

# National Guardian

## Freedom to Speak Up

### Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Survey 2017

#### Findings and recommendations



The National Guardian's Office

# Introduction



The requirement for trusts and foundation trusts to have a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian has been in place since October 2016, just as I took up post as National Guardian.

The National Guardian's Office set out its expectations about the role early on but I have been struck by the wide range of approaches that organisations have taken in implementing the role. This survey has given us the first opportunity to quantify some of this variation.

Enabling organisations to implement the role in a way that is right for them is important as no two organisations are the same. The new role allows for it to be integrated into the priorities of individual trusts. The diverse occupations and professional backgrounds of those in the guardian or champion / ambassador role has also proven to be a great source of strength. We have built up a unique network of individuals where traditional barriers between grade and profession simply do not exist and where everyone can draw upon the experience and expertise of everyone else. I am proud to lead this network and see it as a potentially powerful force for change and a source of skill, commitment, and knowledge that I hope others in and around the healthcare system can draw upon.

Consistency in approach does, however, have a part to play. I want everyone working in the health system to know that they can go to a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian for support and advice about speaking up and for their expectations to be met, no matter which organisation they are in. Some of the recommendations in this report therefore focus on ensuring that, amongst all the variation, a consistent core to the guardian role is maintained.

The guardian role is not an easy one. Our expectations are high and broad and, as patient safety and staff wellbeing are at its heart, we believe that it is a role in which it is well worth investing. Investment includes support and guardians need the support and commitment of their senior leaders to do their job and sufficient time to be reactive and proactive in culture change. The recommendations, drawn from the experience of guardians will enable trusts and foundation trusts to ensure that this role will meet the needs of all their staff.

I hope that senior leaders, guardians, champions, ambassadors and all those with an interest in speaking up will welcome this report. It is an honest reflection of how this new role is developing at the start of the Freedom to Speak Up journey, and I look forward to repeating this exercise next year to see how the recommendations have been implemented.

*Dr Henrietta Hughes, National Guardian for the NHS*

## Background and summary

The development of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role was a recommendation made by Sir Robert Francis in “Freedom to Speak Up” in [2015](#). The standard NHS contract requires all trusts and foundation trusts to nominate a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian by October 2016.

Guidance on the role including a job description was issued by the National Guardian’s Office, initially in April 2016, with a revised form being issued in June 2016. Support was given to guardians and trusts throughout 2016 /17, including foundation training and the development of regional networks to promote local learning and sharing of good practice.

Whilst the overall requirements of the role have been published, the role is not centrally funded, with trusts being expected to implement the role according to local need and resources. As this is a new initiative, and one that requires a broad range of skills and qualities, up until this point the National Guardian’s Office has not issued detailed guidance on the grading of the role, where the role should fit in within organisational structures, or how the role should be resourced.

This survey is intended to provide a more systematic understanding of how the role has been implemented, who is being appointed to the role and, for the first time, ask the new network of guardians for their thoughts on Freedom to Speak Up within their trusts.

Ensuring that the needs of staff are met and that Freedom to Speak Up develops in a way that responds to local circumstances, are fundamental principles of the role. The results of this survey have helped identify some potential issues. These are highlighted and trust and foundation trust leadership teams are encouraged to reflect on these and, where necessary, make changes to ensure that the guardian role is properly resourced, embedded and used as the source of support, learning and improvement that it is intended to be.

The questions included in the survey can be found in the **Annex** to this report. These are divided into broad groups looking at how the guardian role has been implemented, who is in the role, and perceptions of Freedom to Speak Up. Respondents were also asked to consider what support they felt they needed from the National Guardian’s Office and for examples of success and challenges that they face.

The survey was distributed to 493 email addresses and was open between 12 June and 30 June 2017. A total of 234 responses were received (a 47% response rate).

## Key findings and recommendations (1-4)

| #  | AREA                                   | RECOMMENDATION  |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | <b>Appointment</b>                     | We recommend that appointment of guardians is made in a fair and open way, and that senior leaders assure themselves that workers throughout their organisation have confidence in the integrity and independence of the appointee.   |
| 2. | <b>Potential conflicts of interest</b> | <p>We recommend that all guardians / ambassadors / champions reflect on the potential conflicts that holding an additional role could bring and that they devise mechanisms to ensure that there are alternative routes for Freedom to Speak Up matters to be progressed should a conflict become apparent when supporting someone who is speaking up.</p> <p>We see particular potential for conflicts to arise where a guardian also has a role as a human resources professional and recommend that guardians do not have a role in any aspect of staff performance or human resources investigations.</p> |
| 3  | <b>Local networks</b>                  | We recommend that all trusts consider developing a local network of ambassadors / champions, depending on local need, to help provide assurance that all workers have appropriate support and opportunities to speak up, and to give guardians alternative routes to pursue speaking up matters should they be faced with a real or perceived conflict. Members of a local network could also cover the guardian role when the guardian is absent, on leave etc.  |
| 4  | <b>Diversity</b>                       | <p>We recommend that all trusts take action to ensure that all workers, irrespective of their ethnicity, age, sexuality or other diversity characteristics, have someone they feel able to go to for support in speaking up.</p> <p>Guardians should consult with relevant representative groups in developing their approach on this matter. Guardians should also take action to assure themselves that any potential barriers to speaking up that particular groups face are understood and tackled.</p>   |

