

Meeting title:	Trust Board (Public) Public Trust Board Paper J					
Date of the meeting:	9 June 2022					
Title:	Freedom To Speak Up Annual Report Highlights 2021-2022					
Report presented by:	Becky Cassidy, Director of Corporate and Legal Affairs and Edel Concannon-Freedom To Speak Up Guardian					
Report written by:	Jo Dawson and Edel Concannon – Freedom to Speak Up Guardians					
Action – this paper is for:	Decision/Approval	x	Assurance	x	Update	
Where this report has been discussed previously	An overview of the report was provided at Quality Committee on May 26 2022.					

To your knowledge, does the report provide assurance or mitigate any significant risks? If yes, please detail which
NA

Impact Assessment	
Patients	Potential negative impact on patient care if staff are not encouraged to report safety issues.
Workforce	Potential negative impact on staff motivation, morale and wellbeing if staff feel unsupported in speaking up
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	Impact on inclusion in relation to staff voice
Services	Potential negative impact on service provision if staff feel unsupported in reporting safety concerns
Finance	Potential financial impact of not retaining staff
Reputation/legal	Reputational damage

Acronyms used: F2SU – Freedom to Speak Up F2SUG – Freedom to Speak Up Guardian OD - Organisational Development EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion HR - Human Resources NGO- National Guardian Office SID - Senior Independent Director

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the Trust Board on Freedom to Speak Up activity in 2020/2021 and provide assurance of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Service.

Recommendation

The Board is asked:

- To note and approve the contents of the annual report for publication

- To be assured the development of the F2SU at UHL will focus upon establishing a more robust framework of response to staff concerns and support for the Freedom to Speak Up Guardians.

Summary

This report brings to the attention of the Trust Board, the F2SU activity 2021/2022, across the four internal reporting mechanisms for all staff to raise their concerns and speak up. There were a number of changes during the year, including a new Executive Team and the introduction of job share arrangements for the F2SU Guardian role. Whilst the Trust continued to work through the exigencies of the pandemic, the Guardians delivered training to ensure all staff knew how to access the F2SU reporting mechanisms. To maintain visibility and on-site access to the Guardians, they carried out ward walks and drop-ins sessions across all three UHL sites as well as providing individual support for staff and raising concerns through the escalation process.

This annual review has highlighted a number of opportunities for development including improvements to the F2SU Governance and the development of a more robust framework of response to staff concerns to ensure that improvements are implemented and that the underlying learning is shared across the Trust. It also highlighted the importance of supporting our F2SU Guardians.

Freedom to Speak Up Activity 2021/2022

Using the four internal F2SU reporting mechanisms, staff have raised 231 individual concerns which are managed by the F2SUG Service. Whilst some months saw a slight down turn, notably May and September 2021 and February 2022, there was an overall upward trajectory in reporting which has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. This suggests that speaking up has gained some traction during the reporting period.

Reporting mechanism	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	Total
F2SU	11	6	13	13	17	8	11	18	16	19	13	25	170
Junior Doc Gripe	3	2	3	4	4	4	9	4	5	2	2	5	47
3636	1	1	1	2	0	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	13
Your Voice	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	15	9	17	19	21	15	22	23	23	22	15	30	231

74% of concerns were raised directly through the F2SUG, with staff citing the need to be listened to and to make sense of their concern as their reason for making contact with the Guardian.

Of the 231 concerns, the most persistent issues were communication, staff attitudes and professionalism. These concerns were attributed to the operational pressures during the pandemic; poor managerial practices due to inexperience or lack of training and insufficient or lack of timely communications.

Staff concerns over patient safety were attributed to low staffing numbers and skills level mix on wards.

Whilst the number of staff reports remained fairly consistent, there are concerns that the impact of speaking up remains low and focused upon individual outcomes rather than trust wide change and learning. The Board can be assured that this has been acknowledged by the Guardians and Executive Team and will be addressed moving forward.

It is acknowledged that a number of the concerns raised with the F2SU Guardians have been emotionally taxing and the Board is assured that this has been acknowledged by the executive team who have offered to provide professional supervision so that the Guardians are supported in being the most resilient and effective professionals possible.

Freedom to Speak Up Governance:

The Board can be assured that since the introduction of the new Executive Team, the Guardians have met with key personnel who have each affirmed the importance of Freedom to Speak up in driving through improvements and making sustainable cultural change at UHL.

The Guardians continue to have access to the CEO through their monthly meetings and can contact him directly whenever necessary.

