



**National
Guardian**

Freedom to Speak Up

Press release

12th April 2022

National Guardian's Office launches 'Follow Up' training to support leaders to improve the speaking up culture of their organisations

The National Guardian's Office, in association with Health Education England elearning for healthcare (HEE elfh), has launched the third and final module of its elearning package. This module is designed for leaders at all levels to help them foster a speaking up culture in their organisations.

The Freedom to Speak Up training - 'Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up' - is for everyone who works in healthcare. Divided into three modules, it helps people understand the vital role they can play in a healthy speaking up culture which protects people who use services and enhances worker experience.

The latest session - Follow Up – completes the package. Developed for senior leaders throughout healthcare - including executive and non-executive directors, lay members and governors – this module aims to promote a consistent and effective Freedom to Speak Up culture across the system which enables workers to speak up and be confident they will be listened to and action taken.

Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark, National Guardian for the NHS, said: *“Time and again we see situations where workers are fearful of speaking up and this invariably correlates with often tragic lapses in safety and quality, as highlighted in the publication of the Ockenden report. The most recent NHS staff survey tells us that only 62% of staff agree that they feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns them. This needs to be addressed urgently. This module will help senior leaders reflect on how they can do more to improve this response from workers in their organisations and improve the speak up behaviours and culture in their teams.”*

Importantly, this free elearning package is available to anybody, no matter where they work in healthcare. Access is via HEE elfh <https://www.elfh.org.uk/programmes/freedom-to-speak-up/>

The first module – Speak Up – is for all workers and has been completed by over 46,000 people. The second module, Listen Up, for managers, focuses on listening and understanding the barriers to speaking up. Leaders are advised to complete the first two modules before engaging with the final Follow Up module.

David Farrelly, Deputy Chief Executive (internal), Health Education England, said:

“As we launch the third and final session in the Freedom to Speak Up programme, I am delighted to see that more than 18,000 managers and leaders across the health and care workforce have accessed this hugely vital resource to ensure staff feel safe about speaking up on issues affecting them.

“This third session provides an opportunity for leaders to reflect on the speaking up culture of their organisations. I will be commending the elearning to the board of HEE for our own learning and development and encourage all my fellow leaders in healthcare to do the same.”

The Follow Up module includes the following topics:

- What is a healthy speaking up culture?
- Benefits and drivers – including improved safety and organisational performance; reducing harm and costs; and worker retention
- Measuring the effectiveness of a speaking up culture
- The role of leaders in setting the tone
- Supporting your Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

The module also includes a downloadable workbook for leaders to record their reflections and plans for future action.

Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark said: *“The module asks leaders to be reflective and curious, with practical suggestions to improve the speaking up culture in their organisation. We are encouraging all leaders to use this as a further prompt to have a conversation with their Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, engage deeply with their speaking up culture, and to use the learning from speaking up to strive for excellence.”*

For more information or interviews contact: comms@nationalguardianoffice.org.uk

>ENDS<

Notes for editors:

About this training programme

This training is for everyone wherever they 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.

Available to access via <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/freedom-to-speak-up/>

The training is divided into three parts.

- **Speak Up: Core training** is for all workers 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 focused on listening up and the barriers that can get in the way of speaking up.
- **Follow Up:** This training is for all senior leaders including Executive and Non-Executive Directors (and equivalents), lay-members 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.

This training follows the [National guidelines on Freedom to Speak Up training in the health sector in England](#) published by the National Guardian's Office in 2019

About the National Guardian's Office

The National Guardian's Office works to make speaking up become business as usual to effect cultural change in the NHS.

The office leads, trains and supports a network of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in England and provides learning and challenge on speaking up matters to the healthcare system as a whole.

There are now over 800 Freedom to Speak Up guardians in NHS primary and secondary care and independent sector organisations, national bodies and elsewhere that ensure workers can speak up about any issues impacting on their ability to do their job.

Freedom to Speak Up Guardians support workers to speak up when they feel that they are unable to do so by other ways. They ensure that people who speak up are thanked, that the issues they raise are responded to, and make sure that the person speaking up receives feedback on the actions taken. Guardians also work proactively to support their organisation to tackle barriers to speaking up.

www.nationalguardian.org.uk

About the National Guardian for the NHS



Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark was appointed as National Guardian in December 2021.

She is a registered nurse with more than 30 years' experience in the NHS, higher education, voluntary and private sectors. Prior to her role as National Guardian, she was a non-executive director at NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group where she was also Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

She is the Independent Chair for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board. She also worked with the NHS England New Care Models Programme for three years as a Clinical Associate and has been working as a consultant and coach with and in the NHS since March 2015. Her specialist clinical area is end of life care in which she was awarded her PhD.

About e-Learning for Healthcare

e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LfH) works in partnership with the NHS, third sector and professional bodies to support patient care by developing e-learning resources to educate and train the health and care workforce. The e-learning programmes cover content from anaesthesia to dentistry, end of life care to mental health, and population wellbeing to sepsis. Users can access statutory and mandatory training, obtain certificates and complete e-learning sessions relevant to their role. For more information about e-LfH visit www.e-lfh.org.uk.