

Board of Directors Meeting in Public

Subject:	Freedom To Speak Up		Date:	3 rd April 2025		
Prepared By:	Kerry Bosworth – Freedom to Speak Up Guardian					
Approved By:	Sally Brook Shanahan – Director of Corporate Affairs					
Presented By:	Kerry Bosworth - Freedom To Speak Up Guardian					
Purpose						
The purpose of this paper is to provide the 2024/2025 speaking up data, provide assurance about the ongoing management of concerns raised and to inform of the implementation of a new process and database to support the management of concerns and the learning from them.				Approval		
				Assurance	x	
				Update	x	
				Consider		
Strategic Objectives						
Provide outstanding care in the best place at the right time	Empower and support our people to be the best they can be	Improve health and wellbeing within our communities	Continuously learn and improve	Sustainable use of resources and estates	Work collaboratively with partners in the community	
x	x		x			
Principal Risk						
PR1	Significant deterioration in standards of safety and care					x
PR2	Demand that overwhelms capacity					
PR3	Critical shortage of workforce capacity and capability					
PR4	Insufficient financial resources available to support the delivery of services					
PR5	Inability to initiate and implement evidence-based Improvement and innovation					
PR6	Working more closely with local health and care partners does not fully deliver the required benefits					
PR7	Major disruptive incident					
PR8	Failure to deliver sustainable reductions in the Trust’s impact on climate change					
Committees/groups where this item has been presented before						
Most recently, People Committee on 25 th March 2025						
Acronyms						
FTSUG – Freedom To Speak Up Guardian NGO – National Guardians Office OD – Organisational Development EDI – Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity AHP – Allied Healthcare Professional SFH – Sherwood Forest Hospitals EM – Ethnic Minority U&EC – Urgent & Emergency Care CSTO – Clinical Services, Therapies, Outpatients W&C - Women and Children OH – Occupational Health move YTD – Year To Date WAND - ‘We’re Able aNd Disabled’ LGBTQ+ -Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning NSS – National Staff Survey						

Executive Summary

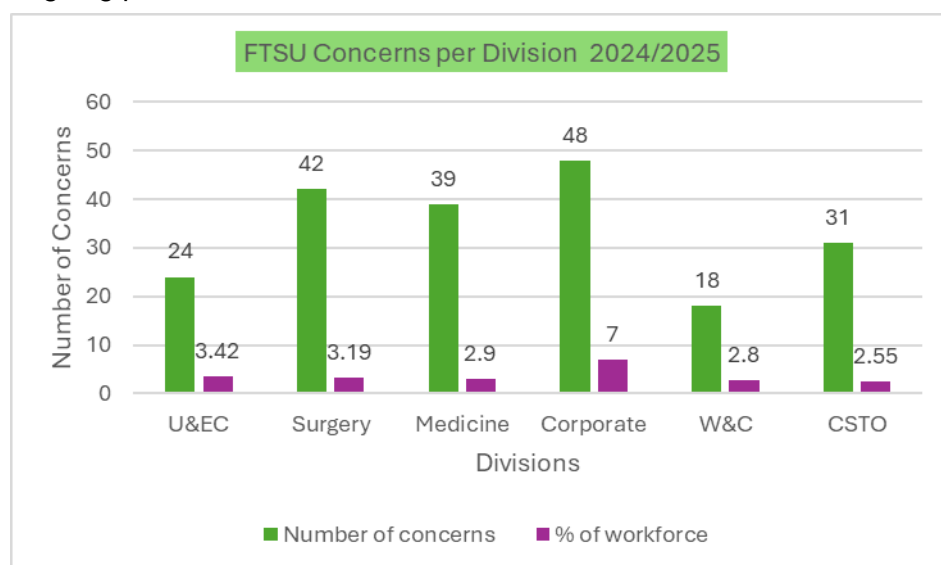
This report provides a review of speaking up cases for 2024/2025 YTD.

During 2024/2025 YTD there were **202** concerns raised with the FTSU Guardian. The previous year 2023/2024, there were **152** concerns raised. This represents an increase of 33% from previous year.

Out of the 202 concerns raised, 148 were raised openly, 48 were raised confidentially (known to FTSUG only) and there were 6 anonymous concerns.