The Director of Corporate and Legal Affairs is now the Executive Lead for F2SU and provides leadership and oversight of the Guardian Service and the arrangements for speaking up across the Trust.

In addition, the Guardians can contact the Senior Independent Director for FTSU as an independent advisor and support as required.

The Chief People Officer is also available to the F2SUGs to ensure that where concerns contain HR elements that there are appropriate levels of response and that the wider people culture is considered.

Following a discussion with the Guardians and the Executive Team, it was agreed that the F2SUG will now report to the People and Culture Committee and the Trust Board, on a quarterly basis.

There were no concerns about the support that has been provided to the Guardians during the reporting period and Guardians are confident that moving forward, these recent changes will serve to strengthen and embed the F2SU culture within the Trust.

Barriers to Speaking Up

UHL is an employer of scale (17,000 staff) and as such the F2SUG Service requires additional support in raising awareness of speaking up across the sites. The F2SUG will consider the adoption of F2SU Champions who will signpost effectively and play a key role in supporting staff to raise concerns with the F2SUG at the earliest opportunity.

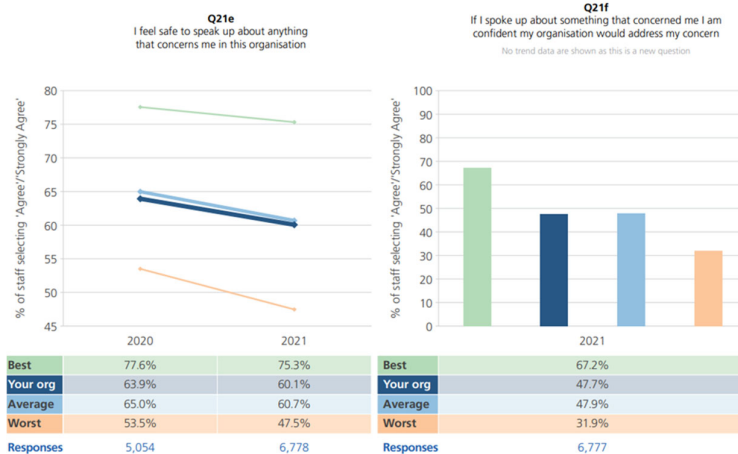
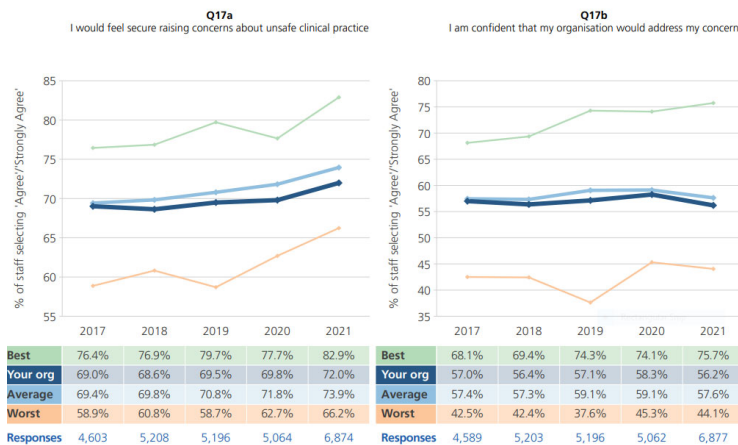
Fear of detriment: The F2SUG will continue to seek support from the Executive Team that staff who speak up with a genuine concern will not suffer a detriment (demeaning and disadvantageous treatment).

Perception that nothing changes after speaking up: The Board can be assured that after discussions with the Executive Team that it was agreed with the Guardians that UHL must develop a framework of organisational response which will deliver a positive consideration of concerns and implement changes which can be communicated effectively amongst staff. All management and leadership will be actively encouraged to follow the F2SUG 5 Steps approach presented here.



Benchmarking

In the NHS Annual Staff Survey 2021, UHL staff responded to four key questions regarding speaking up in our Trust. The questions ask staff about their perception of feeling encouraged, knowledgeable and secure enough to speak up in their organisation. Going forward, the Guardians will utilise this information and benchmarking data to look for further improvements and scrutinise the approaches and processes from the top five Trusts.



The Next 12 Months

In addition to the improvements considered elsewhere in this report the Guardians will:-

- Continue working in partnership with EDI, Staff Engagement, OD and HR
- Data development will align UHL F2SU data with NGO data requirements
- Triangulation of key data sets to provide more detailed information to assist CMGS in driving patient safety and worker safety forward
- Development of F2SU management training to support staff in making speaking up business as usual.

