

Council of Governors

Item 6.2

Subject: Report from Freedom to Speak Up Guardian
Date of meeting: 26th September 2016
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Presented by: Lucy Lavan, Associate Director of Corporate Affairs

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to inform the Council of Governors about the work that has been on-going to respond to the new national requirement for every hospital to have in post a Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Guardian whose role it is to ensure that there are appropriate policies and arrangements in place to support staff to speak up, for example, where they believe that there has been a wrongdoing or concern that has implications for patient safety.

The report provides an update on the following:

- Background
- Local arrangements
- National FTSU agenda
- Activity to date
- Reporting.

The Council of Governors is asked to note the report and receive assurance that the local arrangements in place meet best practice and support staff to raise concerns.

2. Background

‘Learning not Blaming’ was the Government response to:

- Freedom to Speak Up Review (February 2015) following the Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHSFT Public Inquiry
- Morecambe Bay Report (February 2015)
- Investigating Clinical Incidents in the NHS (March 2015)

This response set out the requirement for the appointment of a National Guardian and for every provider to have arrangements in place for the appointment of a local Guardian by September 2016.

3. Local FTSU Arrangements

Listening into Action methodology was used to involve LHCH staff in the development of local arrangements. There was support for the appointment of myself as the Trust’s FTSU Guardian

together with the creation of a network of FTSU Champions who would be readily accessible to staff.

Following a call for expressions of interest and a selection process, there are now 12 local Champions in place.

All 12 Champions have participated in an induction session which has included discussion on the following:

- Background and purpose of having the Champions Network
- Critical Success factors – such as the awareness of profile of the champions throughout the Trust; ensuring integrity, confidence and trust; personal qualities; values and behaviours; effective sign-posting; and the importance of feedback
- Role description- what it is and what it is not
- Road map for speaking up / raising concerns;
- Documentation and how to maintain a record of referrals
- Scenario exploration exercise
- Support for champions
- Further training available
- Schedule of FTSU Champions Forum meeting dates for next 12 months.

Regular FTSUG Forum meetings have been scheduled and work is in progress to promote greater awareness of the Champion role through corporate communications including poster campaigns, team briefing, update at clinical audit days and introduction of a branded e mail footer for use by Champions.

A system is in place to collate referrals to the Guardian / Champions so that themes can be identified and checks undertaken to ensure concerns have been closed off in a timely manner.

A new local FTSU Policy has been developed which is aligned to the published national policy on Whistleblowing (see Appendix 1).

4. National FTSU Agenda

The national FTSU agenda is evolving and key points to note are :

- i) The publication of a 'standard integrated policy' was one of a number of recommendations of the review by Sir Robert Francis into whistleblowing in the NHS, aimed at improving the experience of whistleblowing in the NHS. It is expected that this policy (produced by NHS Improvement and NHS England) will be adopted by all NHS organisations in England as a minimum standard to help to normalise the raising of concerns for the benefit of all patients.

Our local process has been integrated into the policy and provides more detail about how we will look into a concern. (Appendix 1)

- ii) The publication of an example role description for local FTSU Guardian. This contains significant detail and is accompanied by a description of expected personal qualities, purpose of the role and expected outcomes. The role description has been considered carefully and is broadly met through the FTSU Guardian working within the wider structure of the Champions. The national guidance is not intended to be prescriptive and there is recognition that this will be tailored to best suit local circumstances.
- iii) The appointment of Dr Henrietta Hughes as National Guardian for the NHS. Dr Hughes is currently a practicing GP and Medical Director for NHS England's North Central and East London region. She will give 4 days per week to the National Guardian role w.e.f

October 2016. The primary role of the National Guardian is to provide support and advice to FTSU Guardians and to advise providers on FTSU matters.

- iv) The introduction of a 'buddying' scheme as peer support for FTSU Guardians.

5. Activity to Date

To date there have been 5 issues raised with the FTSU Guardian, 3 of which have been reviewed and closed; 2 are subject to on-going review.

6. Reporting

The FTSU Guardian will provide reports as follows:

- Updates to the People Committee on the number of concerns raised through the FTSU Network and any common themes – 6-monthly in September and March, with the proviso that any matters of exception will be escalated as necessary;
- An annual report to the Board of Directors in April for the preceding year;
- A review of the policy and its effectiveness to the Audit Committee annually (July)

7. Recommendations

The Council of Governors is asked to note the contents of this report and receive assurance that local FTSU arrangements are in place and meet best practice guidance.