



Statement of commitment to the principles of Freedom to Speak from the Board of Directors.

We are committed to fostering a culture of safety and learning in which all staff feel safe to raise a concern wherever they work.

Speaking up is an essential part of an open and transparent culture, in any sector where safety is at its core. It should be something that everyone feels able to do and is encouraged to do. There should be a shared belief at all levels of the organisation that raising concerns is a positive, not a troublesome activity, and a shared commitment to support and encourage all those who raise honestly held concerns about safety. Without a shared culture of openness and honesty in which the raising of concerns is welcomed, and the staff who raise them are valued, the barriers to speaking up will persist.

The Board absolutely supports the key principles of speaking up and is committed to leading the actions required to implement them and being available for anyone who needs to raise anything. We have support and advice from the Freedom to Speak up Guardians (FTSUG) and a network of Champions to help us make Speaking Up Safe.

The key principles the Board is committed to include:

	Principle	Action
1	Culture of safety	We will actively foster a culture of safety and learning, in which all staff feel safe to raise concerns.
2	Culture of raising concerns	We encourage the raising of concerns as part of the normal routine business of any well led NHS organisation.
3	Culture free from bullying	We will ensure that staff are able to work in a culture which is free from bullying and other oppressive behaviours.
4	Culture of visible leadership	Through visible leadership at all levels in the organization we welcome and encourage the raising of concerns by staff.
5	Culture of valuing staff	We will show that we value staff who raise concerns, and celebrate the benefits for patients and the public from the improvements made in response to the issues identified.
6	Culture of reflective practice	There should be opportunities for all staff to engage in regular reflection of concerns in their work.

Approved by Board of Directors: September 2020

Author: FTSU Guardians

Review: September 2021



7	Raising and reporting concerns	We will ensure we have robust structures to facilitate both informal and formal raising and resolution of concerns.
8	Investigations	When a formal concern has been raised, there will be prompt, swift, proportionate, fair and blame-free investigations to establish the facts.
9	Mediation and dispute resolution	We will consider that there will be given at an early stage the use of expert interventions to resolve conflicts, rebuild trust or support staff who have raised concerns.
10	Training	All staff will receive training in the Trust's approach to raising concerns and in receiving and acting on them.
11	Support	There will be a range of persons to whom concerns can be reported easily and without formality.
12	Support to find alternative employment in the NHS	Where a staff member has raised a concern cannot, as a result, continue in their current employment, we will fulfil our moral obligation to offer support.
13	Transparency	We will be transparent in the way we exercise our responsibilities in relation to the raising of concerns, including the use of settlement agreements.
14	Accountability	Everyone will be expected to be held accountable for adopting fair, honest and open behaviours and practices when raising or receiving and handling concerns.
15	Students and Trainees	All the above principles will be applied with necessary adaptations to education and training settings for students and trainees working towards a career in healthcare.

(The above principles were outlined in 'Freedom to Speak up' by Robert Francis 2015)



Speaking up ANNUAL DECLARATION

Please tick the statements below to confirm that your agreement.

- I recognise that I have a responsibility for creating a safe culture and an environment which staff are able to highlight problems and make suggestions for improvement.
- I understand the importance of staff feeling able to speak up and the trusts vision to achieve this
- I recognise the impact of my own behaviour on the trust's culture. I will therefore reflect on my own behaviour regularly so that it does not inhibit someone speaking up*.
- I have insight into how my power could silence truth
- I will welcome approaches from staff and thank them for speaking up. I will ensure that I will provide feedback
- I will speak up, listen and constructively challenge one another during board meetings
- I will seek feedback from peers and staff and reflect on how effectively they demonstrate the trust's values and behaviours
- I will accept challenging feedback constructively, publicly acknowledge mistakes and make improvements.
- I will be open and transparent and see speaking up as an opportunity to learn.

*It is good practice to test your behaviour with direct and incidental feedback from staff surveys, pulse surveys, social media comments, reverse mentoring, 360 feedback and appraisals.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name in block letters: _____

Job title: