

The Freedom To Speak Up Guardian (FTSUG) has reviewed the 5 urgent actions requested by NHSE in response to the Lucy Letby verdict from the perspective of the current Freedom To Speak up agenda at SFH.

### **1. All staff have easy access to information on how to speak up**

The revised SFH Speaking Up Policy was ratified in June 2023 and this policy is accessible for all via our People Policies / Guidance Intranet site. The SFH Speaking Up policy has adopted the mandated national policy ahead of the Jan 2024 deadline. Using the national policy wording ensures consistency, simplicity and a unified approach to speaking up.

There is a dedicated FTSU page on the Trust Intranet site with information and link to the policy.

The CEO weekly blog has signposting to the FTSUG and Champions for support in speaking up.

The FTSUG presents speaking up information at each Trust Induction. There are 30 FTSU Champions supporting visibility of speaking up across all sites.

### **2. Relevant departments such as HR and FTSU are aware of the National Speaking Up Support Scheme and actively refer individuals to the scheme**

The FTSUG is aware of the scheme. Currently the National Speaking Up Support Scheme has limited resource and applications must fall in the annual application window with limited spaces. The regional FTSU Guardian team have asked for an update from the NGO on these points. Due to the limited resource currently if referrals aren't accepted onto the scheme there currently isn't a process to support an individual further.

### **3. Approaches / Mechanisms put in place to support staff who may have cultural barriers to speaking up or in lower paid roles and may be less confident to do so, those working unsociable hours who may not always have access or aware of policies. Methods for communicating with staff to build healthy and supporting cultures where everyone feels safe to speak up put in place**

The FTSUG supports all SFH Staff Networks and has regular engagement with the Staff Network Leads to promote speaking up and support for colleagues with protected characteristics, who may have additional barriers in speaking up. The FTSUG is now actively supporting the induction of the International Educated Nurse ( IEN) cohorts and presents sessions on speaking up to nurses in preceptorship.

There are FTSU Champions in roles supporting our ethnic minority colleagues and our IEN colleagues to give extra visibility. The FTSUG meets regularly with the EDI Lead and signposts colleagues as required.

October is Speak Up Month and there is to be a focus on speaking up out of hours and encouraging colleagues to have a say who work out of hours or invite the FTSUG to visit. This will be extended to colleagues employed on the SFH Bank.

In 2022 NHSE in conjunction with the NGO, launched Speak Up , Listen Up and Follow up online training, with a strong recommendation that all colleagues undertake Speak Up training, all line managers undertake Listen Up training and all senior leaders undertake Follow Up training. This Freedom to Speak Up in Healthcare in England programme is designed to help workers understand their vital role in building a healthy speaking-up culture that protects patients and service users and enhances worker experience as well as ensuring leaders set the tone in creating healthy , supportive speak up cultures . Many NHS Trusts have mandated this training. Currently at SFH this training isn't mandated and is on our Sherwood E Academy as optionable but mandating speak up training would be a step in ensuring that all colleagues have information and empowerment on speaking up and also that all leaders have had some training in listening to concerns and setting the cultural tone in respect of this

#### **4. Boards seek reassurance that staff can speak up with confidence and whistleblowers are treated well**

The new Speak Up Policy now contains information and advice on detriment for speaking up following a case raised to the FTSU Executive in 2022, of a colleague feeling detriment for speaking up. An investigation led by the FTSU Senior Independent Director, concluded no evidence of detriment but from this it was recognised the policy didn't cover detriment and therefore now added.

The FTSUG encourages colleagues using FTSU to report any feelings of detriment from speaking up and this would be raised with the executive team. The FTSUG asks for feedback on process outcomes from those that speak up to ensure a positive experience.

#### **5. Boards are regularly reporting, reviewing and acting upon available data**

The FTSUG submits quarterly reports to the People, Culture & Improvement Committee and twice a year to the SFH Board on data, themes , trends and actions from speaking up.

The FTSUG meets regularly with the CEO, the Director of Corporate Affairs and the Director of People to triangulate themes and actions.

Freedom To Speak Up Review of action points from NHSE Letby Verdict Letter  
August 2023  
Kerry Bosworth FTSUG

In June 2022 the NHSE FTSU Reflection and Planning Tool was updated and launched, advising a self-review is undertaken 2 yearly against the tool by the Trust Board. A review had just been undertaken in April 2022 using the previous tool, therefore the review mapping is scheduled for April 2024 using the new document. However, in the light of this case, the SFH Board may like to consider bringing this forward to align with the original mandate for completion by January 2024.

Recommendations for consideration-

- Review position on mandated Speak Up, Listen Up and Follow Up training as a vehicle to ensure all colleagues have knowledge of speaking up and associated culture benefits, line managers are reminded how to listen to concerns and senior leaders encouraged to reflect on their style of leadership in following up concerns
- Consider NHSE FTSU Reflection and Planning Tool for NHS Trust Boards be brought forward to accurately benchmark current speak up arrangements at SFH in light of the Letby case.