

MEETING	PUBLIC BOARD MEETING 15 NOVEMBER 2017
Agenda item Paper Number	4 CM/11/17/04
Agenda Title	National Guardian – Annual Report
Sponsor	Dr Henrietta Hughes – National Guardian for the NHS
Author	Russell Parkinson – Head of National Guardian’s Office

PURPOSE OF PAPER:

The Board is invited to **note** this paper which will be presented to the Boards of the three organisations sponsoring the National Guardian’s Office (NGO) - CQC, NHS(I), and NHS(E)

Summary

1. The National Guardian will publish her annual report in November. This paper presents the report to the Boards of the NGO’s sponsoring bodies. It also summarises a number of the achievements so far, sets out a number of priorities for next year, and makes observations on how each sponsoring body can help forward the freedom to speak up agenda.

Recommendation

2. The Board is invited to endorse the annual report. Its views on future priorities and the NGO’s observations are also welcome.

Discussion and Implications

Achievements

3. The NGO was established in set-up form in April 2016 with the National Guardian taking up post in October 2016. The Annual Report sets out a number of achievements including the:
 - establishment of a network of 530 individuals as Freedom to Speak Up Guardians or ambassadors / champions across all trusts and foundation trusts, with a regional infrastructure, training and guidance to support them
 - publication of a survey quantifying how the guardian role has been implemented and making recommendations on how to improve the consistency and quality of appointments
 - start of the publication of data on speak up cases that are raised to guardians
 - commencement of a pilot of a case review process and publication of its first case review which is expected to be released to coincide with publication of the NGO’s first annual report

- inclusion of freedom to speak up within the CQC well-led domain inspection framework
- introduction of the first Freedom to Speak Up Awards
- establishment of relationships with a wide range of organisations within and around the healthcare system and the establishment of a ‘pan-sector network’.

Priorities

4. The NGO will set out its full work programme for 18/19 in March next year, but a number of priorities are already emerging, including:
- the development of a good practice guide to set out what good looks like and enable self-assessment
 - taking action to ensure that less engaged trusts are properly implementing freedom to speak up and supporting their workers appropriately
 - providing further support and development opportunities for guardians, working with HEE and the Leadership Academy to produce a training guide and self-assessment tool
 - establishing a network of guardians in independent providers of secondary care
 - supporting NHS(E) as freedom to speak up is rolled-out in primary care
 - evaluating the pilot of the case review process, establishing next steps and developing a local case review process for guardians

Observations

5. To date, the NGO has observed a number of issues and challenges. The Board’s comments on these are welcome:

Organisation	Challenge	Details
DH	Making the ‘NHS Whistleblowing Helpline’ fit for purpose	The NGO helped revise the specification for the helpline which has been retendered from 1 September 2017. The helpline has the potential to offer guidance and signposting to people who want to speak up, and to be a source of intelligence on speaking up matters, and barriers to speaking up, across the system. An initial conversation with DH and the new provider has been arranged.
DH and other ALBs	Appointment of their own Freedom to Speak up Guardian	Guardians within ALBs help the organisations act as role-models and also provide internal challenge. DH’s ‘speak out champion’ arrangements and other models that ALBs use should align with expectations of the wider system.
CQC	Providing assurance on how people who speak up are supported and given feedback	The NGO will work with CQC as it widens the scope of their safeguarding committee to include whistleblowing more specifically, and thus provide a more transparent oversight mechanism.
CQC	Inspection in primary care	Develop guidance for inspectors of primary care services on freedom to speak up.
NHS(E)	Getting Freedom to Speak Up right in	Support the development of policies, training etc, working within NHS(E) timeframes.

	primary care	
NHS(E)	National contract	Strengthen the wording reflecting the requirement to have a guardian and ensure that expectations are clear. This has already been included in the current consultation on variation to the contract.
CQC / NHS(I)	Development of guidance on the relationship of Boards and guardians, governance arrangements and reporting	NHS(I) are already developing this work. Working with the NGO and CQC will help ensure that boards, guardians, and CQC inspectors are clear on what good looks like and provide consistent support and challenge.
CQC / NHS(I)	Triangulating data on speaking up so that potential cross-system issues are identified	Bring together CQC, NHS(I), and the NGO so potential emerging issues can be spotted and appropriate action taken.