

Meeting of the People Committee on Monday 25th January 2021

Report Title	Freedom to Speak Up Q3 2020/21 Update Report
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1. Report Summary	
To update the Board on the work of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.	
2. Key points to note <i>(Including decisions taken)</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 3 has been quieter than other quarters (down from 33 concerns in Q2 to 26 in Q3). Over half of the concerns relate to the impact of Covid-19. • Concerns have come from all areas of the Trust except Surgery but just under half have been raised within the Weston Division (12). • A monthly in-house training programme for the Freedom to Speak Up staff advocates started in November, with two sessions completed. • Speak Up training for all workers will be rolled out as essential training in 2021 to help improve the speaking up culture at the Trust. • Further actions are required to drive forward the speaking up culture, namely in the provision of extra capacity to support managers to resolve issues at an informal stage, and in training and support for current and existing managers. 	
3. Risks If this risk is on a formal risk register, please provide the risk ID/number.	
The risks associated with this report include: <i>None identified</i>	
4. Advice and Recommendations <i>(Support and Board/Committee decisions requested):</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report is for Information. 	
5. History of the paper Please include details of where paper has previously been received.	
Senior Leadership Team	20/01/2021

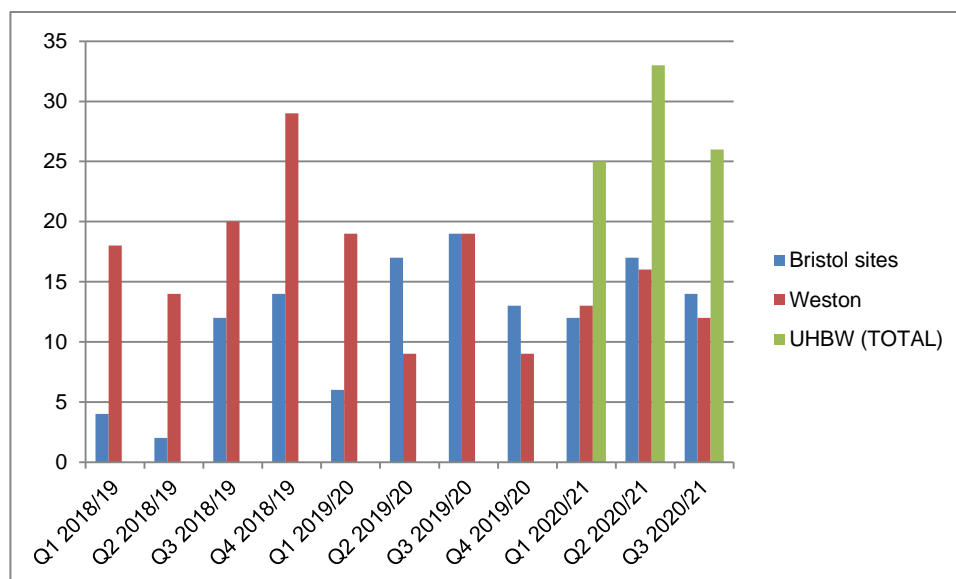
Q3 Freedom to Speak Up Report

1. Introduction

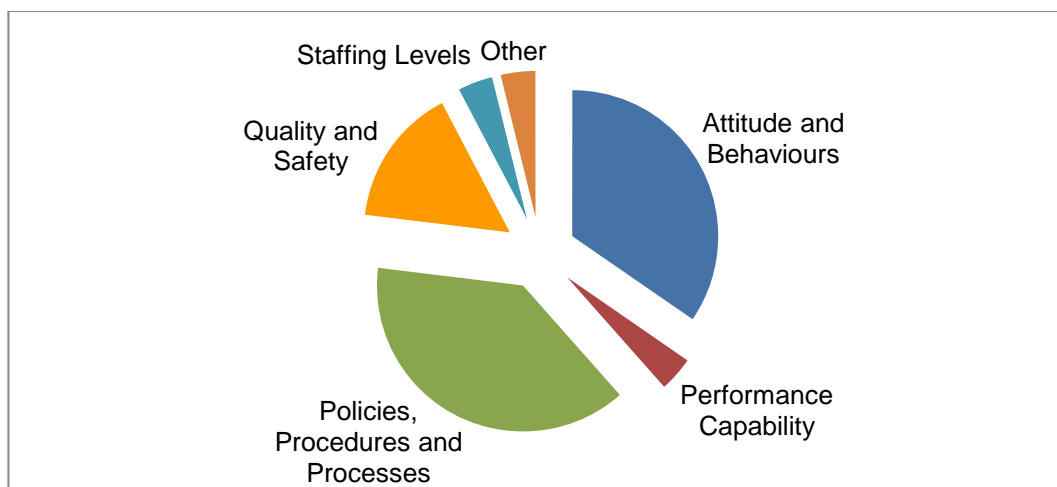
- 1.1. Freedom to Speak Up activity has decreased slightly in the third quarter of the year – 26 concerns were raised in Q3 compared to 33 in Q2. As per previous quarters, just under half of the concerns in the quarter (12) have been raised in the division of Weston.
- 1.2. Speak Up month took place in the quarter (October) which focused on the promotion of the staff advocate network at the Trust, as part of a national campaign. November saw the start of an in-house staff advocate training programme to ensure all staff advocates have a basic level of training to enable them to best support staff who are speaking up.
- 1.3. In December, the Corporate Education Group approved Speak Up training for NHS workers, developed by Health Education England and the National Guardian's Office, as essential training for UHBW staff. This is a significant step forward in starting to improve the speaking up culture at the Trust.
