

Trust Board – 26th July 2022

Freedom to Speak Up: half yearly report

The role of the Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) guardian is to work alongside the trust leadership teams to support the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust in becoming a more open and transparent place to work, where all staff are actively encouraged and enabled to speak up safely. In practice this role can be seen to have 2 key strands: reactive work supporting staff to speak up to improve patient care and the staff experience and proactive work to raise awareness and embed the key FTSU messages making 'speaking up is business as usual'. This report will provide assurance in both of these areas.

Purpose

This paper is a half yearly report to the Trust Board of Directors. The report includes comparative data on numbers of cases per year over the period 2018 – 2022. In addition, there is a breakdown of the number of cases raised through the FTSU route during the periods Q4 20-22 and Q1 22-23. This provides a breakdown of concerns, along with analysis of themes or trends within the organisation and actions being taken.

In addition, the paper contains details of activities carried out in the Trust as part of the Freedom to Speak Up work stream updates and updates from the National Guardians Office (NGO).

Analysis of the Issue

FTSU Guardian Activity

Raising Awareness

In response to the national COVID guidelines, the FTSU Guardian continues to work from home linking in through virtual means and engaging with individual members of staff, teams and networks as appropriate. However, in response to changing guidance as we move to 'living with COVID-19' the FTSU guardian has planned drop-in sessions at all Community hospitals to connect directly with clinical colleagues. Face to face attendance at corporate induction sessions has been maintained to ensure that all new starters, returners, bank staff and aspirant nurses are aware of the role and have opportunity to meet the Guardian in person embedding key speaking up messages from the start of their career with LPT. Attendance at the training and development sessions for Medical Trainees, student nurses, healthcare support workers are nurses on preceptorship provides again provide opportunities to raise the profile of speaking up.

National Staff Survey Results 2021

There will be no Freedom to Speak Up Index published going forward as the original format is now redundant.

The high level analysis of the 2021 National Staff Survey results (shown below) indicate that Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust is higher than the average across all questions under the People Promise element – '*We each have a voice that counts*'. This is very positive and suggests an embedding of the key Speak Up messages across the organisation and a culture where staff feel safe and able to speak up.

Question 17a - I would feel secure raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice

	2020	2021
Best	81.7%	86.1%
LPT	75.5%	81.5%
Average	75.6%	79.6%

Question 17b - I am confident that my organisation would address my concern

	2020	2021
Best	76.5%	74.4%
LPT	62.0%	65.1%
Average	63.1%	64.2%

Question 21e - I feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns me in this organisation

	2020	2021
Best	78.3%	78.7%
LPT	68.0%	69.1%
Average	68.3%	66.8%

Question 21f - If I spoke up about something that concerned me I am confident my organisation would address my concern – *no trend data are shown as this is a new question*

	2021
Best	71.3%
LPT	56.8%
Average	55.1%
Worst	34.3%

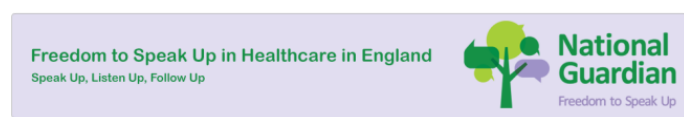
The FTSUG is working collaboratively with the People Promise Manager, Health and Wellbeing Lead, Organisational Development Lead and Staff Engagement Lead to underpin and embed the key FTSU messages within these work domains. The Model Health System supported by NHS England provides data sets and will be used to provide benchmarking data across the wider NHS peer group.

Freedom to Speak Up – Speak Up Month – October 2022

FTSU guardian is working with local communications team to identify and build on the opportunities to promote speaking up through October as part of National Speak Up Month. It is intended that members of staff across all levels of the workforce will be enabled to share speak up messages using refreshed resources, including, speech bubbles to make a personal pledge, photograph opportunities at roadshows and drop in events, articles through corporate and service bulletins and communications through social media platforms.

National Guardian Office (NGO) updates

Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up – new module added



Speak Up – Core training for all workers
Listen Up – Training for all Leaders and Managers
Follow Up - Training for Senior Leaders

Health Education England eLearning for healthcare (HEE elfh), in partnership with the National Guardian Office, has added a 3rd session to the Freedom to Speak Up in the Health Sector in England eLearning programme. The Follow Up module, is aimed at all senior leaders including executive board members (and equivalents), non-executive directors, and governors to help them understand their role in setting the tone for a good speaking up culture and how speaking up can promote organisational learning and improvement.

Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Survey - *Senior leaders' essential role in Freedom to Speak Up.*

In March 2022 the NGO published the FTSU Guardian survey - This included key findings and recommendations for organisations to support the development and embedding of a speaking up culture.

