

## Board Meeting in Public

Tuesday, 25 July 2023

<b>Title of Report</b>	Freedom to Speak Up	<b>Agenda No.</b>	3.8
<b>Nature of Report</b> (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Official	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Official Sensitive	
<b>Author(s)</b>	Rachel May, Freedom To Speak Up Guardian		
<b>Lead Executive</b>	Deb McKenzie, CPO		
<b>Non-Executive Director Sponsor</b> (if applicable)	Phil Huggon		
<b>Presented for</b> (tick all that applies)	<input type="checkbox"/> Approval	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assurance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Update	
<b>Purpose of the report and key issues</b>			
<p>The report sets out Freedom To Speak Up service activity and improvements for Jan-June 2023. Includes themes of concerns raised, work being done to address main themes and any barriers to speaking up.</p> <p>Key data can be found in the appendices.</p>			
<b>Previously Considered by</b>			
Executive Team			
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Board is asked to recognise the importance of achieving a speak up, listen up, follow up culture and support the work of the executive team and wider organisation in this goal		
<b>Risk(s) identified (Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks)</b>			
N/A			
<b>Strategic Objective(s) this paper relates to:</b> [Click on all that applies]			
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Invest in people and culture <input type="checkbox"/> Drive innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Modernise our operations <input type="checkbox"/> Grow and diversify our donor base			
<b>Appendices:</b>	FTSU Jan to June Board report data		

## 1. Background

NHS organisations are required to have a Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) service, following recommendations of the Francis Report 2015. The ability of NHS workers to raise concerns safely and to be heard has a proven link to patient safety and employee wellbeing.

The Board receives Bi-annual reports for assurance of the effectiveness of the service and an understanding of the extent to which the organisation is achieving a speak up, listen up, follow up culture.

General information about Freedom to Speak Up can be found via the [National Guardian's Office](#)

## 2. Report summary

- The FTSU service has been invested in by NHSBT during 2023. The result is increased capacity and a more diverse Guardian team to hear and escalate concerns, and a new diverse network of Champions to promote a speaking up culture.
  - Outcome: fewer barriers to speaking up
- Case numbers for 2023 to date are higher than similar sized Arm's Length Bodies; however, this may be reflective of our success in raising awareness of our FTSU service.
- Bullying & harassment concerns are slowly reducing, although behavioural concerns remain the most frequently raised concerns. This is consistent with other FTSU services across the NHS.
- Some colleagues with disabilities are not being supported to have reasonable adjustments agreed in the workplace, as is their legal right. The organisation must continue its work in educating managers around the Equality Act 2010 and consider how it wants to hold managers accountable for failing in their duties under the legislation.
- Learning from concerns: Much work is underway across the organisation to improve the employee experience. However, it is not clear to what extent this work will effectively resolve systemic issues such as discrimination, racism, poor behaviours, unmanageable workloads etc.

## 3. Service Improvement

- Guardian capacity doubled (to 2 WTE); Champions increased from 5 to 32
- Project with DDTS to explore provision of a FTSU app (ongoing)
- New comms plan to address CQC requirement to ensure all colleagues are aware of the FTSU service, including leaflet drop to home addresses
- Mindset shift – 'Whistle to HR' and 'Whistleblow to a NED' email accounts are now 'Speak Up to HR' and 'Speak Up to a NED' respectively

- Updated Speak Up policy agreed by the Staff Partnership Committee in May 23

### 4. Activity

- 66 cases opened (See Appendix for benchmarking information)
- 49 cases closed
- 19 ongoing (open) cases
- 13% (8) cases raised anonymously (Guardian does not know who they are)
- 49-day average to close cases

### 5. Top themes of concerns raised

- Bullying & harassment
- Inappropriate attitudes/behaviours
- Workload
- Management/HR processes

### 6. Addressing concerns and themes

The most frequently raised concerns (e.g. bullying, manager communication, manager/HR processes, reasonable adjustments etc.) are supported/escalated as individual cases. In addition, NHSBT is implementing a range of projects to begin making systemic improvements:

- The Forward Together programme
- Inclusive Recruitment
- The new Leadership and Management programme offer
- New Induction programme
- The Resolution Framework
- New reasonable adjustments policy

Other concerns have all been escalated as appropriate and are either resolved or being addressed with the individuals involved.

One of the main unresolved concerns is around workload. Pressure on teams and managers and the resulting stress is likely to be contributing to poor communication, behaviours and deterioration of relationships.

### 7. Addressing barriers to speaking up

To encourage people to speak up, we need to ensure they have the

1. **Capability:** *do I know how? Do I understand what I need to do? Have I had training or been given the tools so I understand how to speak up?* – National Guardian Office

We are:

- o Sending a leaflet to all colleagues' homes, telling them about the various routes to speaking up, including FTSU services

## Blood and Transplant

- Including the Speak Up training module in Induction and Mandatory Training
- 2. **Opportunity:** *do I have the time and resources I need? Are there lots of opportunities to speak up – for example will I see posters or hear messaging to remind me of the routes available? Is it easy to get in touch with someone who can point me in the right direction? – National Guardian Office*
  - We are:
    - Implementing a comms campaign which will include posters and online messaging
    - Ready to promote the Champion service
- 3. **Motivation:** *Is it safe to speak up? How do I know anything will change? – National Guardian Office*
  - We are:
    - Including the Listen Up module for managers in induction and mandatory training
    - Beginning to draw together case studies for sharing

## 8. Recommendations

Learning from concerns raised and addressing the underlying causes is key to achieving excellence as an organisation.

The FTSU Guardian recommends that the Board monitors the outcomes of key programmes and policies (below) designed to improve the culture of NHSBT, to gain insight into their effectiveness in addressing underlying systemic issues.

- The Forward Together programme
- Inclusive Recruitment
- The new Leadership and Management programme offer
- New Induction programme
- The Resolution Framework
- New reasonable adjustments policy