- 1.4. Work continues to influence the training needs for all new and existing managers to support workers to speak up. Managers need to play their part in handling and feeding back effectively on concerns to help improve our speaking up culture.

2. Numbers and themes of concerns

- 2.1. In relation to the number of concerns that have been raised, the chart below provides data by month from April 2018. Note that one additional concern from the AHP staff group was logged but not reported in September (which takes the number of concerns in Q2 to 33). The current total number of concerns at the end of Q3 is 94 (compared to total of 55 for 2019/20).



- 2.2. In Q3, 15 of the 26 concerns raised were connected to the impact of Covid-19 – including concerns around the movement of staff between wards, lack of social distancing, masks not being worn, unclear guidance for visitors, and how the Trust was keeping staff safe and well. Ten concerns were raised on the theme of policies and procedures. Nine concerns were raised around attitudes and behaviours with five of these cases including an element of bullying and harassment.



2.3. Below is the breakdown of concerns measured against the FTE (permanent and fixed term temporary staff) and by number of advocates to allow for a more accurate comparison across the divisions. No concerns were raised from staff in the division of Surgery in the quarter. As per previous quarters, nearly half the concerns were raised from staff in Weston. Historically Weston has almost consistently logged more concerns than Bristol, and has a number of proactive staff Freedom to Speak Up advocates.

Division	Number of concerns	Concerns per 1000 FTE (FTE at April 2020)	Number of FTSU staff advocates
Diagnostics & Therapies	4	3.7	6
Medicine	2	1.7	11
Specialised Services	1	1.0	10
Surgery	0	N/A	6
Trust Services	3	3.6	16
Estates and Facilities	1	1.4	4
Weston	12	8.4	12
Women's & Children's	3	1.5	12

2.4. The breakdown by staff group shows the same professions are reporting concerns this quarter as last quarter.

Profession	Number of concerns		
	Q1	Q2	Q3
Administrative/clerical staff	5	13	9
Allied Healthcare Professionals	7	4	4
Cleaning/Catering/Maintenance/Ancillary staff	2	4	2
Nurses	9	11	6

Profession	Number of concerns		
	Q1	Q2	Q3
Healthcare Assistants	2	1	2
Doctors	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	2

2.5. Of the 26 cases raised in Q3, 14 were closed. A further 11 cases remain open from earlier in the year. Two cases were raised anonymously this quarter.

