

Freedom to Speak Up Vision and Strategy

2024 - 2027



Caring, Learning
& Growing Together



National
Guardian
Freedom to Speak Up



Purpose

Following the Mid-Staffordshire Inquiry, Sir Robert Francis published a report in 2013 that highlighted the importance of cultures that embrace transparency and support raising concerns to improve patient safety. This report provided recommendations for NHS Trusts, supported by the National Guardian's Office and is now included in the NHS Contract which is monitored by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Sir Robert Francis's 'Freedom to Speak Up Review' published in February 2013 highlighted the need 'to ensure that NHS staff in England feel safe to raise concerns, confident that they will be listened to and the concerns will be acted upon'. The Review recommended a number of principles and actions, including the creation of a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian to support staff to raise concerns. Since this time, a significant amount of work has been undertaken nationally through the National Guardian's Office and within our Trust to ensure that speaking up becomes central to everything we do.

Consistent and strong leadership and a developing culture that places less emphasis on blame when things go wrong and more importance on transparency and learning from mistakes will help to support our strategy and most importantly focus on patient safety and ensuring patient safety is everyone's top priority.

This Strategy sets out the Trust's vision and strategy for Freedom to Speak Up, our objectives and actions and how we will measure its effectiveness. It should be read in conjunction with our **Freedom to Speak Up Policy and Procedure** published in October 2023.



Our Freedom to Speak Up Vision

“We will all work together to provide an open and transparent culture across the Trust to ensure that all members of staff feel safe and confident to speak out and raise their concerns.”

Our Values

Our Freedom to Speak Up Strategy supports our Trust Strategy (2022-2027) and is underpinned by our core Trust values: “Caring, Learning and Growing”.



- **Caring** for people while ensuring that they are always at the heart of everything we do.
- **Learning** and using proven research as a basis for delivering safe, effective and integrated care.
- **Growing** our reputation for being a provider of high-quality services and a great place to work.

Our Priorities

To deliver our vision, and so help bring about a change in culture, we need to see improvement across the following areas:

- 1 Awareness** – so that everyone knows how to raise concerns and to whom concerns can be raised.
- 2 Confidence in speaking up** – concerns are heard, promptly and thoroughly investigated, feedback is provided and outcomes are shared wherever possible.
- 3 Training and support** – for all leaders and managers in understanding their own behaviours and dealing with concerns.
- 4 Improving** our data collection and governance processes.

These areas of focus must involve all staff in the Trust, including agency staff, students/trainees, contracted workers and volunteers.

We will prioritise the following actions to deliver our vision.

Our Key Objectives and Actions

To deliver our vision the following key objectives and actions have been identified:

Objective 1 Improve awareness of the Speaking Up programme

1. All new starters are made aware of Speaking Up at corporate induction or at local training.
2. All staff will complete the National Guardian's Office Level 1 Speak Up Training as part of their mandatory training requirements.
3. A rolling communications programme to ensure all staff are made aware of the Speaking Up programme through marketing materials in all areas of the Trust (posters and leaflets), regular email updates and face to face communications.
4. There is clearly accessible information about Speaking Up and how to raise concerns on the Trust intranet.
5. Speaking Up Ambassadors will be available in all areas of the Trust and from a range of backgrounds and roles.
6. Members of the speaking up team will attend team meetings to raise the profile and importance of speaking up.

Objective 2 Improve confidence in Speaking Up

7. Individuals will all have the opportunity, and adequate time, to discuss their concerns with the Guardian or a member of the speak up team in line with the Trust's policy and procedure.
8. The number of cases raised and resolved, and key themes of concerns will be reported to staff on a regular basis through Trust communication channels.
9. Wherever possible, case studies will be developed and communicated to share outcomes from investigations.
10. Annual review of Freedom to Speak Up policy and strategy to ensure they are fit for purpose.
11. Concerns are dealt with promptly, independently and confidentially.
12. All those who raise concerns receive feedback on the outcome of the investigation and have the opportunity to provide feedback themselves on the process.