- Cascade data within CMGs to share the learning from our staff speaking up
- Deliver a Communications plan to further imbed the F2SU agenda and promote the internal mechanisms to aide staff to speak up
- To celebrate good news stories and improvements from staff speaking up

Supporting documentation

Appendix 1 - Annual Report 2021/22

Freedom to Speak Up Annual Report Highlights 2021/2022



This annual report provides a highlight summary of the speaking up activity across UHL during the period April 2021-March 2022. It will examine the use of all the internal reporting mechanisms, as well as prominent themes across Clinical Management Groups (CMGs) and Directorates and how UHL has responded to the concerns raised. Finally, it will consider key areas for development for the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (F2SUG) Service over the next 12 months.

This year, has seen a number of exciting changes at UHL; our new CEO and his executive team have committed to making UHL the very best NHS trust for the East Midlands and the UK and for UHL to be the workplace destination of choice for all staff, present and future. Jo Dawson returned to the F2SU Guardian Service from maternity leave and is joined by Edel Concannon who works with Jo in a job share capacity. These changes have provided an opportunity to review the UHL Freedom to Speak Up provision which has led to the development of a new F2SU Strategy 2022-2025.

The National Guardians Office (NGO) is now led by a new National Guardian; Dr Jane Chidgey-Clarke, a former nurse and Freedom to Speak Up Guardian who joined the NGO in December 2021. The NGO continues to support F2SU Guardians and has itself undergone a period of development which sees the Freedom to Speak Up ethos expanding into social care settings and partnership working with professional bodies such as the General Medical Council (GMC) and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN).

Nationally, this past year has seen the publication of a number of NHS reviews; the West Suffolk, the Christie and the Ockenden review; which all highlight the need for healthcare settings to foster a culture of speaking up and for a robust framework of response which drives through learning and improvements for patient care. Here at UHL, we are excited for the future, aware that there is much to do but undoubtedly, much to be gained.

Annual Data:

This report examines the annual data for concerns raised by staff including the themes and key learning points. Staff can raise a concern with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardians (F2SUG) at UHL by using the following mechanisms:-

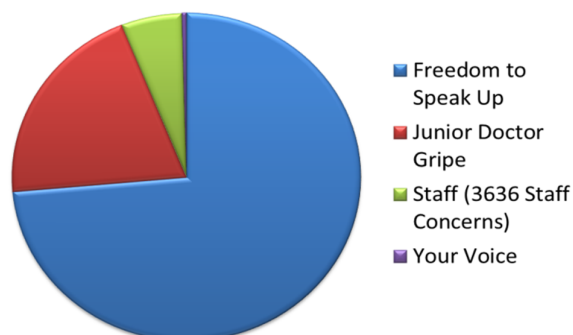
- Freedom to Speak Up Guardians – Mon-Fri
- 3636 Staff reporting line- answerphone & online
- BAME Your Voice Reporting Tool- online
- Junior Doctor Gripe Tool - online

231: The total number of concerns raised via the four reporting mechanisms managed by the Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in the period April 2021 to March 2022. This represents a small decrease of 18 reports in comparison with 2020/2021 figures (**249**).

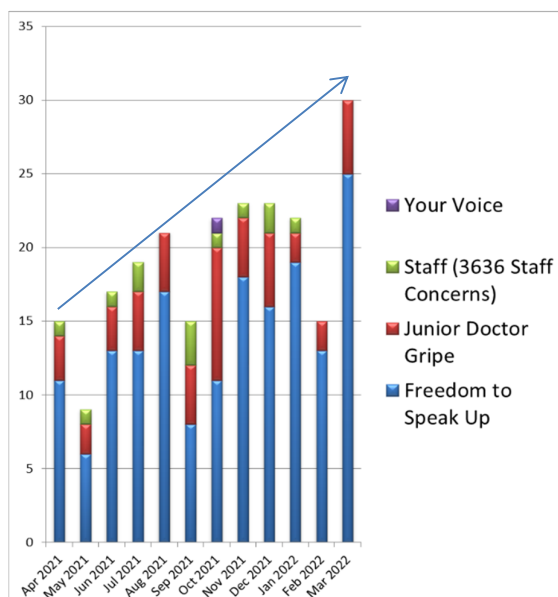
The Freedom to Speak Up mail box and mobile telephone contact were the most consistently utilised mechanism through-out the year accounting for 74% of the overall reporting numbers (170).

