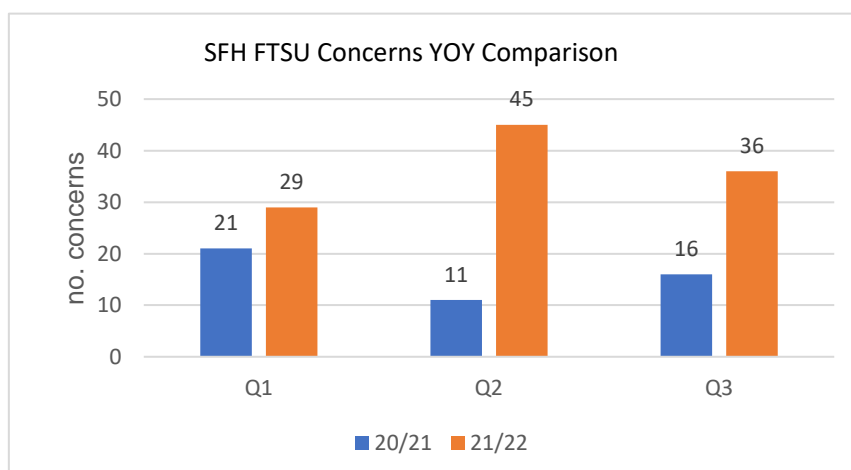


Overview

The number of SFH colleagues raising concerns through FTSU continues to increase. Q3 cases = 36. Year on year comparisons show progress in numbers of workers raising concerns



Q4 21/22 seeing a flux of speaking up within first 3 weeks of January 2022 – 16 to date. Common features in these recent concerns are the emotional impacts of work experiences. Themes are involving mandatory vaccines, concerns around quality and safety in current pressures and the impact of persistently working in this prolonged state of flux

Out of the Q3 36 concerns that were raised, 21 were escalated openly, 12 were escalated confidentially (known to FTSUG only) and there were 3 anonymous concerns. This continues to show increasing trust in escalating concerns openly to those in a position to support and follow up the concerns

All Divisions are represented in using FTSU, with Surgery Division showing presence now in speaking up cases. There are 4 FTSU Champions now in Surgery and this may have contributed to the increase as several of the concerns were raised through the Champions. This is a positive reinforcement of the value of FTSU Champions in grassroots speaking up

There has been an increase in colleagues from an ethnic minority background in using FTSU in the past 2 quarters.

Medical FTSU Speaking Up

It is important to acknowledge that there have been increased number of concerns raised by medical colleagues in this quarter and is significant progress

There has been a focus on improving FTSU visibility within the medical workforce. The FTSUG and FTSU Medical Champion have been working together on improving visibility and encouraging colleagues to speak up. This has led to collaboration with the Medical Director, Director of Medical Education, Guardian for Safe Working and the Medical Education Team to highlight FTSU and the importance of Speak Up, using several forums, induction and medical managers meetings with FTSU presence

Having a medical FTSU Champion has generated informal speaking up and signposting conversations amongst medical colleagues and from this support at grassroots level has supported concern raisers coming forward to the formal FTSU process

Themes from Q3

Bullying & Harassment

This theme continues to raise significant concerns. To break this down into subgroups –

Bullying from a peer

Bullying from line manager

Sexual Harassment

Attitudes and Behaviours

-Misogynistic behaviours

-Homophobic behaviours

Leadership Style & Behaviours

Remains a significant theme in the concerns.

- Poor response to raising concerns locally
- Communication poor to workers
- Visibility of line managers – no walk rounds, check ins, touch points
- Incivility in teams not addressed
- Incivility in response from line manager/ senior leader
- CARE values not demonstrated
- Slipping professional standards
- Favouritism, nepotism – social relationships prevent action and speaking up apathy

Mandatory Vaccine Policy

FTSU has been used as a route to seek support on this issue. To respond and support this trend, the Deputy Chief Nurse, Head of Operational HR and the FTSUG have established direct route of support and 1-1 s for colleagues, to offer immediate wellbeing support and supportive conversations. Despite fear from colleagues this has been welcomed as a positive offer.

