

## Trust Board – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024

### Freedom to Speak Up: half-yearly report.

The role of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardians were created in response to recommendations made in Sir Robert Francis QC's report "The Freedom to Speak Up" (2015). Sir Robert found that NHS culture did not always encourage or support workers to speak up, and that patients and workers suffered as a result.

The Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) guardians here at Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust serve as a vital additional channel for workers to speak up and express their concerns. In addition, they work collaboratively with others to enhance the speaking up culture. The role therefore encompasses two main aspects: reactive case work and proactive culture building activities.

This report serves to provide assurance in both of these areas by assessing the effectiveness of the FTSU guardian's efforts in supporting staff members who speak up and in fostering a culture of open communication. It aims to demonstrate that speaking up is valued and that the trust is committed to addressing concerns in a timely and appropriate manner.

### Purpose

This report will provide the Board with an update on the Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) activity during Q2 and Q3 of 2023/24. The report is structured in accordance with the guidelines outlined in 'Freedom to Speak Up: [A guide for leaders in the NHS](#)' and is divided into three parts.

Part 1. The assessment of cases section seeks to provide assurance that matters being spoken up about are quickly evaluated, escalated and responded to in accordance with National Guidance and our local Freedom to Speak Up Policy: Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up. This section summarises data and provides a narrative to the reactive work of the FTSU guardians where they have supported members of the workforce\* who choose to speak up in order to enhance patient care and improve the overall staff experience. The FTSU guardian offers support, guidance, and advocacy to these individuals, ensuring their concerns are acknowledged, matters raised are responded to and feedback is given on any actions taken. responded to.

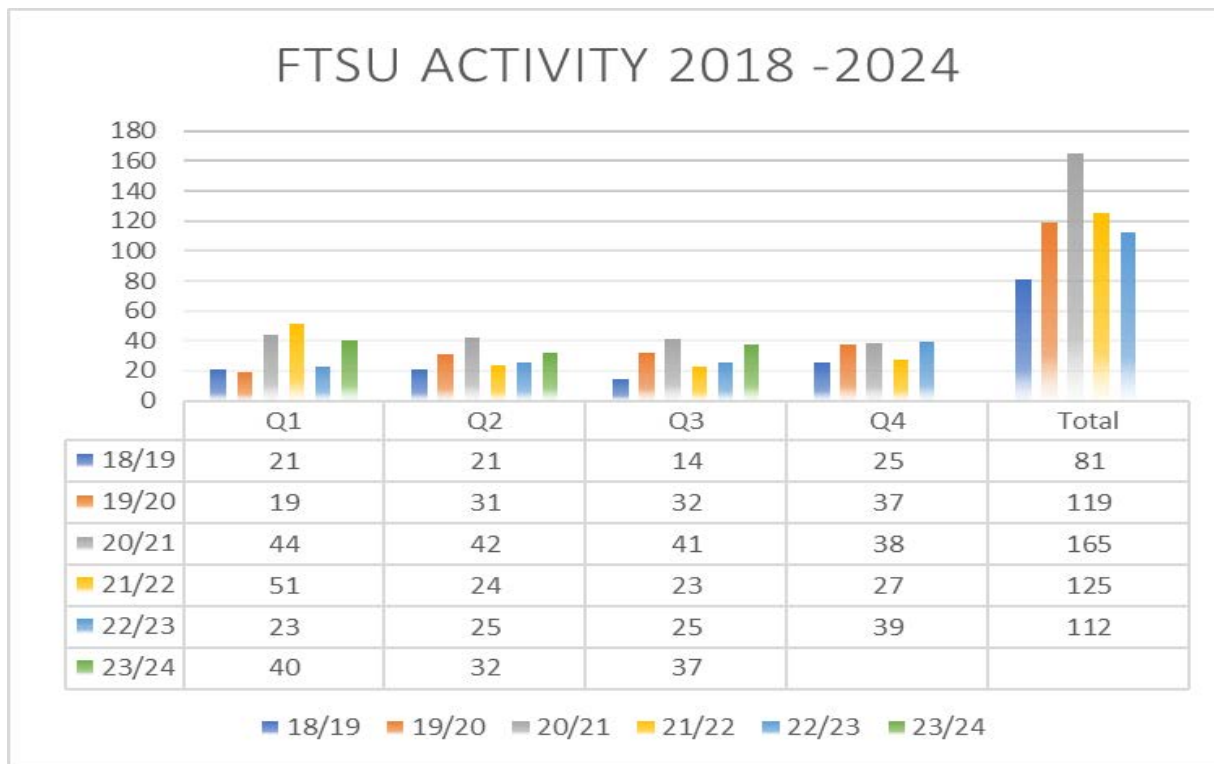
Part 2. Highlights action taken to improve speaking-up culture. This includes working proactively to help identify and reduce barriers to speaking up, working in partnership with senior leaders to create a climate where speaking up, listening up and following up becomes business as usual. This section will also provide updates from the National Guardians Office (NGO), highlighting any significant developments or noteworthy information related to the FTSU initiative.

