



Freedom to Speak Up

Vision and Strategy 2018/19

Purpose

The concept of Freedom to Speak Up was derived from a review undertaken by Sir Robert Francis, which concluded in February 2015. The aim of the review was to assess the processes, mechanisms and cultures in place regarding speaking up across the NHS. As a result of the variations found, the review recommended the implementation of a model of 'Freedom to Speak Up Guardians' across the NHS. The aim of Freedom to Speak Up is to ensure a consistent approach across the NHS and ensure that staff are encouraged and supported to raise concerns, free from detriment.

This strategy sets out our vision for speaking up and demonstrates our commitment to making it safe for our staff to raise concerns and always keeping the patient at the centre of everything we do.

The Freedom to Speak Up vision and strategy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Freedom to Speak Up: Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy. The policy can be found on QPulse, reference number EXT-CE-DOC-1.

Our mission, vision and values

Our mission is to provide safe, effective and responsive care for all.

Our vision is to provide an unmatched quality of care every time we touch lives.

Bringing our values to life
Our Behaviours

MAKE A
DIFFERENCE
DAY IN DAY
OUT

TAKE
RESPONSIBILITY AND
BE ACCOUNTABLE

STRIVE FOR
EXCELLENCE AND
INNOVATION

RESPECT

COMPASSION

PRIDE

Our values are directly linked to the ethos of Freedom to Speak Up – creating a culture of continuous improvement, delivering high quality care and services for patients and making NEAS a great place to work for our staff.

Every directorate was involved in the creation of 'our behaviours' which provide greater meaning around our values and how they are lived every day. Staff wanted the behaviours to have real meaning, and that's what we, together, achieved. Staff wished to show what each value meant to them, their colleagues and patients and to demonstrate how these behaviours are displayed every day and brings the NEAS values to life in all parts of the organisation.

Current context / intelligence

The staff survey provides an important indication on whether staff know how to raise concerns, feel able to do so and feel that concerns are taken seriously. It is noted that this is not a perfect indicator for Freedom to Speak Up as the staff survey questions specifically refer to clinical concerns only and could include raising concerns through incident reporting as well as Freedom to Speak Up.

The 2017 results indicate that most staff (94% of respondents) know how to report unsafe clinical practice, in line with the average for ambulance trusts. The results in respect of feeling secure in raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice and feeling confident that the organisation would address the concerns are above the average and show a slight improvement from 2016. At 68% and 58% respectively, there is still significant scope to improve in this area.

| | | 2017 | Average for ambulance trusts | 2016 | 2015 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|------|
| Q13a | Percentage of staff saying if they were concerned about unsafe clinical practice they would know how to report it | 94 | 94 | 94 | 89 |
| Percentage of staff agreeing / strongly agreeing with the following statements: | | | | | |
| Q13b | I would feel secure raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice | 68 | 62 | 67 | 62 |
| Q13c | I am confident that the organisation would address my concern | 58 | 50 | 56 | 44 |

Our vision

We are committed to promoting an open and transparent culture across the organisation to ensure that all members of staff feel safe and confident to speak up.

We know it's important that staff feel safe to report things and that, when they do speak up, they know they will be treated fairly rather than fearing blame. In addition, being open and honest about mistakes means that we can learn valuable lessons so that the same errors are not repeated.

Our Board and senior management team will support this agenda by:

- Modelling the behaviours to promote a positive culture in the Trust. This includes acknowledging mistakes and making improvements;
- Providing the resources required to deliver an effective Freedom to Speak Up function, including working in partnership with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian;
- Having oversight to ensure that the policy and procedures are being effectively implemented; and
- Being proactive in developing ideas and initiatives to support speaking up.

Our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and Champions have a key role in:

- Helping to raise the profile of raising concerns in our organisation and fostering a positive culture of speaking up;
- Acting as a key point of contact for staff raising concerns;
- Being the vital link between the staff raising concerns and the investigating officers; and
- Promoting learning and improvement resulting from staff speaking up.

Our vision is to ensure that raising concerns becomes business as usual within the Trust, with staff feeling able to raise concerns routinely with their line managers and being confident that concerns will be addressed appropriately. This forms part of the broader ongoing cultural development of the Trust, alongside a number of other initiatives.

Our strategy

In order to deliver this vision we will:

- Ensure that all staff receive Freedom to Speak Up training so that they are clear about what concerns they can raise and how to raise them;
- Ensure managers are clear about their roles and responsibilities when handling concerns and are supported to do so effectively;
- Raise the profile of Freedom to Speak Up via the Trust's electronic and printed communication channels;
- Raise the profile of Freedom to Speak Up through face-to-face communications with staff;
- Communicate key findings to staff and the Board about the level and type of concerns raised and any resultant actions taken, being mindful not to breach the confidentiality of staff who have raised concerns;
- Share good practice and learning from concerns raised with the Board and staff;
- Actively seek the opinion of staff to assess whether they are aware of and are confident in using Freedom to Speak Up processes. Utilise this feedback to enhance Freedom to Speak Up within the Trust.



Outcomes and measures to be undertaken by 31 March 2019

1. Staff and manager Freedom to Speak Up modules are included in the 2018/19 statutory and mandatory training programme to ensure that all staff receive training appropriate to their role. The year-end compliance statistics will measure whether this training has been received by all staff.

2. Increased profile of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, Executive and Non-Executive Leads through direct contact with staff across the organisation. The profile of the Guardian will be measured through discussions with staff as part of the Quality Walkround process.
3. Increased number of Champions are recruited to ensure that there are clear Freedom to Speak Up escalation channels across all services and main geographies of the Trust. This will be measured by mapping the number and location of champions in place at the year end.
4. Quarterly Freedom to Speak Up updates will be included in communications material. This should include key learnings from issues raised. This will increase the reach of Freedom to Speak Up and aim to provide staff with confidence in the process. This will also be discussed as part of the Quality Walkround process.
5. Evidence that investigations are evidence-based and led by someone suitably independent in the organisation, producing a report which focuses on learning lessons and improving patient care / staff welfare. This will be measured through the Freedom to Speak Up leads within the organisation reviewing the quality of the investigation reports (anonymised where required).
6. Improvements in the percentages for the following staff survey questions (noting that Freedom to Speak Up is not the only influencing factor behind these results:
 - i. Percentage of staff saying if they were concerned about unsafe clinical practice they would know how to report it
 - ii. I would feel secure raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice
 - iii. I am confident that the organisation would address my concern.

Monitoring

The Board will be appraised of Freedom to Speak Up activity twice a year, with updates provided at every Workforce Committee meeting. This will be built in to the cycles of business, with the Board and Workforce Committee requested to provide the Guardian with feedback on the quality and content of the reports.

The reports will include:

- An overview of the cases reported and the themes identified.
- Evidence that data has been triangulated with other key cultural, workforce and quality metrics within the Trust.
- Benchmarking data to show how the Trust compares with other trusts in the sector and nationally.
- An overview of how the strategic outcomes are being achieved, including any risks in respect of achievement by the 31 March 2019.

In addition, reports produced by the National Guardian's Office will be shared with the Workforce Committee and / or Board as appropriate.

For Life