

Freedom to Speak Up Guardians – Purpose and key principles of the role

Purpose

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian will work alongside trust leadership teams to support the organisation in becoming a more open and transparent place to work, where all staff are actively encouraged and enabled to speak up safely.

Key principles	...what this means
Independent	... in the advice they give to staff and trust's senior leaders, and free to prioritise their actions to create the greatest impact on speaking up culture ... and able to hold trusts to account for: creating a culture of speaking up; putting in place processes to support speaking up; taking action to make improvements where needed; and displaying behaviours that encourage speaking up
Impartial	... and able to review fairly how cases where staff have spoken up are handled
Empowered	... to take a leading role in supporting staff to speak up safely and to independently report on progress on behalf of a local network of 'champions' or as the single role holder
Visible	... to all staff, particularly those on the frontline, and approachable by all, irrespective of discipline or grade
Influential	... with direct and regular access to members of trust boards and other senior leaders
Knowledgeable	...in Freedom to Speak Up matters and local issues, and able to advise staff appropriately about speaking up
Inclusive	... and willing and able to support people who may struggle to have their voices heard
Credible	... with experience that resonates with frontline staff
Empathetic	... to people who wish to speak up, especially those who may be encountering difficulties ... and able to listen well, facilitate constructive conversations, and mediate to help resolve issues satisfactorily at the earliest stage possible
Trusted	... by all to handle issues fairly, take action as necessary, act with integrity and maintain confidentiality as appropriate
Resilient	... and able to handle difficult situations professionally, setting boundaries and seeking support where needed
Forward thinking	... and able to make recommendations and take action to improve the handling of cases where staff have spoken up, and freedom to speak up culture more generally
Supported	... with sufficient designated time to carry out their role, participate in external Freedom to Speak Up activities, and take part in staff training, induction and other relevant activities ... with access to advice and training, and appropriate administrative and other support
Effective	... monitoring the handling and resolution of concerns and ensuring clear action, learning, follow up and feedback