

Freedom to Speak Up Strategy

2022/23 to 2024/25

A new strategy designed to help improve what we do, how we tell you about its impact and how we will contribute and support positive cultural influence in the Trust.

The National Guardian's Office was created to support positive cultural change in the NHS by giving workers the freedom to speak up. Its role and purpose are described in the Freedom to Speak Up Review.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have outlined the priorities for the NHS for 2022/23 with the first being to "Invest in our workforce... by strengthening the compassionate and inclusive culture needed to deliver outstanding care". Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark, National Guardian, has pointed out that supporting Freedom to Speak Up is essential to achieving this resilience.

The aim of this strategy is to create an environment and culture where speaking up and listening up are both business as usual for all our staff and where raising concerns results in improvement. We aim to ensure that staff feel safe in speaking up, are supported to do so, and that confidentiality is safeguarded. Fostering this environment of psychological safety is a crucial investment in our workforce.

This strategy, which has been co-produced by Trust staff and endorsed by the Board of Directors, sets out how we will achieve our vision.

**better lives,
together**



We Care



We Listen



We Deliver



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Foreword

I am thrilled to have been appointed to the role of Freedom to Speak Up Guardian at the Trust and am looking forward to working with colleagues to empower a 'speaking up, listening up and following up' ethos within the organisation. We know that speaking up is making a difference; last year we had 71 cases raised through the Guardian route, which are all opportunities for the Trust to learn, change and improve.

Locally, a lot of progress has been made but there is still much for us to do in driving forward this agenda. There have been challenges arising from COVID-19 meaning that much of our activity over the last period has necessarily moved online, but feedback from people who have raised concerns gives us cause for optimism. In addition, Emma Greenwood (Deputy Guardian) and I are supported by the executive team to present and discuss the concerns raised, highlighting themes and triangulating information from other sources to give us a clearer idea of where the Trust needs to put support in place to make improvements.

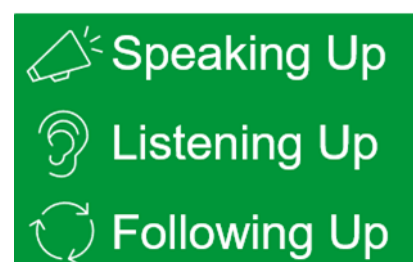
We have recently recruited a network of Speak Up Ambassadors who will play a crucial role in encouraging staff to speak up at the earliest opportunity and support us in creating a culture of openness and honesty. We will also work closely with colleagues in HR, Staff Side and the Equality Leads to ensure we follow the right processes that will make a difference to those raising concerns, and ultimately provide improvement to the services we work in. In this role, it is imperative that we listen to hard truths and respond attentively and sensitively. I am committed to supporting colleagues across the organisation to help foster a more open, kind and compassionate culture in which staff feel safe about speaking up, knowing that their concerns will be taken seriously.

In the spring of 2022, during review of this strategy, we took the opportunity to undertake a crowdsourcing exercise to validate its contents. Over 250 of our colleagues have helped to support the development of this document by contributing ideas and feedback which have been invaluable in refreshing our objectives for the next 3 years. This ground-up approach has given us a fantastic insight into what is important for our colleagues and allowed us to refine our workplan accordingly. I am excited about the opportunities we have to improve culture and increase visibility of the Freedom to Speak Up movement going forward.



Rebecca Wixey

**Freedom to
Speak Up
Guardian**



Purpose

In 2015, Sir Robert Francis QC produced his Freedom to Speak Up Review which called for all NHS organisations to appoint a Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Guardian to improve the way each organisation deals with concerns raised by NHS staff as part of the process of promoting “a culture of safety and learning in which all staff feel safe to raise concerns”.

Guidance from NHS England/NHS Improvement and the National Freedom to Speak Up Guardian has called for all NHS organisations to have a FTSU strategy and vision to support this work.

Trust vision

Better lives, together

Our values:

We care: We act with respect and empathy, and always value difference.

We listen: We understand people's views and respond to their individual needs

We deliver: We develop and provide excellent services and support our partners to do the same.



The Freedom to Speak Up strategy supports this vision and our staff charter, promoting the Trust's values and helping us become the best place to work.

Freedom to Speak Up Vision

Our vision for Freedom to Speak Up is that it becomes part of the organisation's DNA as a crucial aspect of the overall Trust vision, **Better lives, together**.

