



MEETING TITLE Trust Board Meeting		MEETING DATE 28/11/2017	
TITLE of PAPER		Freedom to Speak Up – 1 Year Review	PAPER REF 4.1
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE(S)		Develop and retain a highly skilled, engaged and motivated workforce Provide a safe and caring service which demonstrates an efficient use of resources	
PURPOSE OF THE PAPER		to provide the Trust Board with an overview of Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) activity since its launch in July 2016 and provide assurances that staff are engaging with the process.	
For Approval		<input type="checkbox"/>	For Assurance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion/Information <input type="checkbox"/>
AUTHOR / LEAD	Jock Crawford, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian	ACCOUNTABLE DIRECTOR	Steve Page, Executive Director, Quality Governance & Performance Assurance
DISCUSSED AT / INFORMED BY – N/A Quality Committee – 14 September 2017			
PREVIOUSLY AGREED AT:		Committee/Group: Not Applicable	Date: Click to enter date
RECOMMENDATION(S)		It is recommended that the Board: a) notes the issues handled via the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and developments in Trust operations; b) is assured with regard to the rigour of the processes in place	
RISK ASSESSMENT			Yes No
Corporate Risk Register and/or Board Assurance Framework amended <i>If 'Yes' – expand in Section 4. / attached paper</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resource Implications (Financial, Workforce, other - specify) <i>If 'Yes' – expand in Section 2. / attached paper</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal implications/Regulatory requirements <i>If 'Yes' – expand in Section 2. / attached paper</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diversity and Inclusion Implications <i>If 'Yes' – please attach to the back of this paper</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ASSURANCE/COMPLIANCE			
Care Quality Commission Choose a DOMAIN(s)		5: Well led 1: Safe	
NHSI Single Oversight Framework Choose a THEME(s)		6. Leadership & Improvement Capability (Well-Led)	

1. PURPOSE/AIM

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Trust Board with an overview of Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) activity since its launch in July 2016 and provide assurances that staff are engaging with the process.

2. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

- 2.1 “Freedom to Speak Up: An independent review into creating an open and honest reporting culture in the NHS” (Francis) was published in February 2015. The aim of the review was to provide advice and recommendations to ensure that NHS staff feel it is safe to raise concerns, confident that they will be listened to and the concerns will be acted upon.
- 2.2 Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust was quick to implement the recommendations set out in the Freedom to Speak Up Review resulting in the ‘Raising Concerns at Work’ policy being revised, amended and implemented in June 2016. The policy and accompanying Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was also retitled to reflect the recommended Freedom to Speak Up terminology and approach. The FTSU Guardian was seconded for two years in June 2016 and ten FTSU Advocates were appointed to support the Guardian in this role.
- 2.3 In the first twelve months sixty nine concerns were raised through the FTSU process although it should be noted that concerns which resulted in the individual being ‘signposted’ to an alternative person or process were only captured from December 2016 onwards.
- 2.4 While it was originally anticipated that the FTSU process would predominantly generate direct patient and staff safety concerns, in practice these categories are in the minority with concerns around staffing levels and bullying & harassment appearing most often. To a degree this activity is also being mirrored at a national level following data provided from the National Guardian’s Office (NGO) and from other ambulance trusts through the National Ambulance Network (NAN) for FTSU Guardians.
- 2.5 The majority of early concerns around staffing levels originated from the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). Staffing levels in EOC had already been identified as a risk to the trust at this time with much work already underway to predict and address current and future staffing issues. During the same period the implementation of new staff rotas and team structures may well also have contributed to EOC staff anxieties and the desire to formally raise concerns around staffing levels. The FTSU Guardian and EOC Advocate met regularly with EOC managers to discuss these concerns resulting in a joint communication being distributed in an attempt to reassure staff that their concerns had been recognised and work was underway to address their concerns. Although meetings between EOC and FTSU are now less frequent, an open and honest dialogue continues whenever necessary and the number of concerns originating from EOC has significantly reduced.