The Junior Doctor Gripe mechanism received 47 Gripes. The 3636 staff reporting line received 13 concerns and the BAME Your Voice received 1 concern during this period. UHL recognises the importance of promoting internal mechanisms to aid staff to raise concerns and will endeavour to further promote these tools through the communication plan.

2021/22



Reporting Activity and Themes April 2021 – March 2022

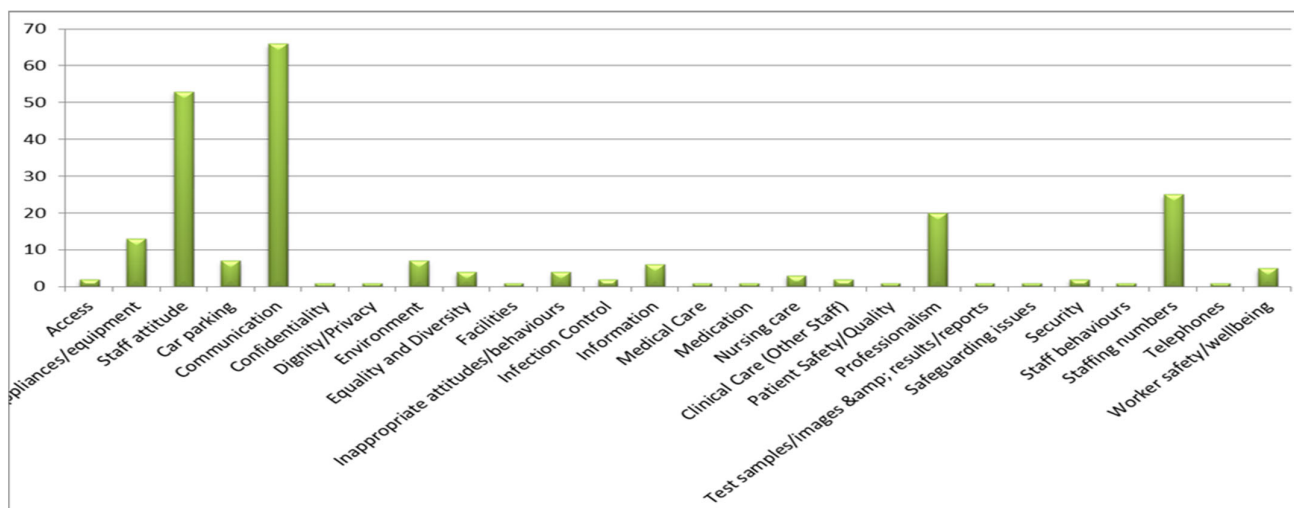


Despite some down turn at certain points, there is an overall upward trajectory of reporting concerns across the year.

There has been a number of changes at Executive Board level, who value and recognise the importance of speaking up and responding to concerns raised. Each month, the two part time Freedom to Speak Up Guardians meet with the CEO to discuss themes and hotspots of speaking up activity. The CEO always features 'speaking up' in his weekly communications to staff.

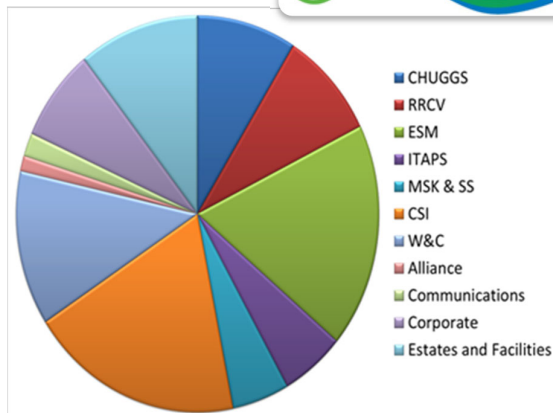
In November 2021, the two F2SU Guardians participated in a Friday Focus discussion with the CEO, where the conversation highlighted the importance of speaking up for the health and wellbeing of staff and fostering an open and responsive culture throughout the Trust.

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The band width of reporting themes remained fairly broad in 2020-2021, with the highest number of staff reporting concerns over communication (66) staff attitude (53) and professionalism (20). Within these categories, staff reported various issues with interpersonal relationships. Staff attributed behaviours such as incivility or bullying to operational pressures and poor managerial practices due to inexperience and lack of training. Additional unwanted behaviours included inappropriate behaviour or attitudes between peers and lack of professionalism. Other concerns conveyed inadequate or delayed communication by management, primarily during HR processes such as resolution or disciplinary activities. Our staff concerns over patient safety were attributed to low staffing numbers (20) and skills mix on wards.

