

Board of Directors (in Public)

Item 5.1

Subject: Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Q2-2022 /23
Date of Meeting: 31st January 2023
Presented by: Helen Martin, Head of Risk Management/FTSU Guardian
Purpose of Report: For Assurance

BAF Ref	Impact on BAF
ALL	The report provides assurance on the arrangements in place to support staff to speak up and to ensure learning from staff concerns is identified and embedded.

Level of assurance (<i>please tick one</i>) <i>To be used when the content of the report provides evidence of assurance</i>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Acceptable assurance Controls are suitably designed, with evidence of them being consistently applied and effective in practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partial assurance Controls are still maturing – evidence shows that further action is required to improve their effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low assurance Evidence indicates poor effectiveness of controls

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Trust Board with an update of the work of the Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Guardian and Champions in supporting the safety culture within the Trust, reflect on the progress made by the FTSU Network in empowering staff to speak up freely and encouraging ongoing positive cultural change. The paper provides an overview of issues and concerns raised in Q3 with comparison of figures for previous quarters.

Updates from the National Guardians Office for Freedom to Speak Up are provided, with the aim of providing assurance that the local arrangements in place continue to meet best practice and support staff to raise concerns. This is done in the context of an evolving and maturing national agenda, that is learning from the collective experiences of FTSU Guardians, their champion networks and those at the National Guardian Office.

The Executive Board is asked to review the quarterly report and receive assurance that the FTSU arrangements in place continue to meet best practice.

2. Background

The Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) policy continues to be integrated at Liverpool Heart and Chest

Hospital alongside the Trusts other forms of Speak-Up Safely channels. In line with the national guidelines, the trust has appointed Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, whose role is to provide of an alternative channel for workers to raise concerns, ensuring that concerns received are escalated, investigated, and followed up to enhance patient safety and worker experiences.

The FTSU Guardians continue to maintain engagement and communication with the National Guardian's Office and the Northwest Regional Network of FTSU Guardians for regular updates, continued learning and support. The FTSUG continue to work closely with the FTSU Executive Director, champions and senior leaders to enable effective escalation, review and triangulation of safety and welfare concerns. A standard operating procedure within the governance process ensures that all concerns, especially any patient safety or serious issues are escalated immediately to the Chief Executive, investigated, and followed up.

Through a personal speak-up safety pledge, the Trust's Chief Executive encourages all staff to speak up and gives assurance that any concerns raised will be investigated, and the staff will be protected from any detriment after speaking up.

The FTSU network at LHCH comprises of the FTSU Executive Director, Non-Executive Director Lead, two Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, a Deputy Guardian, and a network of multi-disciplinary FTSU Champions.

3 Assessment of FTSU concerns Quarter 3, 2022/23

The trust has several safety reporting channels such as speaking directly to line managers, the HALT process, incident reporting and team and trust Safety Huddles. Issues raised in other channels are not logged as FTSU unless referred to or raised directly to the FTSU Guardian or champions. A total of four concerns were raised through the FTSU policy in Q3 with a further two enquiries regarding raising a concern (1 had already been taken forward as per HR route; 1 concern raised to Champion but not escalated or taken further with a Guardian).

Of note, there were no anonymous or detriment cases raised in this quarter. A summary of concerns raised in this quarter is provided in the tables below with further details of action plans and outcomes provided in appendix one.

The themes of the FTSU concerns raised in Q3 2022/23 as categorised by the NGO guidelines and outcomes are detailed in the table below.

Table 3.1: Themes of FTSU concerns (categorised by the NGO guidelines and outcomes)

Themes of concerns as categorised by the NGO	No. of concerns (Q3 22/23)	Outcome	Status (Closed/ in progress)
Number of cases raised anonymously	0		-
Element of Patient Safety / Quality	1	Awareness raising within the team carried out	Closed
Element of Worker Safety or Wellbeing	0		
Element of Bullying or Harassment	3	Resolved (3)	Closed x3
Number of cases where disadvantageous or demeaning	0		

Themes of concerns as categorised by the NGO	No. of concerns (Q3 22/23)	Outcome	Status (Closed/ in progress)
treatment (detriment) from speaking up is indicated			
Other Category:	0		-

Comparative numbers and themes to previously reported quarters are set out below.

Table 3.2: Comparative themes

Themes of concerns as categorised by the NGO	Q3 2022/23	Q2 2022/23	Q1 2022/23	Q4 2021/22	Q3 2021/22
Element of Patient Safety or Quality	1	0	1	0	2
Element of Worker safety or Wellbeing	0	2	1	0	0
Element of Bullying or Harassment	3	3	2	1	0
Number of cases where disadvantageous or demeaning treatment (detriment) from speaking up is indicated	0	1	0	1	1
Other:	0	0	6	3	2
Total	4	6	10	5	5
Number of cases raised anonymously	0	0	0	0	0

In line with the NGO guidance, comparative views of concerns raised in Q3-2022/23 and the previous quarters, per professional groups are provided below.