Patient, People Safety & Quality

There has been an increase in concerns around safety and quality. Examples are concerns about patient care, colleagues unable to provide the level of care required, fear of errors and repercussions, work environments, mask wearing compliance by public and emotional impacts of colleague's work experience. Staffing numbers and pressure of covering rotas contributing to quality of care given and the decreasing emotional resilience in workers in the workplace

FTSU Champions and Stage 1 Data Intelligence Themes

The Trust now has 21 FTSU Champions trained and active around the organisation with 2 based at Newark. The Champions represent diversity in role and personal characteristics and have been actively used by colleagues. Pleasingly the role has generated interest in other colleagues and the next cohort of Champion training is planned for March 2022

The FTSUG has introduced collection of data regarding informal discussions from colleagues with our FTSU Champions. Previously this data was only forwarded to the FTSUG if the concern raiser wanted to progress a concern. The Champions will now forward a summary of all conversations anonymously to the FTSUG even if the person doesn't wish to progress further

This has given information and an understanding of what concerns colleagues have, the barriers on raising this further and understanding of issues that would not have made it through to an official concern. Themes are emerging from this soft intelligence-

- Fear in our international colleagues from speaking up and prefer to have these informal discussions regarding their experience.
- Medical colleagues fear reprisal of speaking up but some are experiencing negative female bias and poor senior behaviours

FTSU Growth and Learning for Improvement

Growth

- FTSUG and Champions working together with EM Staff Network to raise awareness of speak up
- October Speak Up Month promoted activities for wards / teams to promote local speaking up and FTSU, with Best Board competition. The FTSUG went on tour and there was a good uptake of engagement and invites to visit teams
- FTSUG now has in person presence at all Trust Orientation days
- Medical FTSU triangulation progress with medical management and through a medical FTSU concern, as well as a personal resolution for the concern raiser, a reporting tool for concerns medical trainees use was found to have crucial feedback functionality issues which now the DME team are sighted to
- Due to increase in FTSUG hours – there is now proactive FTSU presence at the Trusts leadership development programmes providing training and FTSU feedback with our future leaders
- Review of managers training / offers using FTSUG working with Improvement Team
- Proactive joined up working with OD teams on delivering sessions to teams in need of support with cultural concerns. Targeted FTSU support in sessions for teams
- FTSU Champions proactive ideas to encourage speak up – holding sessions for teams within their area, speak up surgeries.

- Champion's information intelligence reporting – able to hear what people don't want to speak up about

National Lessons Learnt

National Guardians Office Publication - [NGO - Learning from Case Reviews Dec 2021](#)

The NGO have released a toolkit and supporting guidance, having collated summary learning from all recent case reviews by the NGO. The recommendation is for each provider to undertake gap analysis of the recommendations. The SFH FTSUG and FTSU Executive will prioritise this piece of work

West Suffolk Review NHS England

In December 2021 a review into West Suffolk NHS Trust was published. This review was commissioned following reported events by staff to NHSIE about the response from executive leaders to employees, arising from an anonymous letter about unsafe care sent to a patient's family.

The focus of the review was the response to speaking up about concerns raised by staff to the executive team and the detriment to those that spoke up. This led to the Trust being downgraded in the CQC Well Led domain from outstanding to requires improvement.

The main recommendations for all organisations –

- Not to differentiate between the different ways workers speak up. Where workers raise concerns but do not specifically cite FTSU, the concerns should be treated in the spirit of the FTSU Policy and be treated with the same principles of speak up – such as impartiality, respect, without judgement and without detriment
- All NHS organisations are aware of and implemented the May 2018 Guidance for NHS Boards. [CQC FTSU Guidance May 2018](#) . This requires them where concerns are raised involving actions of members of the Board to inform the Trusts NEDs and FTSUG. This supports impartiality, aids in record keeping and reporting to NHSEI and the CQC.

Recommendations for SFH –

- 1. Develop an action for when Board members are implicated in concerns that the FTSU Executive and Senior Independent Director for FTSU are informed**
- 2. Review of the SFH Speak Up Policy to reflect the above – FTSUG to review policy**

The SFH Board are asked to receive assurance from the report regarding the Freedom to Speak up agenda and agree the above recommendations