

Cover Sheet

Public Trust Board Meeting: Wednesday 14 July 2021

TB2021.47

Title: Freedom to Speak Up – annual report 2020/2021

Status: For Information

History: Lead Guardian presented the 2019/20 annual report at Public Board on 05 November 2020.

Lead Guardian presented the 2019/20 Annual report and 6 monthly update report at TME on 22 October 2020.

Lead Guardian presented the 6 monthly update report at TME on 14 November 2019.

Lead Guardian presented the 2018/19 Annual report at TME on 11 April 2019.

Lead FtSU Guardian presented the 2017/18 Annual report at TME on 13 September 2018.

Lead Guardian presented at a Trust Board Seminar in February 2018.

Board Lead: Chief Assurance Officer

Author: Jane Hervé. Freedom to Speak up Lead Guardian

Confidential: No

Key Purpose: Assurance

Executive Summary

1. This paper covers the 12 months from April 2020 to March 2021.
2. Data is provided, in line with the reporting used by the National Guardian Office (NGO), and includes the number of staff contacting the FtSU Guardians and the reason for the contact. During the 12 month period 164 members of OUH staff contacted the FtSU team for advice and support. Depending on the concern and the individual's wishes, issues were escalated to the relevant manager, Human Resources Business Partner or member of Trust Board.
3. Raising awareness of speaking up to all staff continues to be a focus of the FtSU team. The FtSU team has presented via a recorded video at Corporate Induction and Medical Induction. Listening events have continued throughout the year, these have provided all staff with an opportunity to join the event virtually to ask questions or raise a concern. Most of the events have been held with the FtSU team and some have included members of the Trust Board. The FtSU team promoted 'speaking up' during October Speak up month with a series of daily videos and tweets using the letters of the alphabet.
4. The OUH Guardians continue to work with peers across the region and this was helped as the Lead Guardian was Chair of the South East (East) Region for the calendar year 2020 and stepped down in January 2021. The role of Chair is to link the Regional Guardians and to ensure close working with the National Guardian Office.

Recommendations

5. The Trust Board is asked to
 - Note this report, support the Freedom to Speak up Guardians and Champions in their roles

Freedom to Speak Up – annual report 2020/2021

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Trust Board with an overview of the work of the FtSU Guardians and Champions, updates from the National Guardian office and the activity over the twelve month period related to this report.

2. Background

- 2.1. The standard NHS contract requires that all trusts and foundation trusts employ a Lead Freedom to Speak up Guardian and the role continues to be employed in Primary Care and relevant Charities..
- 2.2. The Guardian role is to ensure patient safety, staff wellbeing as well as providing support to staff raising concerns. The Guardian supports the Board to develop an 'open and transparent culture'.
- 2.3. The FtSU team in 2020/21 comprised two Guardians and four Champions. The Champions support the Guardians in raising the profile of the team and 'speaking up'. The team has changed during the last year with two resignations and two replacement Champions.
- 2.4. Quarterly data is requested by the NGO from every NHS organisation and the data is available on the NGO website.
- 2.5. The FtSU Lead Guardian has individual monthly meetings with the Chief Assurance Officer, Chair and the Non-Executive lead for FtSU to ensure concerns are raised, themes are discussed and relevant actions are taken. The Guardians meet with members of the Executive team and senior leaders as necessary to raise serious concerns.

3. Professional Relationships

- 3.1. The OUH FtSU Guardians and Champions work closely together.
- 3.2. The Lead Guardians from the Trusts in Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire meet informally to offer confidential support. Guardians attend the Regional FtSU meetings; these are held quarterly across the Southeast region. The purpose of these meetings is to gain peer support and advice as well as receiving updates from the NGO.

4. Assessment of cases

- 4.1. The number of staff contacting the FtSU Guardians continues to increase year on year since the role was introduced in OUH. Comparison data from

2017/18 is provided in the following table and data on the themes for each quarter in 2019/20 and 2020/21 is also provided.

4.2. Comparison with previous years

Year	Contacts
17/18 (8 months)	56
18/19 (12 months)	93
19/20 (12 months)	141
20/21 (12 months)	164

Table 1 - Number of contacts

4.3. The main reason staff contact the OUH Guardians relates to behaviours including 'bullying and undermining'; and is the same as previous periods of reporting within OUH. See table below for OUH data.

