

Freedom to Speak Up - August 2023

Email sent to all ELFT Staff



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Trial of Lucy Letby

Dear Colleague,

You will probably have heard by now about the outcome of the trial of Lucy Letby. Reading the judge's sentencing remarks was extremely difficult. The appalling crimes committed were a terrible betrayal of the trust placed in her. We think of the families affected and can't fully comprehend the pain and suffering they have experienced.

Colleagues across the nation, the NHS, and in particular, within the nursing profession, have been shocked, saddened and repulsed to learn of her actions. It's beyond comprehensible. In the coming weeks and months ahead, there will no doubt be many lessons to be learned by the NHS.

In her response to the verdict of the trial of Lucy Letby, **Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark**, National Guardian for the NHS, said:

“My thoughts are with everyone whose lives have been affected by the actions of the nurse found guilty of murdering seven babies – both families and colleagues. These

terrible events, though rare, underline why it is so vital that everybody feels safe to speak up about anything which gets in the way of delivering great care.

I welcome the Secretary of State's announcement of an independent inquiry, as it is vital that improvements are made so that this never happens again.

Confidence to speak up comes from knowing that when you speak up, what you raise will be actioned appropriately. It is vital that leaders listen to concerns raised to them. If actions are not taken, workers may remain silent, and that silence can be dangerous."

It is all our responsibility to make sure patient safety and quality of care is our number one priority, and to raise concerns regarding safety and quality issues whenever and wherever they occur. If, for some reason, you are unable to raise your concerns through the usual channels (Line Manager route, Supervisor, Service Director, Clinical Lead, Professional Lead, Datix/InPhase and so on), you can contact the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian for advice and/or support with raising your concern.

The National Guardian's Office states that 'speaking up' is *"speaking up about anything that gets in the way of doing a great job. Freedom to Speak Up Guardians support workers to speak up when they feel that they are unable to in other ways."*

Freedom to Speak Up – Support Session

Freedom to Speak Up is hosting a drop-in support session on **Wednesday 30th August from 4 to 5pm** for those who would like a safe space to talk about any concerns they may have around speaking up as a result of the outcomes shared from the trial of Lucy Letby. It will be held over MS Teams and to join, please click [here](#).

Freedom to Speak Up – Feedback Survey

We want to hear from you to understand how we can better support you/your team/your locality with speaking up and raising concerns. The results of this feedback survey will be received by the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian only and will be anonymous. If you wish to be contacted by the FTSU Guardian directly, you have the opportunity to share your contact details in question 3.

The survey should only take a few minutes to complete, and we would be very appreciative if you could do so. To complete the survey, please click [here](#).

Freedom to Speak Up – Regular Drop In Sessions

Freedom to Speak Up also hosts a regular drop-in session on the **fourth Wednesday of every month, from 4 – 5pm**. If you would like to join a session to find out more information around FTSU, arrange a training session for your team/service or seek advice about a concern you may have, please click [here](#) to join.

Freedom to Speak Up – eLearning Modules

These e-learning modules were created collaboratively by the NGO (National Guardian’s Office) and NHSE and are now available to complete on **ELFT’s Learning Academy**. Just search for ‘FTSU’ and the three modules will appear (**image below**). This training is for everyone wherever you work in healthcare and explains in a clear and consistent way what speaking up is and its importance in creating an environment in which people are supported to deliver their best. It will help you understand the vital role you can play and the support available to encourage a healthy speaking up culture for the benefit of patients and workers.

The training is divided into three parts.

- **Speak Up:** Core training is **for all staff** including volunteers, students and those in training, regardless of their contract terms and covers what speaking up is and why it matters. It will help learners understand how to speak up and what to expect when they do.
- **Listen Up:** This training **for all line and middle managers** and is concentrating more on listening up and the barriers that can get in the way of speaking up.
- **Follow Up:** This training is **aimed at all senior leaders including executive board members, Non-Executive Directors, and Governors** to help them understand their role in setting the tone for a good speaking up culture and how speaking up can promote organisational learning and improvement.



Speak Up Month – October 2023

In **October**, we will be celebrating **Speak Up Month** and this year the theme is **Breaking Barriers**. We will be raising awareness of some of the barriers to speaking up. Being afraid of what may happen or feeling that you won't be listened to can prevent colleagues from speaking up and sometimes this may be due to their background, their heritage or their previous experience. They may feel they might not be listened to because of their banding, their circumstances or their job role.

By highlighting these barriers, we hope to give people the confidence to overcome these barriers and strive towards making speaking up business as usual. Raising awareness of the barriers to speaking up is also an opportunity for leaders across ELFT to understand and work to address and remove them. This will help foster an inclusive environment that encourages speaking up, listening up and following up.

ELFT Freedom to Speak Up Conference Friday 20th October 2023

ELFT's Freedom to Speak Up Conference is taking place during Speak Up Month on **Friday 20th October** in the **Holiday Inn Bloomsbury**, close to Russell Square tube station, in Central London.

We are pleased to announce that, amongst others, we will be joined on the day by **Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark**, the National Guardian for the NHS, and **Helené Donnelly**, who previously worked in the A&E department at Stafford Hospital and following her experience and difficulties in trying to raise concerns there, was a key witness at the Public Inquiry held by Sir Robert Francis QC into the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust. Helené also acted as an advisor in Sir Robert Francis' Freedom to Speak up Review (2015).

We will also hear from our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion colleagues, learn about Civility at Work, Respectful Resolution and learn about how we can work towards ensuring the psychological safety of staff when raising concerns. The agenda will be shared with colleagues in the coming weeks. If you would like to book your place at the conference, please register via Eventbrite [here](#).



For further information regarding speaking up, the FTSU Guardian and FTSU Champions contact details, and other resources, please see the Trust's Freedom to Speak Up intranet page [here](#).

Best wishes,

The Freedom to Speak Up Team
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