Freedom to Speak Up Guardian: Concerns Raised by CMG and Themes

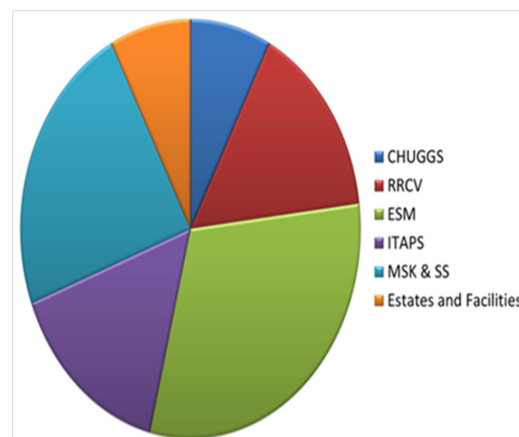


Please note: An individual concern can include more than one theme.

CMG	Top Themes 1	Top Themes 2	Top Themes 3
Alliance	Bullying & Harassment	Communication	-
CHUGGS	Bullying & Harassment	Staffing numbers	Communication
Corporate	Bullying & Harassment	Worker safety/wellbeing	-
CSI	Communication	Bullying & Harassment	Professionalism
E&F	Bullying & Harassment	Worker safety/wellbeing	Environment
ESM	Bullying & Harassment	Communication	Professionalism
ITAPS	Communication	Bullying & Harassment	Infection Control
MSKSS	Communication	Environment	Bullying & harassment
RRCV	Bullying & Harassment	Staffing numbers	Communication
W&C	Bullying & Harassment	Professionalism	Staffing numbers

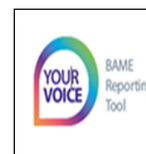
3636: Staff Concerns raised by CMG and Themes

CMG	Top Themes 1	Top Themes 2	Top Themes 3
CHUGGS	Bullying & Harassment	-	-
E&F	Appliances/equipment	-	-
MSK & SS	Bullying & Harassment	-	-
ESM	Staffing numbers	Bullying & Harassment	Communication
RRCV	Information	Communication	-
ITAPS	Medical care	Appliances/equipment	-

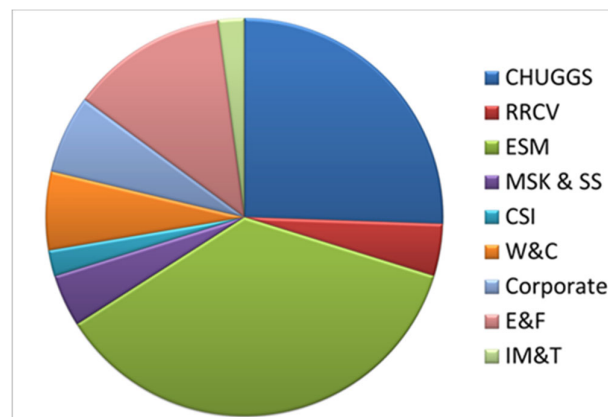


BAME Your Voice; Staff Concerns raised by CMG and Themes

The BAME Your Voice mechanism received 1 concern from RRCV regarding staffing numbers. The low reporting levels may be attributed to the challenges with communications and publicising the online reporting mechanism. Fortunately in March 2022, the BAME Council invited the guardians to a council meeting to explain the mechanism and the escalation protocol. Guardians continue to provide an overview of themes to the Equality Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Lead and the Non-Executive Director who has responsibility for both EDI and F2SU. It should be noted that at the time of writing, the use of the mechanism has increased.



Junior Doctor Gripe; Staff Concerns raised by CMG and Themes



Junior Doctors spoke up about access to IT and phones in addition to highlighting practical issues with Emeds (see below). Reports also included concerns over car parking and personal safety (see below) and access to on-call facilities.