Part 3. Identifies current recommendations.

## Analysis of the Issue

### Part 1. Assessment of cases and utilization of the FTSU process

**Table 1** - Provides comparative data on the number of cases reported annually from 2018 up to and including Q3 23-24. This illustrates a comprehensive picture of case reporting over time.



FTSUG local data as reported to NGO.

**Table 2. Comparative Summary of Speaking up Cases per Directorate**

Service Area	Q4 2022/2023	Q1 2023/2024	Q2 2023/2024	Q3 2023/2024
DMH	24	10	18	12
CHS	5	9	5	4
Enabling	4	4	4	6
FYPC/LD	4	6	5	7
Hosted	2	1	0	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>37</b>

When comparing speaking-up concerns across directorates, there is a significantly higher number of contacts from DMH. This should be viewed positively as this shows us that workers are confident to speak up to share their experiences. It is understood that workers are also requesting opportunities to speak up about matters to leaders and managers directly which is building confidence in the speak up culture. We are working closely with this directorate to promote the listen up, follow up aspects of the FTSU agenda which is creating a positive narrative in the cases that have been raised through FTSUG route.

Conversely, there is a marked reduction in cases being raised from workers in CHS when compared to previous years. This could be an indicator of concern as listed in the 'Freedom to Speak Up: [A guide for leaders in the NHS](#)' document or could indicate a positive speaking up culture through alternative routes

apart from FTSU. This data going forward will be monitored to ensure workers within CHS are aware of FTSU and how to utilise the process effectively and appropriately when required.

**Table 3. Themes**

Themes *	Q4 22 - 23	Q1 23-24	Q2 23-24	Q3 23 - 24
Patient safety & Quality	12	7	16	6
Worker Safety or Well-being	31	9	24	31
Inappropriate Attitudes & Behaviours	28	8	25	20
Bullying/Harassment	10	5	10	6
Detriment	0	0	0	0

*\*Speak Up cases often contain multiple themes; therefore, data sets do not always equate together. Reports are recorded under the workers' description.*

### Interpreting the data – Generic Themes

Although, The FTSU team have tried to identify key themes in relation to matters that are spoken up about, it is important that this is done in a way that does not identify individuals where they have asked for confidentiality. In addition, over a workforce of 6,500, matters tend to be raised on an individual basis which again makes it difficult to infer specific themes may disproportionately occur with teams, professional groups or directorates as a whole.

It is important to note where patient safety and quality concerns are raised the FTSUG will ensure that the Director and senior leaders for the area is made aware and where appropriate the concern is reported to the patient safety team if they have not been made aware through other routes for example by the compliance team or through eIRF system. FTSUG's have provided confidential feedback from staff in relation to inpatient wards within Directorate of Mental Health (DMH) community nursing services within Community Health Services (CHS) and inpatient wards within the directorate for Families, Young People and Children. Where appropriate feedback has been included as part of relevant Quality and Safety summits and therefore supports future action planning.

The over-riding theme across the organisation relates to attitudes and behaviours and individual perceptions of bullying behaviours. We discuss these in terms of Trust values and LPT recognised Leadership Behaviours. This generic theme has been raised at all DMT's and within the monthly 1:1 meeting with the CEO and Dep. CEO. As a result, there are a number of trust wide events taking place into 2024, supported by the Senior Leadership team and Organisational Development Team to enhance the practical skills and compassionate leadership for Band 7 and Band 8A. In addition, plans to include Speak Up, Listen Up training into the role essential category of the line manager pathway are being put in place. There are additional large scale and bespoke leadership activities at local level within the individual directorates.