## Key findings and recommendations (5-10)

| #  | AREA                               | RECOMMENDATION  |
|----|------------------------------------|---|
| 5  | <b>Communication and training</b>  | <p>We recommend that all guardians use all appropriate communication channels to ensure that all staff know of their role, and work with colleagues to ensure that Freedom to Speak Up is incorporated in all relevant staff training and development programmes, and particularly in staff inductions.</p> <p>In conjunction with the relevant parts of their organisation, guardians should monitor the effectiveness of their communication and training activities. Guardians should ensure that the language and message of communications and training are consistent with national guidance.</p> |
| 6  | <b>Partnership</b>                 | We recommend that all guardians continue to develop working partnerships with all relevant parts of their organisation.   |
| 7  | <b>Access to senior leadership</b> | We recommend that all guardians have direct and regular access to their chief executive and non-executive director with responsibility for speaking up.   |
| 8  | <b>Board reporting</b>             | We recommend that guardians or a representative from a local network of champions / ambassadors personally presents regular reports to their board. Board reports should include measures of activity and impact and, where possible, include 'case studies' describing real examples of speaking up that guardians are handling.   |
| 9  | <b>Feedback</b>                    | We recommend that guardians always gather feedback on their performance, from their line managers, the partners they work with, and from those they are supporting.   |
| 10 | <b>Time</b>                        | We strongly recommend that all trusts provide ring-fenced time for anyone appointed as a guardian / ambassador / champion to carry out their role and attend training, regional and national network meetings, and other events.  |

|   |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
|  |                                 |    |   |    |
| <p><b>Fairness</b></p>  | <p><b>Conflict</b></p>   | <p><b>Reach</b></p>   | <p><b>Diversity</b></p>   | <p><b>Communication</b></p>   |
| <p>Freedom to Speak Up Guardians should be appointed in a fair and open way</p>   | <p>Freedom to Speak Up Guardians should guard against potential conflicts caused by holding additional roles</p> | <p>The Freedom to Speak Up message should reach everyone – developing a local network of ambassadors can help with this</p> | <p>All staff groups, especially the most vulnerable, need routes to enable them to speak up – staff networks can support this</p> | <p>Freedom to Speak Up messages should be included in training and feedback on how it generates change should be disseminated regularly</p> |

## Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Survey 2017

10 principles for the role.

These principles are derived from the findings of our 2017 Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Survey.

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|    |    |            |  |    |
| <p><b>Partnership</b></p>   | <p><b>Leadership</b></p>  | <p><b>Openness</b></p>  | <p><b>Feedback</b></p>  | <p><b>Time</b></p>  |
| <p>Freedom to Speak Up Guardians need to forge strong partnerships with teams and individuals throughout their organisation</p> | <p>Leaders should demonstrate their commitment to Freedom to Speak Up and CEOs and NEDs should meet regularly with their Guardian</p> | <p>Freedom to Speak Up Guardians should present regular reports to their Board, in person</p> | <p>Freedom to Speak Up Guardians should gather feedback on their performance</p>      | <p>Freedom to Speak Up Guardians should have enough time and other resources to meet the needs of workers in their organisation</p> |

# Detailed findings and discussion

## 1. How the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role has been implemented

### Appointment to the role

At the time of the survey, the requirement to have nominated a guardian had been in effect for nine months, though we know that many trusts had taken early action in response to the Francis recommendations. It is not surprising, therefore, to note that **59%** of respondents had been in post for over 6 months, with **17%** being in post for 18 months or longer.

We asked how individuals were appointed to the guardian / champion / ambassador role. **60%** of respondents had been personally approached, volunteered, or were nominated. Whilst **56%** of this group were also interviewed as part of the process, this illustrates the 'personal' nature of many of the appointments.

The guardian role is one that requires a high degree of personal integrity, and the individual in the role needs to work alongside senior leaders whilst also capturing the confidence of staff throughout the organisation. In addition, the person needs to be able to act independently and under their own initiative. Given this, we see potential difficulties if appointments are made to the role without a transparent, fair and open process and we would always recommend that appointments are made in this way. To give further confidence that appointees have the confidence of workers, we know of some trusts where the appointment process has incorporated staff elections, values based recruitment, and other elements where staff representatives can be involved in the process.