Table 3.3: Comparisons of staff groups raising concerns

Concerns raised by staff bands	Worker	Senior Manager	Senior Leader	Unknown/ Undisclosed	Total
Q3 2022/23	4	0	0	0	4
Q2 2022/ 23	6	0	0	0	6
Q1 2022 / 23	8	0	0	2	10

The table below reflects comparative data of concerns raised different professional groups for the current and previous 3 quarters, as per the National Guardian Office guidelines.

Table 3.4: Comparison of concerns raised by different professional groups

Concerns raised by professional groups	Q3 2022/23	Q2 2022/23	Q1 2022/23	Q4 2021/22
Medics	2	1	0	2
RGN/ Midwives/ ANPs	0	0	1	1
Nursing Assistants & HCA	1	0	0	0
Allied Health Practitioners	0	2	1	1
Admin, Clerical	0	1	3	0
Maintenance/Ancillary/Cleaning/ Catering/ Porters	1	1	1	0
Corporate Service Staff	0	0	0	1
Undisclosed	0	1	4	0
Total number of speak-ups	4	6	10	5

In terms of analysis of FTSU concerns and actions:

- With regard to two cases of bullying, the staff members were encouraged to speak to their manager and resolve within the team.
- In one case of bullying, meetings were held with both parties and a resolution was agreed.
- In another case, discussion is ongoing to improve the culture within the team.

The following areas for wider organisational learning areas were identified and have been shared extensively through a range of communications channels:

- Manager support and consistency
- FTSU Guardians and Champions often provide support through signposting colleagues and/or factfinding/ information gathering
- Listening can help individuals to determine the action they want to take
- Triangulation of data with HR colleagues is important to ensure a long-term resolution is found.

4. Update on previous ongoing cases

Staff wellbeing and safety concern raised in Q2. Contact made with manager who advises equipment has been ordered and is awaiting delivery

5. Progress on Internal assessments and Governance

The FTSU Policy has been reviewed in line with latest revision of the NGO policy, with no changes required at present.

Engagement with the FTSU champions for support and updates continues through regular correspondence and quarterly FTSU workshops. These create opportunity for champions to learn and share / showcase their experiences. The latest workshop was held on the **5th January 2023** and was attended by the FTSU Executive Director, the two Guardians and a group of champions. Several new FTSU Champions have volunteered and have been appointed in both clinical and non-clinical settings during Q3.

The new Guardian is contacting all of the Champions to introduce herself and visit their areas.

6. Updates from the National Guardian Office

NHS England has published an updated national Freedom to Speak Up Policy and Guidance (June 2022).

- The **Freedom to speak up policy** (e-book) includes:
 - References the People Promises and ED&I
 - Summarises the routes to speak up and how
 - Signposts national organisations for support and advice
- **The guide for leaders** in the NHS and organizations delivering NHS services is aimed at Senior Leaders and Boards. The guide provides ideas about how FTSU principles can be developed and embedded

These resources are being reviewed alongside the NGO FTSU reflection and planning tool (published June 2022) to ensure our arrangements continue to reflect best practice.

During Q2 the Executive Lead for FTSU attended an NGO workshop aimed at Board members and learning was shared to take forward.

Freedom to speak up month

October is national FTSU month. To highlight and celebrate FTSU, we ran a successful communications and awareness campaign. Walk rounds were conducted which were accompanied by Non-Executive Directors. We were able to speak to a number of staff of differing disciplines in several areas and received positive feedback regarding FTSU, with staff advising that they are aware of the channels by which to raise concerns. We will continue to build on this success with continues walk rounds and awareness raising.

7. Conclusion

The FTSU compliments existing speak-up safely policies and processes within the trust, providing an alternative channel for staff to speak confidentially or anonymously. The policy provides assurance that concerns will be escalated, and workers are supported during the process and investigations.

The FTSU Guardians supported by the network of champions continue to maintain engagement with the staff to raise the FTSU profile, support staff who have raised concerns, record and follow-up cases raised. A recent call out for FTSU volunteers has seen the Champions network increase by members of staff in clinical and non-clinical departments.

The FTSU Guardians will continue to provide quarterly and annual reports on the number of concerns raised through the FTSU Network and any common themes to the Board of Directors and the National Guardian's Office. Learning from cases will continue to be reviewed and shared appropriately. The FTSU guardians will continue to maintain engagement with the National Office and regional networks to ensure that national updates are cascaded and implemented.

8. Recommendations

The Board of Directors is asked to:

- i) note the Q3 2022/23 report.
- ii) receive assurance that local FTSU arrangements are in place and continue to meet best practice.