Where leadership matters are raised with the FTSUG's, involving peers, managers or other professional relationships, these have been worked through with reference to available options including informal

discussion, facilitated meetings, mediation or more formalised processes under HR policies. In addition, sign posting regularly includes recommendation to undertake Leadership Behaviours and/or Giving and Receiving Feedback training to support the development of an open, just and learning culture and personal responsibility.

Furthermore, matters concerning inappropriate attitudes and behaviours and/or Bullying and Harassment have led to conversations and working through options using the Disputes at Work Resolution policy. Close links with the Governance teams, Human Resources team, Organisational Development team and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion service are maintained to ensure we are able to triangulate information in order to identify 'hot spots' and 'hot topics'. This has enabled the most appropriate service to focus early support and enhance the embedding of an open and transparent culture.

The results from the National Staff Survey 2022-2023 and the local surveys undertaken by the Change Leaders as part of the Our Future Our Way culture programme also indicate that providing psychological safety is a key priority to support the health and wellbeing of the workforce and the Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up culture of our organisation. Both FTSUG's are taking a role as key stakeholders in this work stream to support various facets of this particular priority and to embed the positive messages/outcomes.

Finally, the worker safety and wellbeing heading, tends to include more contacts relating to health and wellbeing rather than worker safety. Where safety is an issue, these are raised with the relevant specialist in the Health and Safety team. Many of the matters raised in relation to wellbeing led to signposting and support to access the Health and Wellbeing offer, other specialist services including, Human Resources, Occupational Health service, AMICA and Staffside representatives.

### **Examples of Learning**

DMH – matters raised in relation to potential lack of consistency for patients during case load management and potential impact on the expectations and experience of the service and universal interventions available. This matter was reported immediately through the escalation process and individual circumstances reviewed including fact finding exercise. The information was then taken forward and advice and support given to the relevant team to ensure there was consistency in relation to interventions available to service users and how to escalate exceptions to protect both patient care and worker safety.

DMH – Matters were raised confidentially by a number of colleagues in relation to best practice recommendations, skill mix and understanding of roles and responsibilities. Due to the number of individual contacts the matter was reported through the FTSU escalation process, and the circumstances and context of the concerns were reviewed with some early fact finding and increased senior leadership visibility within the service area. The information was taken forward which led to broad engagement and discussions relating to understanding individual concerns, professional respect, building team cohesion and joint training opportunities across the skill mix to ensure best practice is maintained.

FYPC – matters raised in relation to administrative workers roles and responsibilities in the service user experience. This matter was immediately reviewed, with specific reference to skill mix, knowledge and skills

and training. The information was then used to identify appropriate expectations and responsibilities within the individual roles providing support and clarity to the wider team members.

## **Part 2 - FTSU Guardian Activity - *Creating a Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up Culture.***

FTSUG's have taken steps to increase their visibility across the organisation in recent months for example

- Face to face attendance at Corporate induction sessions paying particular attention to new and inexperienced starters, returners, bank staff and aspirant nurses.
- Bespoke sessions for International Nurses, Medical Trainees, Student Nurses, Preceptors & HCSWs.
- Staff support groups – attend each group for part of session time in particular during October Speak Up month to discuss breaking barriers.
- Linking with OD, Staff Engagement Lead and HR to support learning from National Staff Survey and Local OFOW programme.
- Linking with OD and Health and Wellbeing Lead to support response to National People Plan including joint visits on all Health and Wellbeing Roadshows, supporting Stay conversations and Exit interviews as required.
- 'Here for You' drop-in events in collaboration with Chaplaincy Service.
- Drop-in sessions across DMH and FYPC to support action plans (BMHU, Willows and Mill Lodge, Beacon Unit, Agnes Unit. Melton, St. Lukes, Oakham and Hinckley Hospital).
- Bespoke engagement events on various wards and inpatient areas.
- [Speak Up, Listen Up, and Follow Up](#) training modules are available on the uLearn platform.

