

Board of Directors Meeting in Public – 1 August 2019

Freedom to speak up

Purpose

This paper is a six monthly report to inform the Board of Speaking Up cases within the Trust, analyse themes of concerns within the organisation and actions being taken.

This paper contains details of the newly appointed Freedom to Speak Up Guardian; plans to develop the Speaking Up culture across the Trust and a breakdown of concerns raised through the Guardian during Quarter 1 2019-20.

Background

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian at the Trust is Jessica Woodward who was appointed on a 0.4WTE basis, part way through this quarter. The initial objectives of the Guardian are to: raise the profile of Freedom to Speak Up and the Guardian role across the trust; recruit Freedom to Speak Up Champions whilst ensuring that these roles meet the diverse needs of the trust; develop a consistent approach to recording concerns, data, themes and feedback which could begin to inform improvement and widen ways of reporting thus creating more opportunities to raise concerns.

Raising the profile

The Guardian and communications team have produced posters, banners, screensavers and other e-communication announcements to promote the role, including a #twitter campaign, bulletin article and guest speaker edition of the CEO blog. The Guardian has also been meeting with divisional heads, leaders and individual teams to promote the role and build rapport. The Guardian now has a face to face presence at Orientation days and has begun to deliver team leader training sessions. There are also plans to have a presence at Leaders Induction training. Public and inward facing platforms such as the website, intranet, phonebook, A-Z guide and 'Quicklinks' are all now operational and up to date to ensure support can be accessed quickly.

Champions

Currently the Trust has one Champion who works alongside the Guardian to promote Freedom to Speak Up and signpost staff to relevant departments or support agencies within the Trust. This is set to increase in September and promotion has already begun through communications and face to face opportunities. To ensure equality and promote diversity, the Guardian will proactively recruit Champions from vulnerable groups within the Trust to ensure that everyone has equal and fair access to raise concerns. A reporting and recording structure has also been developed to ensure consistency and support for Champions.

Recording data and ways of reporting

Confidentiality is of key importance and a new way of recording data which is protected and monitored only by the Guardian has been developed. Champions will not have access to any other concerns, other than ones raised to them. Champions will instead use a 'stage 1' form to record and refer any concerns raised to them, this will then be collated centrally by the Guardian to allow for National data reporting and analysis of themes.

The central Freedom to Speak Up email is no longer being used and instead the Guardian can be contacted directly to her personal email address. There is now also a mobile phone which can be used for text communication and to respond to concerns outside of the office.

Assessment

Concerns

The first table contains comparative information of concerns raised over the last 5 quarters: the last quarter being the present quarter.

Quarter	Number of concerns raised
Q1: 2018-19	7
Q2: 2018-19	3
Q3: 2018-19	2
Q4: 2018-19	4
Q1: 2019-20 (present)	11

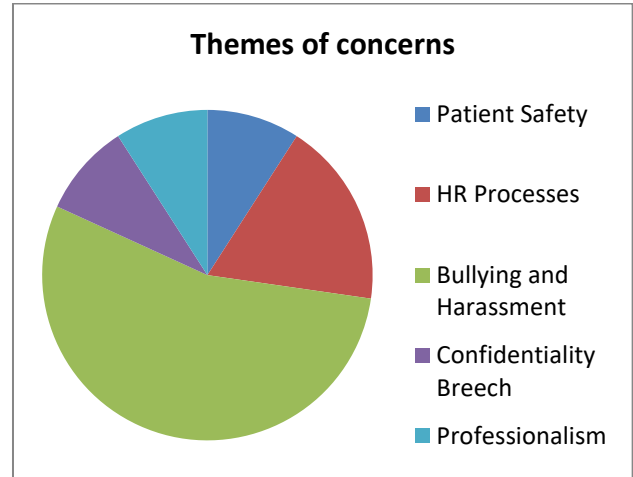
The number of concerns raised in the most recent quarter has risen by 175% since the last quarter, supporting the effectiveness of the new Guardian role within Trust. This is the highest number of concerns raised in the last year and demonstrates that through raising the profile of the Guardian role, more concerns will be raised, which could potentially lead to improvement across the Trust as concerns are addressed.

Themes

Below is a table of concerns raised in quarter 1 categorised by theme, how the concern was raised and whether the concern is still being investigated (open or closed). This is supported by a chart highlighting the themes of concerns.

The most prevalent theme occurring is 'bullying and harassment'. This makes up over half of all concerns raised in this quarter. The situations in which these concerns are raised are different and individual to the circumstances in each case but it is worth noting that the term 'bullying' is defined by perception, in that if the person raising the concern perceives the actions as bullying, then it must be recorded as such to the National Guardian's Office. If one unpicks the data further, half of the concerns raised also had elements of favouritism within teams.

Q1 (April-June 2019)		
Concerns		11
Theme	<i>Patient Safety</i>	1
	<i>HR Processes</i>	2
	<i>Bullying and Harassment</i>	6
	<i>Confidentiality Breach</i>	1
	<i>Professionalism</i>	1
Raised	Openly	3
	Confidentially	7
	Anonymously	1
Status	Open	1
	Closed	10



The majority of concerns raised were raised confidentially with only three wishing to do so openly. This may be an indication of the worry attached to speaking up and the consequences that may follow. However, only one concern was raised anonymously which supports the view that the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role is building trust within the organisation.

Proposal

NHS Improvement self-review tool

In September 2018 the Board was presented with a completed *Freedom to Speak Up Self-Review Tool*, which highlighted the expectations of the Board and Board members with regards to Freedom to Speak Up. The self-review highlighted key areas for development which will continue to inform the Guardian's objectives at the Trust.

The table below demonstrates progress against the action thus far and proposed progress by the Guardian over the coming months.

Development area (Sept 2018)	Progress / Proposal (July 2019)
Consideration of the model for the FTSU Guardians, currently this is on a voluntary basis across 4 guardians.	The Guardian role is now undertaken by Jessica Woodward which is a substantive role and her only position within the Trust.
The current guardians do not reflect the diversity of the organisation.	There are plans to positively recruit Champions across the Trust which will represent a wider diverse population of the Trust. Thus enabling vulnerable groups to have greater access and support in speaking up.
There is a requirement for a FTSU strategy which aligns with the Trusts vision, values and strategic objectives	This is in development with the Guardian and Executive Lead for Freedom to Speak Up.
More focus is required on understanding the barriers to speaking up in the organisation	The Guardian will be involved in training and workshop sessions which will discuss these issues. Drop-in sessions and listening events

	will also be promoted. Further analysis of the staff survey and how this can support changes in the Speaking Up culture at the Trust will also be explored.
There should be a more formal approach to auditing of FTSU concerns and process	There is now a formal approach to recording and storing data. All concerns are directed through the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, who will hold these centrally.
A review of case studies from within and external to the organisation to be reported to the board 6 monthly by the FTSU guardians.	The Guardian will present case studies every 6 months as part of the Board meetings. Learning opportunities will be presented from each and considered alongside the Trust's current ways of working.

Recommendation

Determine whether this report sufficiently assures the board of the Freedom to Speak Up agenda at the Trust and that the proposals made by the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian promote a culture of open and honest communication to support staff to speak up.