We are committed to promoting an open and transparent culture across the organisation to ensure that all members of staff feel safe and confident to speak up. We aim to make speaking up business as usual by:

- Creating a culture where staff feel confident and safe to speak up, and know that leaders are listening up.
- Enabling our leaders to be responsive to concerns and act on these promptly to ensure concerns are well received and fairly investigated.
- Sharing any learning from concerns raised to improve both patient/service user and staff safety, in order to ensure that speaking up makes a difference.

In March/April 2022, we held an online workshop at icare.clevertogogether.com where YOU told us what was strong, wrong or missing with our DRAFT Freedom to Speak Up Strategy at BDCFT



You told us that you supported our strategy direction overall, but you wanted to see a sustained difference and impact in three key thematic areas:



[illegible]

The crowdsourcing exercise with colleagues across the Trust has helped us to define and clarify the objectives of this strategy going forward, and how we can ensure that these are being achieved in practice...

Objectives

To support the delivery of this strategy we will:

1. Continue to raise awareness of speaking and listening up amongst staff and leaders.
2. Recruit, train and maintain a diverse cohort of Ambassadors to ensure all staff feel safe and confident to raise concerns.
3. Develop a formalised support and learning programme for Ambassadors.
4. Develop a focussed FTSU training plan for the organisation.
5. Improve partnership working within organisational teams and implement joint approaches to promote speaking up.
6. Enhance the role of the FTSU Guardian in contributing to the cultural change programme in the organisation.
7. Ensure robust governance and quality assurance of FTSU in the organisation.

Monitoring

To monitor the success of the strategy and positive impact on staff lives we will:

1. Continue to systematically record all concerns raised through Freedom to Speak Up, in line with guidance from the National Guardian Office.
2. Review the annual staff survey results including identification of any 'hot spots'.
3. Review the Freedom to Speak Up evaluations following conclusion of any concerns raised.
4. Monitor engagement with the FTSU twitter account.
5. Have regular review of themes or trends raised with HR, Equality Leads and Staff Side.
6. Provide quarterly figures to the Quality and Safety Committee.
7. Provide high level findings to the Workforce Equality Committee & Trust Board.
8. Monitor percentage completion of the mandatory 'Speak Up' eLearning package for all workers.
9. Monitor percentage completion of the 'Listen Up' eLearning package for managers.
10. Review number of contacts with Ambassadors at regular network meetings.



We Care: Staff feel confident and safe to speak up

Staff will know it is their right to speak up and where to go to get support and advice. Staff will be supported to speak up about concerns and know they will not be bullied, victimised or harassed as a result of speaking up.

We will evidence this by:

- ▶ Promoting freedom to speak up as business as usual
- ▶ Monitoring the number of staff who report they feel safe in raising concerns
- ▶ Monitoring the number of staff who report they would speak up again
- ▶ Monitoring the number of staff who report they have not been treated adversely after raising concerns.
- ▶ Reviewing results of the annual staff survey
- ▶ Ensuring the organisation has a clear and positive policy and procedure in place.
- ▶ Ensuring staff know where to go for support and advice on speaking up



We Listen: Concerns are well received and fairly investigated

Staff will be thanked for raising their concerns and know that the facts will be examined and a fair and proportionate investigation will take place, after which they will receive a response

We will evidence this by:

- ▶ Ensuring staff are thanked for speaking up.
- ▶ Ensuring concerns are taken seriously and clear records are kept.
- ▶ Supporting and training managers so they are approachable and able to receive concerns constructively.
- ▶ Ensuring an independent, fair and objective investigation into the facts takes place promptly and without the purpose of finding someone to blame
- ▶ Ensuring staff are told (as far as possible) what has been found out and what action will be taken.

We Deliver: Speaking up makes a difference

Safety is paramount. Where there are lessons to be learned they will be identified and acted on.

We will evidence this by:

- ▶ Ensuring actions are recorded, implemented and tracked
- ▶ Monitoring the number of staff who report they would speak up again
- ▶ Ensuring lessons learned are shared with the individual or team reporting them and more widely across the organisation, as appropriate.

Freedom to Speak Up Strategy in Action – Plan for Year One 2022/2023



FTSU APPROACH

COMMUNICATION

CULTURE

Measuring success

By July 2023, we will have:

