

Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy

Trust Board	Item: 15
Date: 28th September 2016	Enclosure: L
Purpose of the Report: This paper explains the Trust's response to the publication of a 'standard integrated policy' for the NHS on raising concerns. The Audit Committee has approved the policy for ratification by the Trust Board.	
For: Information <input type="checkbox"/> Assurance <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion and input <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decision/approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
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Risk Implications – Link to Assurance Framework or Corporate Risk Register:	Encouraging staff to raise concerns forms part of the Trust's risk management processes
Legal / Regulatory / Reputation Implications:	NHS Improvement and NHS England expect all NHS organisations in England to adopt the standard policy as a minimum
Link to Relevant CQC Domain: Safe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Effective <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responsive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well Led <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Link to Relevant Corporate Objective:	CO13 - action point from Well Led review
Document Previously Considered By:	Executive Management Committee Audit Committee
Recommendations: The Board is asked to ratify adoption of the national policy as proposed.	

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Policy content

The Trust's Raising Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy is due for review in October 2016. A national policy was released jointly by NHS Improvement and NHS England in April 2016 with the expectation that all Trusts will adopt it as a minimum. Following a review of options, it was agreed by the Executive Management Committee to recommend to the Board that the national policy is adopted in full and as written to demonstrate the Trust's full support. Local details applicable to the Trust have been included within the body of the text and a flowchart added to lead the reader through the Trust's process. The Audit Committee has approved the revised policy shown in Appendix 1.

Local Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

In response to concerns about the culture in the NHS, the Secretary of State for Health asked Sir Robert Francis to carry out an independent review: Freedom to Speak Up. The review recommended the creation of a national guardian for the NHS to support a network of local freedom to speak up guardians (FTSUG) within all NHS trusts, to help foster a culture of openness in relation to raising concerns. The FTSUG role is referenced in the national Raising Concerns policy.

The Executive Management Committee has agreed that the FTSUG role will be offered internally as an option to combine with an existing role. A role description is being developed for consultation internally and oversight of the role will sit within Corporate Affairs alongside Whistleblowing.

The purpose of the role will be to work alongside Trust's 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. The role will contribute to achieving the following outcomes:

- A culture of speaking up is instilled throughout the organisation
- Speaking up processes are effective and continuously improved
- All staff are supported appropriately when they speak up or support other people who are speaking up
- The Board is fully sighted on, and engaged in, all Freedom to Speak Up matters and issues that are raised by people who are speaking up
- Safety and quality are assured
- A culture of speaking up is instilled throughout the NHS

Recommendation

The Board is asked to ratify adoption of the national policy as proposed.