3. Progress against the Freedom to Speak Up Strategy

Work continues to deliver the three objectives of the strategy:

Raising awareness

- 3.1. October was Speak Up month, which provided an opportunity to continue to build awareness of speaking up at UHBW as part of a national campaign, supported by the National Guardian's Office. The focus this year was on promoting the advocate network through Trust communications channels in the framework of a Speak Up ABC. 26 pieces of content were shared through the month and the speaking up message was linked into wider corporate messages (e.g. chief executive staff briefings). Though this did not translate to an increase in concerns in November and December, January has already seen more concerns logged in the first week of the New Year than in the whole of December.
- 3.2. Dr Henrietta Hughes, National Guardian for the NHS, spoke to the Board on 29 October 2020 to highlight the importance of a good and effective speaking up culture in protecting patient and worker safety and experience, including sharing and learning from concerns, and training. The National Guardian's Office and Health Education England launched a national training programme for all NHS workers in October, comprising three modules. The Board was supportive of the training and agreed to undertake all three modules (Speak Up (for all workers); Listen Up (for managers) and Follow Up (for leaders).
- 3.3. In December, the Corporate Education Group confirmed the Speak Up training module for all workers would become essential training from 2021. Communicating the new training module is to be discussed with the corporate education team in January to ensure it is promoted across as many different staff groups as possible within the first six months of launch. Compliance against training will be monitored from six months after launch. It is intended that numbers of workers completing the training will be fed back to the National Guardian's Office which will monitor compliance by region. UHBW is the first trust in the South West to introduce the Speak Up training as mandatory.
- 3.4. Roll out of the training is due to begin on 1 February 2021 and will run for six months before compliance starts to be measured from 1 August 2021. The roll out will be supported by the advocate network who will be provided with key messages and marketing materials and encouraged to promote the training in their own teams and departments. We will also produce guidance for line managers in responding to concerns raised with them in anticipation of an increase in speaking up activity as a result of the training. We have identified members of the advocate network to provide support if required.
- 3.5. A further five staff Freedom to Speak Up advocates were recruited in the quarter, taking the total number across the Trust to 77. Recruitment was supported by the

new Wellbeing Nurses in Medicine and Specialised Services who are also part of the advocate network. The aim is to have advocates in all departments across the Trust to help raise awareness around speaking up. Discussions are underway with the Wellbeing team to understand the reach of the wellbeing advocate network and whether it may support the sharing of messages around promoting an open and transparent organisational culture.

Building confidence

- 3.6. Two training sessions were held for Freedom to Speak Up staff advocates, in partnership with the psychological health services team, in November and December 2020. 14 advocates have now completed in house training alongside six advocates who undertook training provided by the South West Regional Guardian. Training will not run in January due to operational pressures, but will resume on a monthly basis from February until all new and existing advocates are trained. Feedback on the training is collected from each participant to ensure that it meets their needs.
- 3.7. The Deputy Guardian is identifying examples of proactive work being carried out by staff advocates across the Trust who are working with their managers to improve their speaking up culture. The aim is to develop a 'tool kit' of ideas which can be shared with the advocate network and potentially with the Wellbeing team to encourage staff to take positive action to improve our culture. This links with the priority of the organisational development team to support a 'culture of conversations" (including 1:1's and team briefings).
- 3.8. Following on from the initial two 'speaking up summits' held last year to bring together individuals within the Trust whose key role is giving staff a voice, further data from across the Trust was sought to corroborate the 10 'worry areas' identified by the group.
- 3.9. Staff Survey data from the past three years showed nine of the 10 worry areas had low staff engagement scores, and highlighted another further 10 areas with low overall scores. There was some correlation between worry areas and patient complaint data for Q1 2020. Case volumes data for grievances, disciplinary cases and short and long-term sickness absences was not available for Weston and was not robust enough for Q1 and Q2 to identify trends.
- 3.10. An overview of Happy App activity at Bristol sites for Q3 2020/21 (and a comparison with Q3 2019/20) is available as Appendix 1. The Happy App is another mechanism by which staff can get their voices heard about issues affecting them at work, however if staff comments are not being consistently published and responded to this may erode confidence that the organisation (via its network of managers) is listening and can make changes.
- 3.11. As part of the strategy to improve understanding of the speaking up role, one further case study has been developed from a concern raised in the last quarter from student nurses about their experiences on a ward. This third case study (Appendix 2) was developed in partnership with the parties involved and will be shared with the advocate network, through corporate communications channels and more widely with the National Guardian's Office to build on their [100 Voices collection](#) of speaking up concerns from across the country.
- 3.12. Feedback forms (to monitor the quality of the speaking up service) were sent to individuals who had raised concerns and had their concerns heard and closed between July and October. Seven forms were returned. In answer to the question 'do you feel you've suffered in any way as a result of speaking up' all respondents answered no. In answer to the question 'would you speak up again', five