### #1. Appointment

We recommend that appointment of guardians is made in a fair and open way and that senior leaders assure themselves that workers throughout their organisation have confidence in the integrity and independence of the appointee

The survey did not specifically address the appointment of Freedom to Speak Up ambassadors / champions who usually play a supporting role to the guardian and who are often employed to increase the 'reach' of Freedom to Speak Up across a trust. Whilst appointments to these roles clearly need to meet local needs we would encourage them to be made upholding the same principles we recommend in relation to the appointment of guardians.

## Who is in the role?

The vast majority of respondents (**84%**) indicated that they held another role alongside that of guardian or champion / ambassador. This 'other' role includes a broad range of clinical and non-clinical roles (table 1.1).

| 1.1 Other role                 | % respondents |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Nurse                          | 23%           |
| Corporate Services             | 18%           |
| Allied Healthcare Professional | 11%           |
| Administrative / clerical      | 7%            |
| Human Resources                | 6%            |
| Organisational Development     | 6%            |
| Governor                       | 6%            |
| Doctor                         | 5%            |
| Safety                         | 4%            |
| Midwife                        | 2%            |
| Chaplaincy                     | 2%            |
| Healthcare Assistant           | 1%            |
| Therapist                      | 1%            |
| Maintenance / ancillary        | 0.5%          |
| Other*                         | 28%           |

\*responses include: company secretary, adult safeguarding lead, front of house manager, non-executive director, IT director, oral health promoter, listening into action lead, staff side chair

We think that this variety brings richness to the network of guardians and ensures that there is a wide range of peer-support available for guardians. This diversity brings a broad breadth of knowledge, insight and experience to bear on the guardian role, which will help ensure that it continues to develop to reflect the needs of all NHS workers.

However, carrying out two (or more) roles does not come without its challenges, both in terms of ensuring that enough time is given to the guardian role, and in managing potential conflicts of interest and perceptions of the ability of a guardian to act independently.

## #2. Potential conflicts of interest

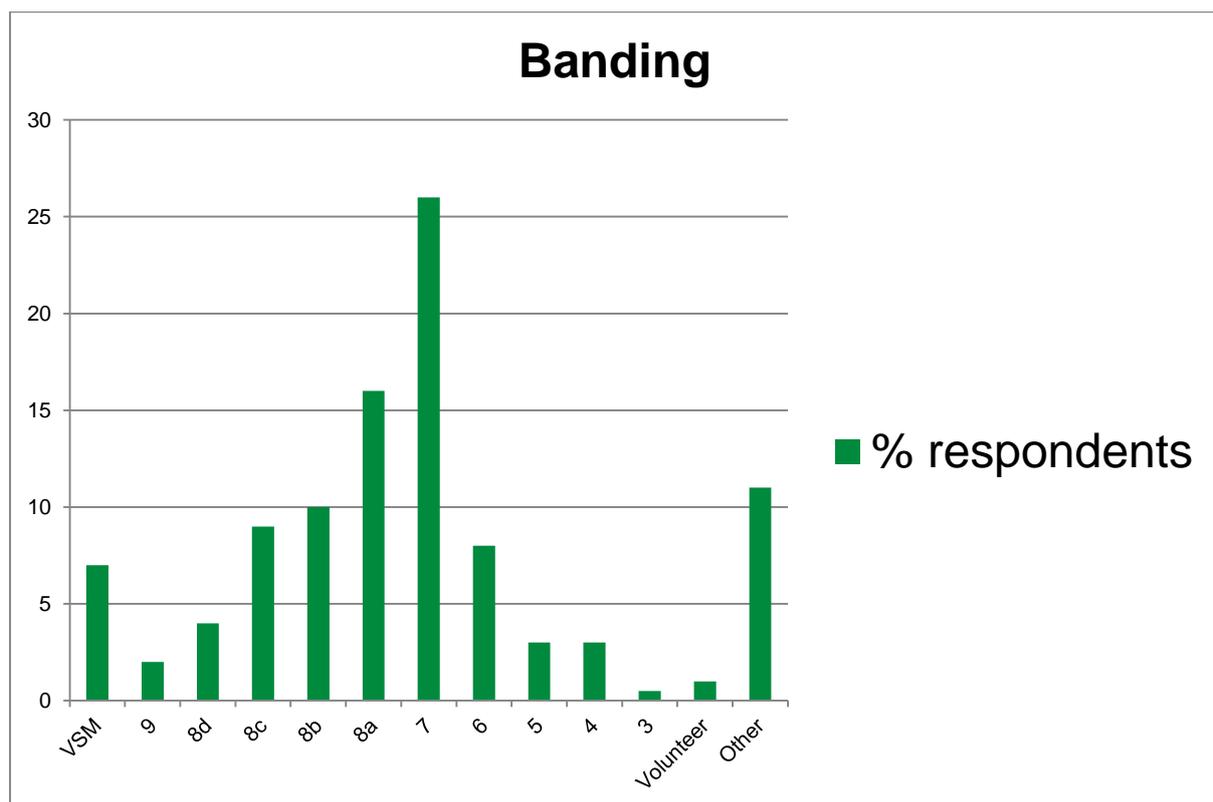
We recommend that all guardians / ambassadors / champions reflect on the potential conflicts that holding an additional role could bring and that they devise mechanisms to ensure that there are alternative routes for Freedom to Speak Up matters to be progressed should a conflict become apparent when supporting someone who is speaking up. We see particular potential for conflicts to arise where a guardian also has a role as an HR professional and recommend that guardians do not have a role in any aspect of staff performance or HR investigations.