<https://nationalguardian.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-FTSUGuardian-Survey-Report.pdf>

Freedom to Speak Up: A guide for leaders in the NHS

[The guide for leaders in the NHS and organisations delivering NHS services](#), provides comprehensive information, advice and resources to support leaders to provide the best possible working environment – one where speaking up is not only welcomed, but valued as an opportunity to learn and improve. It identifies 8 fundamental principles

1. Value speaking up.
2. Role-model speaking up and set a healthy Freedom to Speak Up culture.
3. Make sure workers know how to speak up and feel safe and encouraged to do so.
4. When someone speaks up, thank them, listen up and follow up.
5. Use speaking up as an opportunity to learn and improve.
6. Support Freedom to Speak Up guardians to fulfil their role in a way that meets workers' needs and National Guardian's Office requirements alike.
7. Identify and tackle barriers to speaking up.
8. Know the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation's speaking-up culture and take action to continually improve.



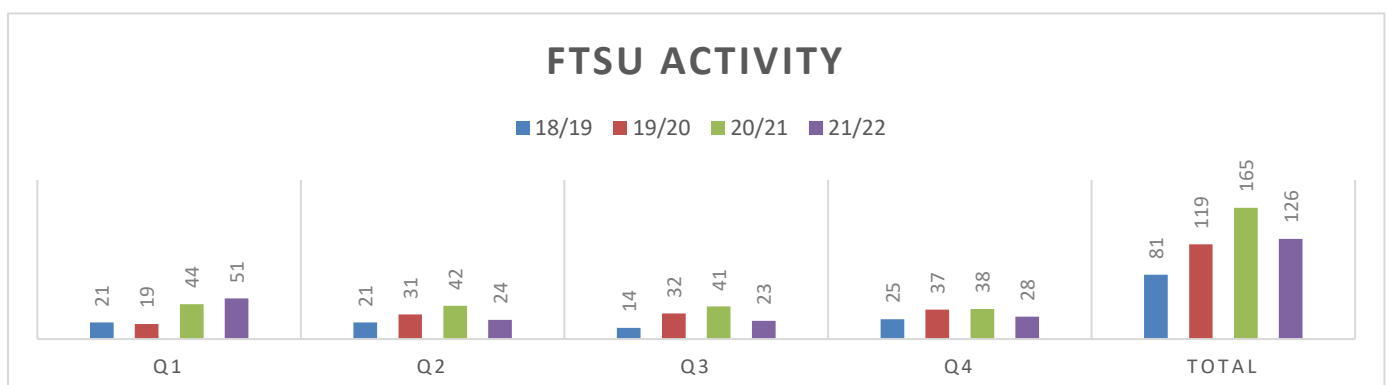
This document also provides advice on the structure of board reports and it is intended that future board reports will be presented as recommended in the guide.

Freedom to Speak Up: A reflection and planning tool

This [tool](#) recommends the senior lead for FTSU takes responsibility for completing the reflection tool and is designed to help identify strengths and any gaps that need work. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the [guide for leaders in the NHS and organisations delivering NHS services](#)

Utilisation of the FTSU Process

The chart below shows the number of concerns raised per quarter during the period 2018 -2022. Although, speak up contacts had progressively increased year on year initially, there is a comparative reduction in the number of contacts across the last 3 quarters of 2021-22 and Q1 Of 2022-23. There may be many reasons for this for example: reduced visibility of the FTSUG across the trust (due to working from home), the increase in confidence to speak up through alternate routes, individual time and capacity to speak up or other real or perceived barriers.



FTSU Guardian Activity and Speaking Up

As seen in the table below there are a relatively constant number of speaking up cases across the last 12 months with a slight increase in Q4 21/22.

Generally, colleagues request that their issue be dealt with confidentially however with support and reassurance many have felt confident to be identified and further-more discuss issues openly with their senior leaders or managers through an informal 'listening meetings'. These meetings create opportunities for staff to be listened to and to understand any future actions in response and/or achieve resolution. Feedback on this process has been positive and builds on the development of an open and transparent culture.