- 2.6 At the time of writing, thirty six concerns raised from a total of a total of eighty four contain an element of Bullying and Harassment (B&H), this equates to almost 42% of all concerns raised since YAS launched FTSU in July 2016. While no detailed analysis has yet been conducted to determine any themes or trends relating to these B&H concerns, anecdotal evidence would suggest that there is a gap in what is perceived to be true B&H and that which is strong performance management. Nevertheless, this misconception often appears to be exacerbated by an inappropriate and/or inconsistent management approach to the fundamental issue.
- 2.7 In July 2017 South East Coast Ambulance (SECamb) NHS Foundation Trust published an independent report into Bullying & Harassment within their trust. The report suggests that high workloads and procedures not being followed were two of the reasons why B&H may exist. The report continues to state *“between 30% and 60% of respondents indicate exposure to ‘Unreasonable Management’ behaviours”*. One of the recommendations from the report is to *“Enhance training, support and development of managers, but also make managers accountable”*. It is the belief of the FTSU Guardian that whilst specific issues and circumstances differ, there are some broad similarities to be found between the findings of the SECamb report and YAS and that a commitment to equip our managers, particularly those who are new to the role, with the necessary knowledge, training and support to undertake this role is vital. Learning from the SECamb report has been discussed in the Trust Executive Group and recommendations for action relevant to YAS agreed.
- 2.8 In July 2016 the trust elected to adopt a FTSU model which included ten FTSU advocates being appointed to represent their own functional areas of the trust and who would support their colleagues and the Guardian in championing FTSU. Advocate meetings have become less frequent due to a reduction in attendance and an increase in workload of the FTSU Guardian.
- 2.9 The national Freedom to Speak Up Review stressed the importance of engaging with ‘vulnerable groups’ specifically Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) members and students embarking on the first stages of a career in the NHS. To date the FTSU Guardian has attended BME and LGBT network meetings in addition to presenting to student Paramedics studying at Sheffield Hallam, Teesside and Bradford Universities with an additional request from Hull University to present to BSc Paramedic students. FTSU has also had representation at Clinical Best Practice events, Staff Forum meetings and other trust campaign events such as ‘Sign up to Safety’.
- 2.10 At a national level Yorkshire Ambulance Service has been recognised as a trust that adopted the recommendation of the FTSU review early and has committed to the FTSU process. In March 2017 our Guardian was asked to present two workshops at the FTSU Conference in London. The workshops titled ‘Visibility & Reach’ focussed on how to improve the visibility of a FTSU Guardian in trusts with large number of sites or spread over a large geographical location. The workshops were well attended resulting in a number of NHS trusts contacting our Guardian for advice and support.

- 2.11 A 'National Ambulance Network' of FTSU Guardians has also been established which is co-chaired by our FTSU Guardian and one of the East of England Ambulance Service (EEAS) Guardians. It is hoped that working in collaboration on projects, while also identifying any common themes and trends will provide a stronger voice for ambulance trusts and reduce the likelihood of ambulance Guardians working in silos to tackle common issues. Meetings are held quarterly and rotated between trusts.
- 2.12 The NGO requests data on concerns being raised within trusts and we have provided Quarter 1 (1st April – 30th July) and Quarter 2 (1st July – 30th September) data to date, the details of these returns can be shared if required. The request for data did however identify a requirement for Guardians to start collecting feedback from those who engage in the FTSU process. It was decided to use a web survey approach to not only capture information on the experiences of staff but also capture equality monitoring information. Although the number of requests for feedback is still relatively low the majority of staff appear to be willing to complete the survey and provide feedback.
- 2.13 In August 2017 the Trust reconvened the FTSU implementation group and Advocates to review the first year of operation. Overall the review was positive and the arrangements were felt to be successful. A number of key areas were highlighted for further development, some relating to FTSU processes and others to wider development of Trust leadership, values and behaviours.

3. PROPOSALS/NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 As staff exposure to the FTSU process grows it is reasonable to anticipate that the number of concerns being raised through this process will also increase. However, experience has shown that managing staff expectations in respect to timescales and outcomes is important if staff are to feel that raising concerns through the FTSU process has been worthwhile. Moreover, the time it is taking to address some of the more complex concerns which have been raised is greater than originally anticipated and there is an intention to review the Freedom to Speak Up (Raising Concerns) policy to ensure it clearly reflects current practice.
- 3.2 Forward planning FTSU Advocate meetings and staff engagement events will hopefully re-engage advocates and allow them to support their colleagues and the Guardian more effectively.
- 3.3 Key themes and learning arising from FTSU will continue to be used over the coming year to inform and support wider Trust development relating to its values and behaviours framework, management and leadership development and Diversity and Inclusion agenda
- 3.4 A commitment by the Quality Governance And Risk Directors (QGARD) group to support the development of ambulance centric FTSU training materials has been given and the NAN will work together to design and implement this training across all ambulance trusts in England.

3.5 The Guardian secondment finishes in June 2018 and if it is decided to appoint a successor it is anticipated that a minimum of two months will be required to handover.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 No risks identified at the current stage in the process that requires addition onto the risk register.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that the Board:

- a) notes the issues handled via the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and developments in Trust operations;
- b) is assured with regard to the rigour of the processes in place

6. APPENDICES/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

6.1 Appendix 1 – Freedom to Speak Up - Staff Feedback

6.2 Appendix 2 - National Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Survey 2017