The development of a local network of ambassadors / champions can help provide alternative routes to avoid conflict when a speaking up matter is being pursued, whilst also increasing 'reach' across larger or widely dispersed organisations. A network can also provide a diverse range of individuals for staff to seek support from. It is encouraging to see that **63%** of respondents said that they were part of a local network of this type.

### #3. Local networks

We recommend that all trusts consider developing a local network of ambassadors / champions, depending on local need, to help provide assurance that all workers have appropriate support and opportunities to speak up, and to give guardians alternative routes to pursue speaking up matters should they be faced with a real or perceived conflict. Members of a local network could also cover the guardian role when the guardian is absent, on leave etc.

As with professional background, a similarly broad range of grading / band is also represented within the guardian network (see below)



| 1.2 Band / grade    | % respondents |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Very Senior Manager | 7%            |
| 9                   | 2%            |
| 8d                  | 4%            |
| 8c                  | 9%            |
| 8b                  | 10%           |
| 8a                  | 16%           |
| 7                   | 26%           |
| 6                   | 8%            |
| 5                   | 3%            |
| 4                   | 3%            |
| 3                   | 0.5%          |
| Volunteer           | 1%            |
| Other*              | 11%           |

\*responses include: non-executive director and independent / self-employed role

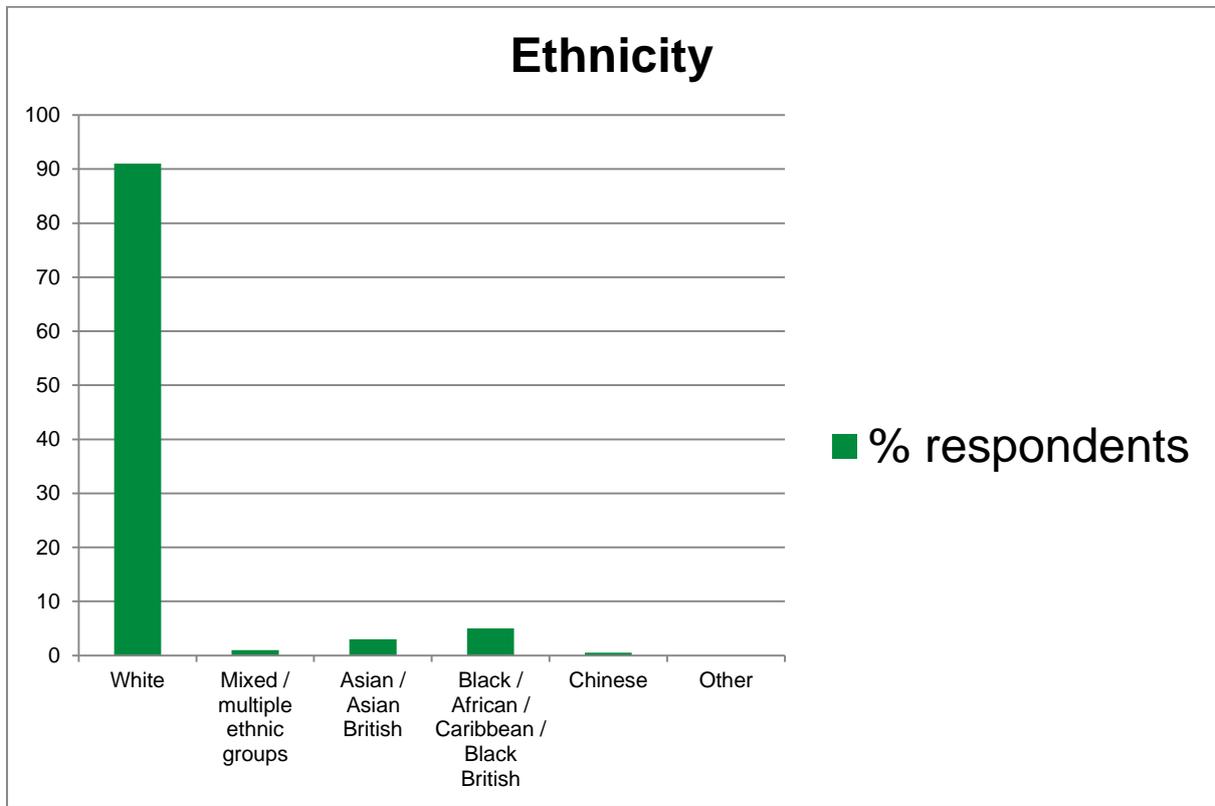
The guardian role is a broad one that requires reach and credibility from the frontline to the board and, most importantly, the ability to support, encourage, and capture the trust of any worker within an organisation (table 1.2). Given that, we see this wide range of banding as a strength. However, we do appreciate that it may be more difficult for individuals in lower banded roles to gain the confidence of, and challenge, senior leaders. Similarly, those in higher banded roles may be faced with barriers that being further up the 'hierarchy' can bring when trying to capture the trust and confidence of staff at lower grades. Nevertheless, we are reassured by the experiences of our guardians and those who are speaking up to them that these barriers are being overcome.