Comparative Summary of speaking up cases 2021 -2022

Service Area	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23
DMH	7	12	17	14
CHS	5	5	4	1
Enabling	0	2	2	3
FYPC/LD	12	4	4	4
Hosted	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	24	23	28	22

	No. of Contacts	Internal	External	Anonymous
Q4 21/22	28	25	3	3
Q1 22/23	21	21	0	0

Themes *	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23
Patient Safety/quality	12	8	9	7
Staff Safety	12	12	21	9
Attitudes & Behaviours	9	18	15	8
Bullying/Harassment	3	5	5	5
System/Process	14	9	18	10
Infrastructure/Environment	5	2	2	1
Cultural	5	16	14	4
Leadership	15	18	21	10
Senior Management Issue	1	3	3	7
Middle Management Issue	11	10	14	7

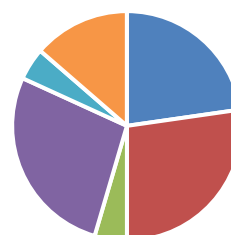
**Speak Up cases often contain multiple themes; therefore, data sets do not always equate together.*

Contacts by Professional Groups

There is a wide cross-section of the Trust workforce, that have contacted the FTSU guardian, from a variety of professional groups and levels of seniority. A comprehensive definition for professional groups forms part of the updated guidance [Recording Cases and Reporting Data \(NGO 2022\)](#)

Contacts by Professional Groups Q1 22/23

(as recommended in NGO Recording Guidance)



- Addition Clinical Services (HCSW) ■ Nurse
- Allied Health Professional ■ Administrative and clerical
- Medical & Dental ■ Scientific and technical
- Unknown

The nature of the role of the FTSU Guardian tends to lead to individual members of staff speaking up in relation to specific individual cases and therefore it is often difficult to see generalised themes within teams, departments, directorates or indeed across the Trust.

Discussion of Themes

Staff Safety, Attitudes & Behaviours, Systems & Processes and leadership behaviours often relating to professional relationships and management issues were the highest categories of concern during Q4 21/22 and Q1 22/23. Issues relating to attitudes and behaviours, and more recently leadership behaviours have been consistently reported within each quarter and work is being undertaken to embed compassion and civility into the culture. In these cases, sign posting regularly includes recommendation to undertake Leadership Behaviours and Giving and Receiving Feedback training to support the development of an open, just and learning culture. In addition, staff are supported through coaching style conversations to manage expectations, explore options and agree future actions. Actions may include facilitated conversations, mediation or listening meetings. Where concerns relating to staff safety have been highlighted these have reflected how a member of staff is feeling within the team dynamic and does not directly relate to a specific risk. In these cases, feedback is provided to the individuals and learning shared within service areas when appropriate.

Issues identified as systems and processes mainly relate to interpretation and actions under policy and guidance procedures. Colleagues have been supported to explore these issues through the appropriate responsible team or department and where appropriate learning has been shared.

Learning and Actions

The FTSU guardian has been asked to provide specific information relating to the concerns raised across each directorate. This has been included as intelligence in the context of wider triangulation opportunities, as part of workforce listening events or discussed as part of the response, action plan and assurance from Quality Summits.

All issues and potential themes have been reported to the appropriate Directorate Management Teams or delegated representatives and managed at a local level. Staff that have spoken up have received ongoing feedback on the progress made to resolve issues or on the final outcome as appropriate, observing confidentiality. Concerns that are raised to external agencies by a staff member are included in the FTSU record log to ensure information is triangulated and provides opportunity for early recognition of any wider theme.

Decision required

- Trust Board is asked to note the activity and actions relating to FTSU workstream.
- Confirm assurance that issues of concern are being raised and dealt with in line with the Freedom to Speak Up: Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) policy and that the Trust Board is aware of themes and trends emerging in the organisation.
- Confirm assurance that the Trust Board are proactive in supporting a speaking up culture in the Trust
- Acknowledge the national updates

Presenting Director: Angela Hillery

Author(s): Pauline Lewitt

15/07/22

Governance table

For Board and Board Committees:	Trust Board 26.7.22	
Paper sponsored by:	Angela Hillery, CEO	
Paper authored by:	Pauline Lewitt, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian	
Date submitted:	15/07/22	
State which Board Committee or other forum within the Trust's governance structure, if any, have previously considered the report/this issue and the date of the relevant meeting(s):	N/A	
If considered elsewhere, state the level of assurance gained by the Board Committee or other forum i.e. assured/ partially assured / not assured:	N/A	
State whether this is a 'one off' report or, if not, when an update report will be provided for the purposes of corporate Agenda planning	6 Monthly	
STEP up to GREAT strategic alignment*:	High Standards	Yes
	Transformation	
	Environments	
	Patient Involvement	
	Well Governed	
	Reaching Out	
	Equality, Leadership, Culture	Yes
	Access to Services	
	Trustwide Quality Improvement	Yes
Organisational Risk Register considerations:	List risk number and title of risk	
Is the decision required consistent with LPT's risk appetite:		
False and misleading information (FOMI) considerations:	None	
Positive confirmation that the content does not risk the safety of patients or the public	Confirmed	
Equality considerations:	None	