Objective 3

Support all leaders and managers to understand their own behaviours and deal with concerns positively

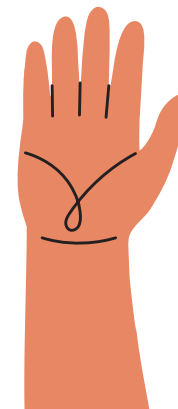
13. Ensure managers are clear about their roles and responsibilities when handling concerns and are supported to do so effectively. Working with our managers and HR leaders to ensure speaking up training is embedded in all our development programmes.



Objective 4

Continue to improve our data collection and governance processes

14. Ensure monitoring and evaluation of the number and nature of concerns is timely and supported by appropriate governance.
15. Ensure that key learning related to concerns are articulated to all in an open and transparent manner, while respecting confidentiality.
16. Ensure feedback is obtained concerning staff's speak up experience to enable continuous improvement.
17. Ensure we fully meet and can evidence the expectations outlined in the National Guardians Office and NHS Improvement self review tool.
18. Regularly review the national case reviews to ensure that any recommendations and learning are implemented, where appropriate.



How will we monitor and measure our progress in our Trust?

We will use the following information to monitor our achievement against the strategy.

- A continued % increase in our staff survey scores in relation to the following questions:-
 1. I feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns me in my organisation.
 2. If I spoke up about something that concerned me, I am confident that the trust would address my concern.
- Grievances
- Exit interviews
- Retention figures
- Feedback on issues raised through the FTSU Guardian
- Bullying and harassment reports
- Patient safety incidents
- Issues raised to the Care Quality Commission
- Incident reporting
- National benchmarking data from the National Guardian's Office



How will progress against our strategy be reported?

A Freedom to Speak Up bi-annual report will be presented to the Trust Board by the Freedom to Speak up Guardian and the Executive Lead for raising concerns. It will include qualitative and quantitative information and other information that enable the Trust Board to fully engage with speak up to understand the issues that have been identified and receive assurance about the actions being taken.

The information will include the number and type of cases being dealt with through the Guardian, an analysis of the trends, including whether the number has increased or decreased. It will also include information of any instances where people who have spoken out may have suffered detriment and recommendations for improvements. We will also provide where available data on who is speaking up and raising concerns by ethnicity, gender and age.



How will we know we have made a difference?

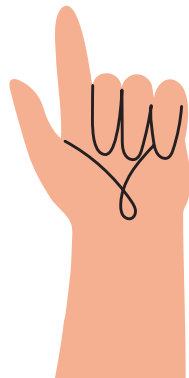
The indicators that will demonstrate we have made a difference in achieving our vision is as follows:

Speak up concerns have satisfactory outcomes.

Improvement in staff survey responses in targeted speak up questions.

Staff will feel confident in raising concerns.

Positive feedback is received from staff who speak up.



What are the specific Freedom to Speak Up roles in our Trust?

It is everyone's responsibility to engender an open culture which invites and encourages both positive and negative feedback from all who use and work within our services. This feedback is used to inform future strategies to support our continual learning and improvement. Every member of our staff has a role to support a freedom to speak up culture.

The following roles have specific responsibilities in relation to speaking up.

- Chief Executive and Chairman
- Executive Director responsible for Freedom to Speak Up
- Non-Executive Director responsible for Freedom to Speak Up
- Medical Director and Director of Nursing
- Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and Deputy Guardian



Review

This strategy will be reviewed in March 2025.

Document Configuration

Document Ref

11th March, 2024	Version 01
Author Name / Job Title	Alison Flack, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian
Directorate Name	Freedom to Speak Up
Clinical / Executive Sponsor	Michele Moran, Chief Executive
Reporting Committee	Trust Board
Trust Board Ratification	March 2024
Review Date	March 2025
Distribution Channels	Trust Board
	All staff – midweek global
Regulator Link	National Guardian's Office
	NHSI
Key Internal Documents	
Key External Documents	NHSI Freedom to Speak Up Self-Assessment Tool