We continue to believe that appointments to a guardian role need to have the personal qualities of individuals front and centre, rather than focussing on banding. However, when this area is being considered we would encourage trusts to look at the job description in the round and ensure that whoever is in the role is appropriately rewarded for their work.

Building on this, it is clearly helpful if guardians have experience of speaking up themselves, and we note with interest that **42%** of respondents said that they had. Respondents provided us with a wide range of examples illustrating their experience, these included matters of abuse in a residential care setting, unsafe staffing levels, staff being pressurised to make decisions outside their area of competence, lack of support for vulnerable groups, challenging decisions made by senior leaders, fraud, and reports of bullying behaviour amongst senior colleagues.

It is essential that all workers in an organisation feel able to speak up and able to access the support of a guardian / ambassador / champion should they need it. To do this, they need to be able to turn to someone whom they can trust. We therefore note with interest the demographic profile of respondents to the survey.

**91%** of respondents are white (table 1.3), **79%** are women (table 1.4), **44%** are between 45 – 54 years old (table 1.5), **91%** did not consider themselves to have a disability (table 1.6), and **88%** are straight / heterosexual (table 1.7).



| <b>1.3 Ethnicity</b>                        | <b>% respondents</b> |
|---|----------------------|
| White                                       | 91%                  |
| Mixed / multiple ethnic groups              | 1%                   |
| Asian / Asian British                       | 3%                   |
| Black / African / Caribbean / Black British | 5%                   |
| Chinese                                     | 0.5%                 |
| Other                                       | 0%                   |

| <b>1.4 Gender</b> | <b>% respondents</b> |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Male              | 20%                  |
| Female            | 79%                  |
| Prefer not to say | 1%                   |

| <b>1.5 Age</b>    | <b>% respondents</b> |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 16 – 34           | 6%                   |
| 35 – 44           | 24%                  |
| 45 – 54           | 44%                  |
| 55+               | 24%                  |
| Prefer not to say | 2%                   |

| <b>1.6 Response to the question “Do you consider yourself to have a disability?”</b> | <b>% respondents</b> |
|--|----------------------|
| Yes  | 6%                   |
| No   | 91%                  |
| Prefer not to say  | 3%                   |

| <b>1.7 Sexuality</b>    | <b>% respondents</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Bisexual                | 1%                   |
| Gay man                 | 4%                   |
| Gay woman / lesbian     | 0.5%                 |
| Heterosexual / straight | 88%                  |
| Prefer not to say       | 7%                   |

Whilst none of these factors should present a barrier to workers speaking up to guardians, we are aware that they may do so for some and therefore recommend that all trusts take action to assure themselves that all staff have a range of individuals they can go to for support in speaking up, including individuals of differing diversity characteristics. We would also encourage guardians to forge close working partnerships with staff diversity networks and consider recruiting and training members of these groups as champions / ambassadors, or developing some other means of partnership working so that the trust has the assurance that all workers feel supported and able to speak up.

#### **#4. Diversity**

We recommend that all trusts take action to ensure that all workers, irrespective of their ethnicity, age, sexuality or other diversity characteristics, have someone they feel able to go to for support in speaking up. Guardians should consult with relevant representative groups in developing their approach on this matter. Guardians should also take action to assure themselves that any potential barriers to speaking up that particular groups face are understood and tackled.