CMG	Top Themes 1	Top Themes 2	Top Themes 3
CHUGGS	Communication	Appliances/ Equipment	Staffing numbers
RRCV	Medication	Staffing Numbers	-
ESM	Communication	Appliances/ Equipment	Staffing numbers
MSK & SS	Facilities	Staffing numbers	-
CSI	Appliances/ Equipment	-	-
W&C	Staffing numbers	Test samples	Appliances/ Equipment
E&F	Car Parking	Access	Environment

The Impact of Freedom to Speak Up; an Open and Responsive Culture

STAFF CONCERN	UHL RESPONSE
Pleural procedures at LRI and lack of trained staff	Pleural procedures become essential competency for acute medical trainees. Staff member raising concern is invited onto Pleural Procedures Group as Junior Doc rep
Patient privacy & dignity concerns on wards during cardiac scans	Escalated to CEO & Deputy Chief Nurse. Sign purchased; 'Stop! Do Not Enter- Echo in Progress.' Taken to wards and positive impact reported by staff.
COVID Shielding Group concerns over new Govt. guidance (July 2021) and practical working implications	Staff Engagement and Occupational Health provide guidance updates & reassurance for group. F2SUG attend meetings to support until Shielding Group disbanded in Sept 2021
ITAPS – availability of surgical plants for orthopaedic surgery	Investigation carried out and report published to identify operational issues. Changes on-going
Concerns over clinical practice	Quality Improvement project on use of growth charts for babies & children initiated
Confidentiality concerns in public places	Escalated to Head of Privacy – Trust wide comms created to remind staff of importance of confidentiality for staff & patients
Lack of IT access for Estates & Facilities (E&F) Staff	Comms created for Estates & Facilities staff RE: access to emails and UHL Comms – main channels & access to computer stations in the Trust. F2SU to attend engagement events to support speaking up in E&F.
Reduction in Staff car parking at LGH to accommodate Nightingale Hub	Escalated to CEO & Travelwise Manager. Extensive comms and parking stewards on site to assist staff in finding parking spaces
Staff attitudes & behaviours in department	Civility & Respect training made essential to job role across department. Programme of training delivered by F2SUG April 2022- Dec 2022
Use of staff & family members for translation/interpretation for patients	Referred to EDI. Staff who raised concerns are invited by EDI to join focus group to review T&I policy and working practices across the Trust

STAFF CONCERN	UHL RESPONSE
Issues with NerveCentre Electronic Prescribing - fluids	Sharing of EMedS best practice by Medicines Management Nurses & creation of SBAR on system
Safety Concerns in Community Midwifery	Acknowledged by SLT and added to Risk Register – close monitoring- Recruitment Drive and Management pro-active in improving working environment for staff.
Issues with NerveCentre Discharge letter	Escalated to Chief Medical Information officer – Post Graduate Doctor asked to collaborate on redesign process
Personal security of Junior Docs at King Power Stadium car park	Referred to CEO & staff invited to focus group- new security walk arrangements in place.

Where a concern has highlighted behaviours and team dynamics, the F2SU Guardians have worked closely with supportive services such as Organisational Development, the Health and Well-Being team, AMICA, and the Chaplaincy Service. Through this partnership working, the F2SU Guardian Service has seen improvements in team dynamics and culture within wards and departments at UHL.

The F2SU Guardians recognise how exhausted our workforce is due to the past few years and acknowledges the importance of compassionate, empathetic, and visible leaders to support us all through these difficult times.

Service Development: The Next 12 Months...

- The introduction of a F2SU Steering Group which will provide oversight of the implementation of the F2SU Strategy
- To drive through improvements, the F2SU Guardian Service will utilize the NHS Staff Survey Results 2020/2021, speaking up data and benchmark against the top 5 speaking up trusts
- To support a more robust framework of response to speaking up concerns, the Guardian Service will continue working in partnership with EDI, Staff Engagement, Organisational Development and Human Resources
- Data development will align UHL F2SU data with National Guardians Office data requirements
- Triangulation of key data sets to provide more detailed information to assist CMGS in driving patient safety and worker safety forward
- Cascade data within CMGs to share the learning from our staff speaking up
- Development of F2SU management training to support staff in making speaking up business as usual.
- Deliver a Comms plan to further imbed the F2SU agenda and promote the internal mechanisms to aide staff to speak up
- To celebrate good news stories and improvements from staff speaking up
- Provide professional supervisions to the Freedom to Speak up Guardians
- Organise Freedom to Speak up Champions to support speaking up within their CMG's

Conclusion:

In summary, a significant number of concerns raised in 2021- 2022, highlighted the importance our staff place upon constructive and timely communication and the desire for just and restorative conversations to support managerial practices. As UHL looks to achieve its ambition of being the best trust for the East Midlands and beyond, our F2SU Guardian Service is well placed to support this vision. The impact of speaking up at UHL demonstrates that it is within our gift to respond positively to staff concerns and to receive the learning which brings with it innovative and creative improvements for patient safety and staff wellbeing.

The Guardian Service would like to say thank-you to all the staff who spoke up with courage this year and for all our colleagues who listened with courage and made speaking up business as usual at UHL.