respondents answered 'yes' and two 'maybe'. Reasons attributed by the respondents to the answer to this question were as follows:

"Speaking up helped with the problem, cleared the air, and gave me the confidence to approach my line manager if I felt the issues arising again... I would have no hesitation in speaking up again and actively encourage others to speak up if they feel unhappy about something or are being treated unfairly."

"My feelings surrounding work and the situation hasn't changed."

"I'm very pleased with all the procedure of the concern, and although I'm not happy with the resolution, I do feel safe to raise my voice about anything now, I'm (or I like to think) that I'm a very conscious person and I would like to think that if in the future I have any problem, and I think I see something that isn't right, I will always speak up, either through the raising concerns tool that we have available or by any way that I will have to, thank you for your work."

Training and support for managers and leaders

3.13. As identified by staff (in the speaking up survey circulated in summer 2020) and members of the speaking up summit, training and support for managers and leaders to respond positively to concerns, take action and provide feedback, is key to developing a culture in which staff feel safe to raise issues, suggestions or concerns.

3.14. Many of the concerns raised over the past five years since the Freedom to Speak Up process was introduced at the Trust, particularly those relating to attitudes and behaviours, and the application of policy or process, could be deflected from the speaking up process with earlier intervention from managers. Earlier appropriate intervention may also help to drive down the high levels of grievance and disciplinary cases in areas of the Trust.

3.15. The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian will continue to work with HR Business Partners, alongside summit partners, to identify where there may be managers that need extra support and how we can work together to support staff in areas where indicators show there are issues. However, however broader corporate investment is needed to bring about lasting change.

4. Summary of learning

4.1. The themes identified in learning in previous quarterly reports show that similar themes are raised in this quarter, i.e. the application and communication of policies and processes; ways of working between Bristol and Weston sites; awareness of the continued impact of coronavirus on workers (in terms of behaviours, capacity, and stress).

4.2. Appendix 3 provides a summary of some of the concerns raised over the last year to date and the outcomes. In reviewing the concerns raised, it is evident that learning is happening locally, but we are not seeing any organisational shift – which means that similar concerns are being heard in other areas. To improve this, we need to see shared learning across managers within the Trust to avoid the same issues occurring in other divisions and staff groups. This further reinforces the need for a robust training and support programme for new and existing managers.

5. Forward look

5.1. Alongside the work to continue to support staff who are raising concerns and ensure investigations are undertaken in an timely, fair, transparent and objective manner,

the Guardian's focus over the next quarter will also look at what can be done proactively to start to shift our culture towards a safer and more open environment for speaking up.

- 5.2. This focus is in line with the NHS People Plan to foster a compassionate culture of inclusion and belonging. It also links with the priorities of the Trust's People Strategy to build a culture of engagement and diversity that drives the best behaviours in our people and supports their health and wellbeing; and provide people systems that support self-service and enable managers to provide efficient, timely management of their people.
- 5.3. We know the barriers to improving the culture at the Trust, raised by the speaking up summit partners and staff (through the speaking up survey circulated in summer 2020), see below. To effectively tackle a number of these barriers and see a culture shift we need greater investment in time to train and develop our people. We believe this includes providing extra capacity around mediation/facilitation to help resolve issues at an earlier stage, and an appropriate training programme and support network for new and existing managers in the Trust.