## 2. Freedom to Speak Up Guardian activities

In addition to one-to-one support for people speaking up, guardians are engaged in a wide range of communication and engagement activities

| 2.1 Activity                        | % respondents |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Communication of role internally    | 88%           |
| Communication of role externally    | 11%           |
| Involvement in staff induction      | 62%           |
| Involvement in other staff training | 52%           |
| Attending team meetings             | 65%           |
| Carrying out surveys                | 16%           |
| Other*                              | 25%           |

\*responses include: developing steering and other working groups, back-to-floor visits, attending out-of-hours services, taking part in leadership programmes

A wide range of partnerships are also being forged

| 2.2 Partnership                            | % respondents |
|--|---------------|
| Senior leaders / the Board                 | 83%           |
| HR   | 82%           |
| Organisational Development teams / similar | 50%           |
| Communications teams                       | 73%           |
| Training and Development teams             | 49%           |
| Unions / staff-side                        | 54%           |
| Staff diversity networks                   | 36%           |
| Patient representative groups              | 18%           |
| Internal Audit                             | 15%           |
| Other*                                     | 15%           |

\*responses include: patient experience teams, safety and quality teams, occupational health, information governance and guardians in other trusts

We think this broad range of activities (table 2.1), and developing partnership working (table 2.2), is encouraging. We would advocate that all guardians continue to communicate their role, work with colleagues to ensure that Freedom to Speak Up messages are incorporated into staff training and development programmes (particularly staff inductions), and continue to forge working relationships throughout their organisation.

### #5. Communication and training

We recommend that all guardians use all appropriate communication channels to ensure that all staff know of their role, and work with colleagues to ensure that Freedom to Speak Up is incorporated in all relevant staff training and development programmes, and particularly in staff inductions. In conjunction with the relevant parts of their organisation, guardians should monitor the effectiveness of their communication and training activities. Guardians should ensure that the language and message of communications and training are consistent with national guidance.

## #6. Partnership

We recommend that all guardians continue to develop working partnerships with all relevant parts of their organisation.

The relationships between a guardian and their chief executive and non-executive director with responsibility for speaking up are particularly important ones. A guardian needs to support their senior leaders in creating a culture where speaking up can flourish whilst also maintaining their independence to enable confidential investigations to happen and, if appropriate, to step outside of their organisation's leadership altogether. We are therefore pleased to note that **86%** of respondents said that they had direct access to their chief executive (with **14%** saying that they did not), and **76%** of respondents said that they have direct access to their non-executive director with responsibility for speaking up (with **24%** saying that they did not). We believe, however, that all guardians should have this direct access.

## #7. Access to senior leadership

We recommend that all guardians have direct and regular access to their chief executive and non-executive director with responsibility for speaking up.

Boards need to be kept abreast of all matters related to speaking up. This encompasses being sighted on both the issues being raised, and apparent barriers to speaking up. Board members also need to model speaking up behaviours, demonstrate their responsiveness and, in particular, provide feedback so that people who are speaking up are assured that they are being listened to and that action is being taken. In addition, so that Freedom to Speak Up messages can be taken to the board in an unfettered manner, and so that the independence of a guardian can be seen in practice, we believe it is important that guardians present regular reports to their board in person. We are therefore disappointed to note that only **55%** of respondents said that they present reports to board meetings in person.

## #8. Board reporting

We recommend that guardians or a representative from a local network of champions / ambassadors personally presents regular reports to their board.

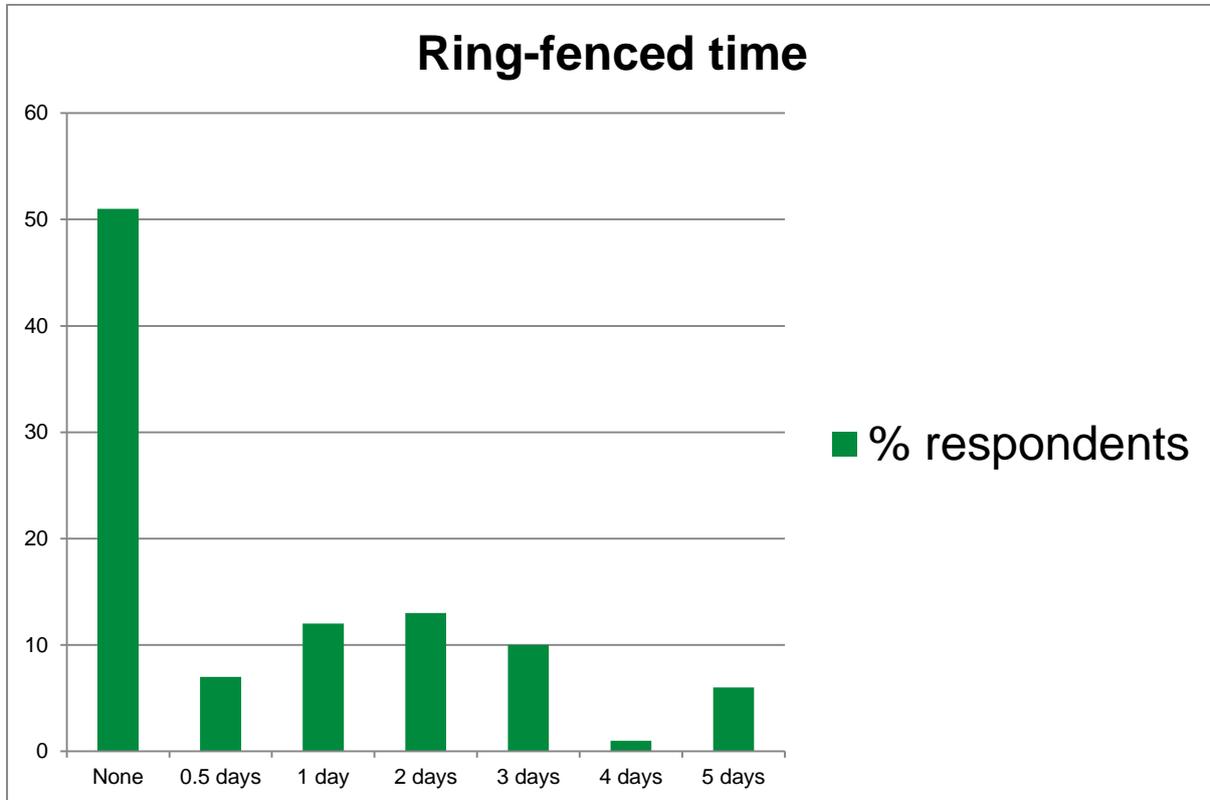
Asking for, receiving, and acting on feedback is a central aspect of an effective speaking up process with a lack of feedback being a significant barrier to encouraging workers to speak up in the first place. We therefore see it as essential that guardians role-model this behaviour by always asking for feedback, both from the people who speak up to them (guardians have been provided with a standard form of wording to use when asking for this feedback), and from others who can comment on their performance more generally. However, only **46%** of respondents said that they gathered feedback on their performance (with **54%** saying that they don't).