### **Further planned actions for collaboration and awareness raising**

- FTSU Guardian to continue to triangulate information with key stakeholders Including Surveillance Leads, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), Patient Experience, Patient Safety, and workforce metrics to establish common themes.
- FTSU Guardian to work with the EDI Lead, Organisational Development Lead, Health and Wellbeing Lead, People Promise manager and Communications lead to support staff engagement, wellbeing and culture.
- Continue to work closely with the OD team as key stakeholders in all four priorities of the "Our Future, Our Way" culture, work supporting change leaders and the wider organisation.
- To work with wider system partners to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to the Freedom to Speak Up agenda across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland(LLR) and Integrated Care Board (ICB) LLR and the wider system.

**Policy** - The Freedom to Speak Up: Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up policy (including – guidance on responding to experiences of disadvantageous or demeaning treatment as a result of speaking up) was published in November 2023 in line with expectations of NHS-E that local policy will be aligned with the updated template by end of Jan 2024.

**Internal Independent Audit – 360 assurance** – report was published in October 2023 and all actions are included within the FTSU Action Log.

**Training** – there is a very low uptake of the Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up training modules as highlighted in internal independent audit report. This is being targeted through comprehensive comm's plan for Q4 2023-2024 and throughout 2024-2025. In addition, Speak Up and Listen Up training is to be highlighted as a role essential component of the line managers pathway.

## **National Guardian Office (NGO) updates:**

**National Guardians Office Annual Report** - In November 2023 the Annual Report of the National Guardian for the NHS was laid before Parliament, highlighting the work of FTSUG's and the National Guardians Office. The report also shares learning which indicates that more work is needed for speaking up to be described as business as usual in the healthcare sector in England. The report features case studies from across England, illustrating the difference Freedom to Speak Up guardians are making and examples of how healthcare workers are being supported to speak up for patient safety and worker wellbeing. <https://nationalguardian.org.uk/2023/11/16/annual-report-laid-before-parliament/>

**Speak Up Month – October 2023 – Breaking Barriers** - Dr Jayne Chidgey Clarke – National Freedom to Speak Up Guardian presented a Leadership Masterclass as part of the local celebration Speak Up month. This provided an opportunity to publicise speaking up across the organisation and engage with OD work stream. The session included specific reference to the main barriers to speaking up (fear and futility) as highlighted in the 2022 National Staff Survey. Breaking barriers remains a key theme underpinning the future work of the FTSUG's

### **Part 3 - Recommendations**

Given the challenges that Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust faces, fostering a healthy culture of speaking up, listening up, and following up has become increasingly key, despite the progress made in all areas. The Board is asked to:

- Confirm assurance that issues of concern are being raised and dealt with in line with the Freedom to Speak Up: Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up policy and that the Board is aware of themes and trends emerging in the organisation.
- Confirm assurance that the FTSUG is proactively supporting LPT to develop an open and transparent culture where staff are actively encouraged and enabled to speak up.
- Note the work undertaken to ensure staff are aware of how to raise concerns.
- Confirm they are assured that the Trust has an escalation process in place for staff to safely raise concerns and as a consequence ensure action is taken on any themes emerging or areas of concern with feedback provided to those raising the concerns.

*Presenting Director: Angela Hillery*

*Author(s): Chris Moyo  
Pauline Lewitt*

*30/01/24*

## Governance table

<b>For Board and Board Committees:</b>	Trust Board	
<b>Paper sponsored by:</b>	Angela Hillery, CEO	
<b>Paper authored by:</b>	Pauline Lewitt and Chris Moyo: Freedom to Speak Up Guardian(s)	
<b>Date submitted:</b>	22/01/24	
<b>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):</b>	N/A	
<b>If considered elsewhere, state the level of assurance gained by the Board Committee or other forum i.e. assured/ partially assured / not assured:</b>	N/A	
<b>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</b>	6 Monthly	
<b>STEP up to GREAT strategic alignment*:</b>	High Standards	Yes
	Transformation	
	Environments	
	Patient Experience & Involvement	
	Well Governed	
	Reaching Out	
	Equality, Leadership, Culture	Yes
	Access to Services	
	Trustwide Quality Improvement	Yes
<b>Organisational Risk Register considerations:</b>	List risk number and title of risk	N/A
<b>Is the decision required consistent with LPT's risk appetite:</b>	N/A	
<b>False and misleading information (FOMI) considerations:</b>	None	
<b>Positive confirmation that the content does not risk the safety of patients or the public</b>	Confirmed	
<b>Equality considerations:</b>	None	