Barriers to improving speaking up culture at UHBW
Managers not addressing concerns quickly enough (particularly around poor behaviours/bullying)
Managers not having the training or willingness (to hear and positively deal with concerns when they are raised)
Lack of time for managers to undertake training
Interventions not seeing lasting change
Culture of medical staff not raising concerns formally
Poor communication routes in the Trust

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report and agree that further investment in training and supporting managers will be needed to make significant changes to our speaking up culture.

Appendix 1: Comparison of Happy App data between Q3 2019/20 and Q3 2020/21

Q3 2020/21

To note:

- Published rate has dropped from 74% to 60%
- Reply rate remains low at 51%
- Time to reply has improved from 17 days to 5 days on average
- Fewer positive posts
- Increase in negative comments, particularly around the themes of Trust values, patient experience and pay and training.



Q3 2019/20

University Hospitals Bristol
NHS Foundation Trust

Dashboard
Posts
Insights

From:

To:

Weekly only

[Submit](#)

★ **1662**

total hits

👁️ **74%**

published

↩️ **56%**

replied to

🕒 **17 days**

time to reply

👍 **972**

likes

Total Weekends

Mood Over Time

All posts

Usage by team ★

1	Estates & Facilities	582
2	Trust Services	353
3	Women's & Children's	259
4	Medicine	180
5	Surgery	124

% posts replied to ↩️

1	Surgery	77%
2	Estates & Facilities	67%
3	Specialised Services - STMH	67%
4	Women's & Children's	63%
5	Trust Services	41%

Average time to reply ⌚

1	Specialised Services - STMH	2 days
2	Trust Services	4 days
3	Specialised Services - BHOC	10 days
4	Surgery	10 days

All posts

Physical Environment and Equipment

Patient Experience

Pay and Training

Staffing and Teamwork

Trust Values

UHBristol

- ▼ Trust Services
- ▼ Medicine
- ▼ Specialised Services - BHOC
- ▼ Surgery
- ▼ Diagnostics & Therapies
- ▼ Specialised Services - STMH
- ▼ Women's & Children's
- ▼ Estates & Facilities
- ▼ Specialised Services BHI/BRI

Appendix 3: Examples of concerns raised and outcomes (2020/21)

Your concern...where unable to be resolved by line manager	Action taken by the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian...
The appointment of an individual without following proper process or engagement of the team	Raised with the Head of Employee Relations who undertook an investigation. Reminder to the recruiting manager of their duty to openly advertise roles to help with a fair and transparent recruitment process
The capacity of non-clinical support staff in making clinical decisions	Discussed with the Medical Director and Clinical Chair for the Division. Group discussion held with all staff involved to better understand the issues. Clear message issued that admin and clerical staff should not be making clinical decisions. Additional clinical staff brought into the department to support colleagues.
Process of choosing new supplier for goods offered to patients	Contacted procurement team to understand the procurement process. Guidance provided to managers around contact with incumbent suppliers during procurement process.
Senior members of staff overheard being disparaging about actions of the Trust in a public space	Contacted Medical Director who spoke to individuals concerned and reminded them of the requirement to be aware of their context when having discussions.
Lack of opportunity to learn in role and take on more responsibility	Spoke to head of department advised line manager of development route for staff member
Vandalism of Trust property	Vandalism investigated by Estates and found to be in line with normal wear and tear
Personal information about a member of staff shared with another member of staff without their consent	HR contacted line manager to discuss policy around HR related Trust processes
Member of staff prioritising private work over NHS patients	Counter fraud team investigated and work was found to be appropriately rostered
Unfair allocation of shifts and flexible working requests ignored	Process and roster reviewed by HR with managers to ensure fairness and consistency
Poor behaviours in a department – staff not following the Trust values and using inappropriate language	Communications from divisional director and clinical chair around appropriate behaviours, alongside more visibility of senior team in the department
Admin management structure in the department and working culture.	Raised with divisional management who noted gap in leadership of the team which was due to be filled. Divisional management worked with team leaders to re-establish team meetings, 1:1s and appraisals