## #9. Feedback

We recommend that guardians always gather feedback on their performance, from their line managers, the partners they work with, and from those they are supporting

### 3. Implementation of and support for the role

51% of respondents said that they didn't have any ring-fenced time for the guardian role and the total proportion of respondents who had one day or less assigned to the role was 70%.



| 3.1 Amount of ring-fenced time | % respondents |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| None                           | 51%           |
| Up to 0.5 days / week          | 7%            |
| Up to 1 day / week             | 12%           |
| Up to 2 days / week            | 13%           |
| Up to 3 days / week            | 10%           |
| Up to 4 days / week            | 1%            |
| Up to 5 days / week            | 6%            |

Whilst we do see that some aspects of the role can be carried out alongside other work, and that many respondents are part of a local network of champions / ambassadors which widens the opportunities for speaking up, the general lack of time ring-fenced for the role is a cause for concern (table 3.1). The guardian role includes both proactive and reactive elements and time is needed to communicate the role, engage with staff, form partnerships across the organisation, consider and triangulate data that might indicate barriers to speaking up, and report to and engage with the board and the wider network of guardians. This is in addition to supporting

people who wish to speak up and ensuring that each issue that is brought up is properly handled, that feedback is given, and that any lessons that should be learnt are learnt. We therefore strongly recommend that every trust sets aside ring-fenced time for guardians to carry out their role.

## #10. Time

We strongly recommend that all trusts provide ring-fenced time for anyone appointed as a guardian / ambassador / champion to carry out their role and attend training, regional and national network meetings, and other events.

How much time that should be set aside will need to consider local circumstances and, of course, guardians / champions / ambassadors who are already in the role will be able to offer their own thoughts and advice.

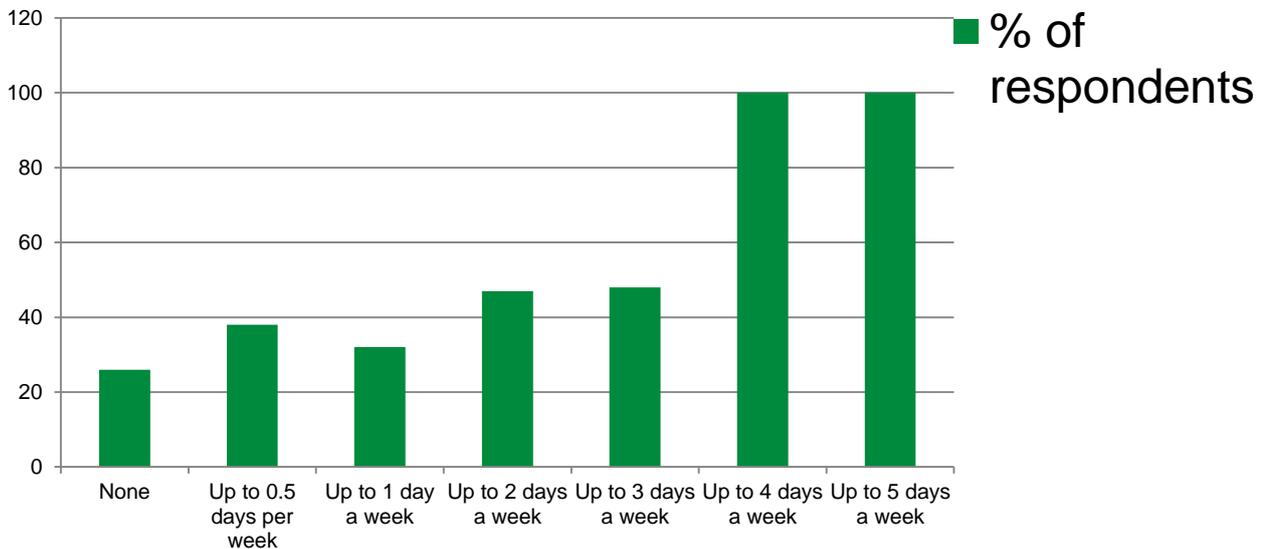
We asked whether respondents felt that they had sufficient time for the guardian role (table 3.2). **38%** agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I have sufficient time to carry out the guardian role appropriately for my organisation', **38%** disagreed or strongly disagreed, and **25%** neither agreed nor disagreed.