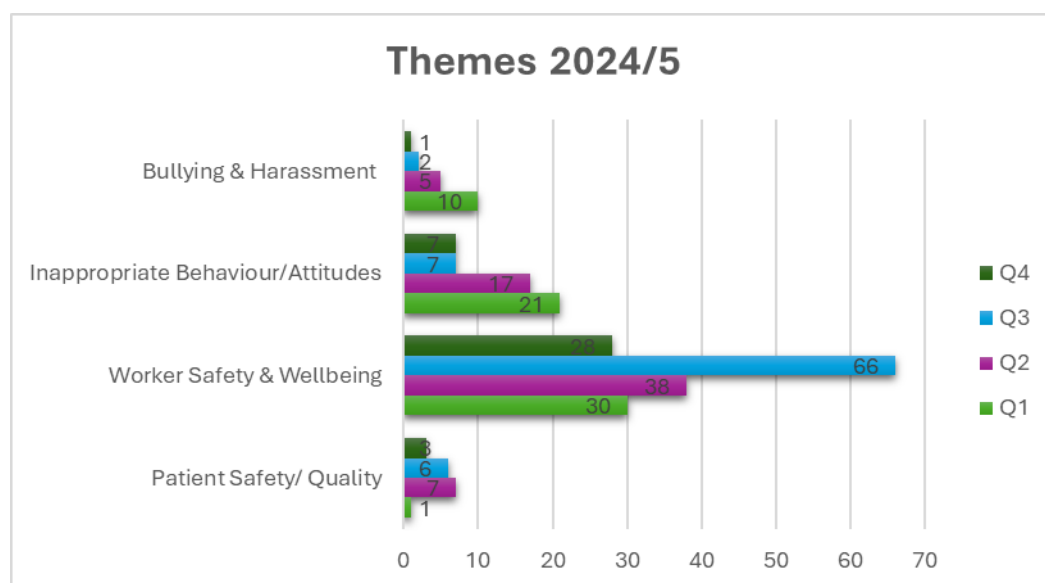
The majority of concerns are escalated openly and this suggests workers using FTSU are searching for a resolution to their concerns and to allow escalation to those in a position to support and follow up FTSU concerns. This also suggests that workers feel psychologically safe to progress through the FTSUG and shows increasing confidence in trust within the process.

Currently from 2024/25 Quarters 2 & 3 there are 24 and Quarter 4 there are 26 concerns that remain open, which means they are awaiting feedback to the FTSUG or awaiting feedback to the concern raiser or are in ongoing processes.



Corporate Division are raising the most concerns per percentage of workforce.

Themes



Worker Safety & Wellbeing is SFH's largest reported category of concerns. Patient Safety & Quality is the least reported category of concerns. Comparing this with the national data for 2023/24, this is in line with the national picture of what workers choose to report through FTSU.

Concerns raised in this category are frequently involving impacts on staff regarding poor relationships at work, leadership failures to resolve concerns, processes impacting colleagues and conflict with line managers. Many workers have their health significantly impacted from these type of concerns – some coming to FTSUG when on work related stress and anxiety sick leave, directed from OH or when they have taken the decision to resign. These concerns often are raised informally and outside formal HR processes.

Actions taken include:

Triangulation of themes and areas of concern are shared regularly with the Wellbeing Team, OD Team, EDI Team and OH, via 1-1s or monthly intelligence sharing catch ups. This is to support a joined-up approach to concerns and support colleagues who may not want to take formal steps with concerns but to ensure support and guidance is available. Signposting individuals to OD has enabled individual access to coaching and mediation in circumstances where colleagues couldn't take a formal path. This a positive resolution for those who feel unable to take speaking up further, through fear or futility but can develop themselves and gain new skills in building resilience and potentially in the future feel they can speak up.

Active workstreams continue involving SFH Sexual Safety.

NSS 2024

SFH remains above the national average in the speak up questions in the NSS 2024.

At SFH there is a growing gap between confidence in raising concerns and being confident that concerns will be followed up and resolutions happen.

FTSU Governance and Assurance

Since FTSU was last presented to the SFH Board meeting, the 360 Assurance audit for FTSU has been presented to the trust and progress continues with the five actions in within the report. Their themes are:

- Frequency of reporting – 1 Low recommendation – **Completed Jan 25**
- Improvement of awareness of Trust wide Staff training - 1 Medium recommendation- **Completed Jan 25**
- Training for FTSU Champions- 1 Low recommendation
- Investigation timescales - 1 Low recommendation
- Checking of data returns to the National Guardian's Office - 1 Low recommendation – **Completed Jan 25**

FTSU Governance and Developments

To support managers in their responsibilities in handling concerns and to ensure timely progression a FTSU Process and Timescale Guidance has been drafted and being consulted on. In summary, the Guidance is designed to assist both colleagues who are speaking up and line managers/receiving managers who are required to respond to concerns, to be clear about their responsibilities and to promote a culture of timeliness in handling and resolving concerns. The Guidance is intended to be read in conjunction with the Speaking Up Policy with the timescale for FTSU concerns – guidance for managers – being the significant new feature of it. This guidance is being consulted on and will seek ratification through JSPF.

Currently in development stage is a new digital FTSU database, in collaboration with NHIS, to design a more efficient, accurate and real time dashboard for FTSU concerns . This will replace the outdated Excel FTSU database and allow improved function of data collection and case management system for FTSU cases. It is predicted that by the end of April this will go live.

FTSU Operational Meeting

From April 2025 – a new FTSU operational meeting is to be convened. Alongside the Director of People, the FTSUG and the Director of Corporate Affairs , critical personnel from the divisions and as necessary, the Director of Nursing Quality & Governance will meet regularly to discuss FTSU concerns to ensure they are managed appropriately and timely feedback and learning is embedded.

The above 3 initiatives will support actions from recent audit feedback, regarding timeliness, learning and improving the experience of speaking up at SFH.

FTSU Feedback

Feedback from those who use FTSU remains positive. There is however evidence in feedback in some cases , that the concern raisers feel nothing is changed and that although grateful to having the FTSUG listen and support escalation, that their concern felt futile and prejudged the outcome.

Workers value the FTSUG time and space provided to share, some as they plan to leave the organisation and from this the FTSUG has been able to directly link them to the new exit interview workstream to collect that feedback for improvement.