



Trust Board Meeting in Public: Wednesday 13 November 2019

TB2019.104

Title	Freedom to Speak Up - Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy Renewal and Strategy
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Status	Raising concerns policy and strategy for approval
History	This paper was discussed by Trust Management Executive Committee on 24 October 2019.

Board Lead(s)	Eileen Walsh, Chief Assurance Officer			
Key purpose	Strategy	Assurance	Policy	Performance

Executive Summary

1. The policy has been updated in line with national guidance and a recommendation from the National Guardian Office to use a standard template.
2. The policy has four changes, detailed in Section 3.4 of the paper. It is envisaged that these changes will assist in the ongoing development of an open and transparent culture across the Trust and also support staff to understand how to raise concerns.
3. The mandated role of the Freedom to Speak Up (FtSU) Guardian is included in the policy.
4. The FtSU Strategy has been written in line with a recommendation from the National Guardian Office and has been subject to an all staff consultation. The strategy will be underpinned by an implementation plan.
5. A Stakeholder event is planned for December 2019 when the implementation plan will be further developed. The implementation plan will be presented and discussed at Trust Management Executive prior to approval at the Board.
6. Recommendation The Board is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To review and approve the changes to the Freedom to Speak up – Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy, highlighted in Section 3.4.• To review and approve the Freedom to Speak Up Strategy.• To support the Stakeholder event planned for December 2019.

Freedom to Speak Up - Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy and Strategy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to present the Trust's updated Freedom to Speak Up - Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy and the inaugural FtSU Strategy to Board for formal ratification.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Raising Concerns Policy outlines the policy and procedure for employees and anyone working at the Trust to raise concerns (whistleblowing) and the protection they are entitled to under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- 2.2. The core elements of the recommended 'standard integrated policy' were produced by NHS Improvement and NHS England to be adopted by all NHS organisations as a minimum standard to help normalise the raising of concerns for the benefit of all patients and staff.
- 2.3. The FtSU Strategy has been written in line with a recommendation from the National Guardian Office and is for all staff working in OUH. The Strategy contains priorities for achievement, governance and assurance processes as well as ideas for raising the profile of speaking up and learning from concerns raised.

3. Policy changes

- 3.1. The policy sets out the process by which concerns can be raised and how the Trust will deal responsibly, openly and professionally with any genuine concerns raised by staff.
- 3.2. The policy states that the Trust will ensure that any member of staff raising a concern does not suffer any form of retribution or victimisation provided the concern is raised in good faith.
- 3.3. The policy has been subject to staff consultation and a number of comments were received and changes made as appropriate. The policy will be reviewed in 2020. .
- 3.4. The main changes to the previous policy are as follows:
 - 'What Concerns can be raised' – Page 6
 - Utilising local FTSU local guardians
 - Reference of using the Fit & Proper Persons policy for Director level concerns
 - 'Who should a member of staff raise their concerns with' – Page 9
 - Amended from Chief Executive to Chief Assurance Officer
 - 'Advice and Support' – Page 9
 - New route to access the Employee Assistance programme on the intranet
 - 'Confidentiality' – Page 11
 - Guidance to seek safeguarding advise from the Safeguarding Team

4. Freedom to Speak Up Strategy

- 4.1. In addition to the policy a draft Freedom to Speak Up Strategy has been developed and an all staff consultation completed. The strategy is attached as Appendix 2 to this paper for review and approval. The strategy has been discussed and supported by the members of Trust Management Executive (TME) for onward submission to the Board.
- 4.2. The TME discussion has led to the further development of the strategy to include a clear link to the overarching trust-wide strategy, that is currently under development. A Stakeholder event will be held in December 2019 to help with the development of the detailed implementation plan. The strategy will be underpinned by the implementation plan.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The policy has been updated in line with national guidance using a standard template recommended by the National Guardian Office. A number of changes are included in the updated policy which support the ongoing development of an open and transparent culture.
- 5.2. The FtSU Strategy is an important document for all staff and details the processes in place for staff to raise concerns to the FtSU Guardians, the need for learning, raising the profile of speaking up and the governance and assurance requirements.
- 5.3. The Stakeholder event planned for December 2019 will assist in the development of an implementation plan to support the FtSU Strategy.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1. The Board is asked to:
 - To review and approve the changes to the Freedom to Speak up – Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy, highlighted in Section 3.4.
 - To review and approve the Freedom to Speak Up Strategy.
 - To support the Stakeholder event planned for December 2019.

Eileen Walsh

Chief Assurance Officer

November 2019

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