

POOLE HOSPITAL AND ROYAL BOURNEMOUTH &  
CHRISTCHURCH HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUSTS

**Board of Directors’ Statement of commitment to the principles of the Freedom to Speak up Publication set out by Sir Robert Francis.**

Sir Robert Francis set out his vision for creating an open and honest reporting culture in the NHS in his 2015 publication Freedom to Speak Up. The Board of Directors is committed to fostering a culture of safety and learning in which all staff feel safe to raise a concern across the Trust.

Speaking up is essential in any sector where safety is an issue. Speaking up should be something that everyone does and is encouraged to do. There needs to 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 supports the key principles of speaking up and is committed to leading the actions required to implement them. The Board will receive support from the Freedom to Speak up Guardian (FTSUG) who is sponsored by the Chief Executive.

The key principles the Board is committed to include:

	Principle	Action
1	Culture of safety	Every organisation involved in providing NHS healthcare, should actively foster a culture of safety and learning, in which all staff feel safe to raise concerns.
2	Culture of raising concerns	Raising concerns should be part of the normal routine business of any well led NHS organisation.
3	Culture free from bullying	Freedom to speak up about concerns depends on staff being able to work in a culture which is free from bullying and other oppressive behaviours.
4	Culture of visible leadership	All employers of NHS staff should demonstrate, through visible leadership at all levels in the organisation, that they welcome and encourage the raising of concerns by staff.
5	Culture of valuing staff	Employers should show that they 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 2019)

Author: Helen Martin

Review: March 2020

7	Raising and reporting concerns	All NHS organisations should have structures to facilitate both informal and formal raising and resolution of concerns.
8	Investigations	When a formal concern has been raised, there should be prompt, swift, proportionate, fair and blame-free investigations to establish the facts.
9	Mediation and dispute resolution	Consideration should be given at an early stage to the use of expert interventions to resolve conflicts, rebuild trust or support staff who have raised concerns.
10	Training	Every member of staff should receive training in their organisation's approach to raising concerns and in receiving and acting on them.
11	Support	All NHS organisations should ensure that there is 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 NHS worker who has raised a concern cannot, as a result, continue in their current employment, the NHS should fulfil its moral obligation to offer support.
13	Transparency	All NHS organisations should be transparent in the way they exercise their responsibilities in relation to the raising of concerns, including the use of settlement agreements.
14	Accountability	Everyone should expect to be held accountable for adopting fair, honest and open behaviours and practices when raising or receiving and handling concerns.
15	External Review	There should be an Independent National Officer (INO) resourced jointly by national systems regulators and oversight bodies and authorised by them to carry out the functions described in this report
16	Coordinated Regulatory Action	There should be coordinated action by national systems and professional regulators to enhance the protection of NHS workers making protected disclosures and of the public interest in the proper handling of concerns
17	Recognition of organisations	CQC should recognise NHS organisations which show they have adopted and apply good practice in the support and protection of workers who raise concerns.
18	Students and Trainees	All principles in this report should be applied with necessary adaptations to education and training settings for students and trainees working towards a career in healthcare.
19	Primary Care	All principles in this report should apply with necessary adaptations in primary care.
20	Legal protection	Should be enhanced to those who make protected disclosures.

## Speaking up ANNUAL DECLARATION

This declaration is to be signed annually alongside our statement of commitment to the Sir Robert Francis recommendations

### Declaration

**Please tick the statements below to confirm that you remain.**

- I recognise that I have a responsibility for creating a safe culture and an environment which workers are able to highlight problems and make suggestions for improvement.
- I understand the importance of workers 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 workers 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 workers 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:

Approved by Board of Directors (September 2019)

Author: Helen Martin

Review: March 2020