Themes 2019/20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Element of patient safety	10	17	9	4
Behaviours including bullying & harassment	14	22	10	10
Suffered detriment	4	2	1	2
Themes 2021/21				
Element of patient safety	32	12	11	8
Behaviour including bullying & harassment	11	11	18	7
Suffered detriment	4	3	2	3

Table 2 – trends from contacts with OUH FtSU Guardians

5. Potential patient safety or worker experience issues

5.1. A number of areas or departments continue to be of concern and have been highlighted appropriately to individual executives, divisional leads or managers. These departments include areas within children's, theatres and recovery, gynaecology and maternity. The issues in some areas are still ongoing.

6. Action taken to raise the profile of FtSU

6.1. The visibility of the FtSU team continues to be a priority, but this has been challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However the team presents via a pre-recorded video at Corporate and Medical Inductions. It has not been possible to visit wards and departments this year. During the year events

were held on each site, visits were made to wards and departments, the team attended various department meetings to 'spread the word' as well as attending Corporate and Medical induction.

- 6.2. Listening events for all staff have continued throughout the year and provide individuals with an opportunity to ask questions or raise a concern with the FtSU team. During 2020/21 31 listening events were held, the majority being supported using MS Teams. Most of the events have been held with the FtSU team and some have included members of the Trust Board.
- 6.3. The NGO's initiative 'October Speak up Month' was supported across OUH with daily tweets and videos on the Twitter platform. The tweets were in line with the NGO Campaign and used each letter of the alphabet to highlight 'speaking up'. The FtSU team were grateful to members of the Trust Board who recorded videos for the month. When safe to do so, the FtSU team will hold face to face events on all OUH sites and involve senior members of staff from the Divisions. .

7. Learning and Improvement

- 7.1. The OUH 'Raising concerns – Whistleblowing policy' was updated and presented to TME and Board in November 2019. The NGO is updated the policy and once published the OUH policy will be updated. This is available to all staff on the OUH Intranet.
- 7.2. The Implementation Plan underpinning the FtSU Strategy has been updated during 2020/2; some actions have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will be a focus for the coming year.
- 7.3. The Staff survey includes questions related to speaking up. There has been an improvement each year but more work is required to ensure staff feel able to speak up.

Staff survey questions	2020	2019	2018	2017
Would feel secure raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice	72.5%	72%	67.9%	68%
Would feel confident that organisation would address concerns about unsafe clinical practice	62%	61%	55.1%	55%

- 7.4. The NGO published the first annual Freedom to Speak up Index report in 2019 for the year 2018. The report identifies the views of the staff on the speaking up culture in NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts (FTs). The second report was published in July 2020 and during 2019 OUH was in the ten trusts which saw the greatest overall increase in the FtSU Index score.

The report is available on the NGO website. Table 4 provides information the improvement in OUH's position in the Index.

OUH Index score	
2018 76.7%	2019 79.5%
<p>The highest rated Trust was Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust with an FtSU Index score of 86.6%.</p> <p>The lowest rated was North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust with an FtSU Index score of 68.5%.</p> <p>The scores are correlated to the latest CQC ratings.</p>	

Table 4 – OUH Index score

7.5. The FtSU team will be working with Senior Leaders to continue the improvement in the OUH score.

8. Challenges for Senior Leaders

8.1. The challenges for senior leaders are:

- improving the experience of some individual members of staff who speak up;
- developing a positive culture in some departments and Clinical Support Units;
- working closely with the FtSU team;
- ensuring staff do not suffer detriment because of raising concerns;
- Senior Leaders must support the principals of 'Civility Saves Lives' in all areas of OUH.
- continue to improve the OUH Freedom to Speaking up Index score by working closely with the FtSU team;
- assisting the FtSU team to deliver the actions agreed in the Implementation Plan.

9. Conclusion

9.1. The numbers of OUH staff accessing the Freedom to Speak up Guardians is positive. Changing the culture so our people feel able to speak to their

managers about concerns remains a priority. Individuals must be listened to and supported so they do not suffer detriment as a result of raising concerns; it is a concern that this continues to be an issue.

9.2. The culture of poor behaviour and lack of respect and dignity (bullying and harassment) in some areas remains an issue and must be addressed. The FtSU team support the introduction of 'Civility Saves Lives' across the OUH.

10. Recommendations

10.1. The Trust Board is asked to

- Note this report, and support the Freedom to Speak up Guardians and Champions in their roles