

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Board of Directors Meeting

Meeting Date: 29 November 2017

Title and Author of Paper: Whistleblowing/Raising Concerns Update – Lynne Shaw, Deputy Director of Workforce and OD

Executive Lead: Lisa Crichton-Jones

Paper for Debate, Decision or Information: Information

Key Points to Note:

The paper outlines the whistleblowing/concerns raised and logged by the Central Workforce team between April 2017 and October 2017.

- 11 cases reported
- 3 categorised as whistleblowing
- 8 categorised as a concerns

In addition, a further 8 cases have been raised with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian during the same period. Two of these cases were also reported centrally.

The figure for the 6 months ending 31 October has increased since the previous report where a total of 7 cases were reported centrally with a further 4 reported to the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

Risks Highlighted to Board:

No current risks highlighted.

Does this affect any Board Assurance Framework/Corporate Risks?

Please state Yes or No NO
If Yes please outline

Equal Opportunities, Legal and Other Implications:

Various employment legislation.

Outcome Required: Information

Link to Policies and Strategies:

Trust strategy, strategic ambition six – ‘A Great Place to Work’
Workforce strategy
Raising Concerns policy

Whistleblowing/Raising Concerns Update

29 November 2017

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Board of Directors with a summary of whistleblowing cases/concerns raised over the period April 2017 – October 2017.

Background

The paper aims to give an overview of cases reported centrally to the Workforce team as requested by the Trust's Raising Concerns Policy. Concerns raised with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian are also included. Additional concerns are raised and dealt with at an informal, local level by operational managers.

Not all matters raised become subject to formal investigation under Raising Concerns or Grievance policies, an approach which was welcomed by Sir Robert Francis in his Freedom to Speak up Review.

It should be noted that the Trust has had for a number of years a clear, defined process for recording cases that fall under the scope of a policy such as whistleblowing (raising concerns), disciplinary or grievance, however, there are a number of concerns raised which do not meet the Disclosure Act's definition of whistleblowing. For these cases the workforce directorate has developed a separate recording category called "raising concerns" for reporting purposes.

Concerns Raised

This report serves to provide information on all concerns raised between April 2017 – and October 2017. The concerns have emerged from different routes. It is anticipated that a greater number of concerns will continue to have been raised over the same period of time but have not been of a significant nature and therefore dealt with locally at ward/department level. This is to be encouraged but also balanced against a wider desire to understand better any themes or trends.

Between the period identified 17 issues have been raised in total (two issues were logged both centrally and with the FTSU Guardian) and these have been categorised either as "whistleblowing" or "concerns" (3 and 14 respectively).

There are 8 cases still on-going. A review of all cases logged has been undertaken and there appears that there are no trends in terms of reported concerns in specific Group/corporate area or staff group, however there has been an increase in cases at Walkergate Park, which are being investigated by a senior member of operational staff at the request of the Executive Director of Nursing and Operations. The Group Head of Workforce and OD will review the cases with the Group Directors.

The number of anonymous concerns have risen again this period with 8 out of the 11 cases reported centrally being anonymous in nature.

Internal Audit Findings

A recent internal audit has highlighted a **good** level of assurance that the risks identified are managed effectively. A high level of compliance with the control framework was found to be taking place. Minor remedial action is required. This has been discussed with the Deputy Director of Workforce and OD and the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

Lynne Shaw

Deputy Director Workforce and OD

Summary of Concerns Raised Centrally 1 April 2017 – 31 October 2017

Status	Date Submitted	Incident Summary	Type	Group/ Corporate Service Directorate	Outcome
Completed	19/04/2017	Whistleblowing – patient Safety	Whistleblowing	Inpatient Care Group (North Locality)	Investigated. Dealt with at a local level with allegation not substantiated.
Completed	24/04/2017	Whistleblowing – Staffing levels and levels of violence and aggression	Whistleblowing	Inpatient Care Group (South Locality)	Local investigation. Action Plan in place.
Completed	18/04/2017	Raising a Concern – treated unfairly by manager due to whistleblowing	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group (South Locality)	Formal investigation and no case to answer. Fed back to individual who raised the concern.
Completed	22/05/2017	Raising a Concern – Issues with Disciplinary Process	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group (North Locality)	Local investigation. Feedback given to Capsticks on process.
Completed	06/06/2017	Raising a Concern – Behaviour of Staff Member	Raising Concerns	Inpatient Care Group (South Locality)	Investigated locally. No further action.
Ongoing	14/07/2017	Raising a Concern – Staffing on Ward 1	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group (South Locality)	Investigation ongoing.
Ongoing	25/07/2017	Raising a Concern – various issues at WGP including staffing numbers and attitude of staff	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group (South Locality)	Investigation ongoing.
Completed	27/07/2017	Raising a Concern – staff unhappy with new model	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group (North Locality)	Local investigation. Concerns addressed informally.
Completed	25/08/2017	Raising a Concern – staff holidays	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group (North Locality)	Local investigation. No further action

Completed	01/09/2017	Raising a Concern – interview process on Alnwood	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group (North Locality)	Investigated by the Service Manager with no further action required.
On-going	13/10/2017	Whistleblowing – patient safety	Whistleblowing	Community Care Group (South Locality)	Investigation ongoing.

Freedom to Speak Up Cases 1 April 2017 – 31 October 2017

Status	Date Submitted	Incident Summary	Type	Group/ Corporate Service Directorate	Outcome
Ongoing	12/05/17	Allegations regarding (1) incorrect processes regarding interviewing (2) appointment to a new post (3) inappropriate management/direct report relationship	Raising Concerns	Corporate Services	Investigation undertaken and allegations not proven. Grievance procedure undertaken, with an appeal being considered.
Ongoing	03/05/17	Concern over staffing levels	Raising Concerns	Community Care Group	Service Director to meet with the individual. Awaiting the outcome of the investigation.
Completed	08/05/17	Concern over dictation software	Raising Concerns	Community Care Group	Investigation found problems. Clinicians to be advised to check their entries. Software provision to be kept under review.
Completed	17/05/17	Concern over staff access to RiO via other's accounts	Raising Concerns	Community Care Group	Staff to be reminded not to share access – Trust can only rely on staff following protocol.
Ongoing	23/05/17	Incident witnessed concerning abuse of a patient by a member of staff	Raising Concerns	Inpatient Care Group	Original investigation was not satisfactory. FTSU Guardian/Executive Director of Nursing and Operations asked for a review. New investigation currently under way.
Ongoing	18/07/17	Staffing levels at Walkergate Park	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group	Investigation ongoing.
Completed	19/07/17	Support requested regarding bullying and harassment investigation	Raising Concerns	Inpatient Care Group	Support offered.
Ongoing	25/07/17	Anonymous concern regarding attitude of management at Walkergate Park	Raising Concerns	Specialist Care Group	Awaiting report.