| <b>3.2 Response to the question 'I have sufficient time to carry out the guardian role appropriately for my organisation'</b> | <b>% respondents</b> |
|---|----------------------|
| Strongly agree  | 12%                  |
| Agree   | 26%                  |
| Neither agree nor disagree  | 25%                  |
| Disagree  | 30%                  |
| Strongly disagree   | 8%                   |

The proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement varied depending on how much time was ring-fenced for the guardian role (table 3.3).

| <b>3.3 Time ring-fenced for the guardian role</b> | <b>Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement 'I have sufficient time to carry out the guardian role appropriately for my organisation'</b> |
|---|---|
| None  | 26%   |
| Up to 0.5 days per week                           | 38%   |
| Up to 1 day a week                                | 32%   |
| Up to 2 days a week                               | 47%   |
| Up to 3 days a week                               | 48%   |
| Up to 4 days a week                               | 100%  |
| Up to 5 days a week                               | 100%  |

## 'I have sufficient time to carry out the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role appropriately for my organisation'



We also asked respondents for their thoughts on how confident they were about meeting the needs of their staff. Overall, **41%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I am confident that I am meeting the needs of staff in my trust', **37%** neither agreed nor disagreed, and **22%** disagreed or strongly disagreed.

| 3.4 Response to the question 'I am confident that I am meeting the needs of staff in my trust' | % respondents |
|--|---------------|
| Strongly agree   | 4%            |
| Agree  | 37%           |
| Neither agree nor disagree   | 37%           |
| Disagree   | 17%           |
| Strongly disagree  | 5%            |

Again, the response to this question varied depending on the amount of time ring-fenced for the guardian role.



| 3.5 Time ring-fenced for the guardian role | Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement ‘I am confident that I am meeting the needs of staff in my trust’ |
|--|--|
| None                                       | 36%  |
| Up to 0.5 days per week                    | 31%  |
| Up to 1 day a week                         | 36%  |
| Up to 2 days a week                        | 43%  |
| Up to 3 days a week                        | 50%  |
| Up to 4 days a week                        | 100%   |
| Up to 5 days a week                        | 64%  |

Whilst the numbers of respondents having 4 or 5 days a week ring-fenced for the role are low, and therefore the reliability of this analysis is limited, these apparent trends are interesting and not unexpected. Setting time aside to allow an individual to carry out Freedom to Speak Up work not only allows them to get that work done but, potentially, increases their confidence in their ability to meet the needs of staff.

Looking at budgets, **67%** of respondents indicated that there was no specific non-pay budget set aside for Freedom to Speak Up activities (though we do note that **24%** of respondents didn’t know whether a budget had been set aside or not).

| <b>3.6 Non-pay budget for Freedom to Speak Up activities</b> | <b>% respondents</b> |
|--|----------------------|
| There is no specific budget set aside                        | 67%                  |
| Less than £500   | 1%                   |
| Over £500 but less than £1,000                               | 1%                   |
| Over £1,000 but less than £2,000                             | 1%                   |
| Over £2,000 but less than £5,000                             | 3%                   |
| Over £5,000 but less than £10,000                            | 2%                   |
| Over £10,000   | 1%                   |
| Don't know   | 24%                  |

We also asked whether respondents felt that they had access to the budget that they need. **28%** agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I have access to the budget I need', **44%** neither agreed nor disagreed and **29%** disagreed or strongly disagreed.

| <b>3.7 Response to the question 'I have access to the budget I need'</b> | <b>% respondents</b> |
|--|----------------------|
| Strongly agree   | 8%                   |
| Agree  | 20%                  |
| Neither agree nor disagree   | 44%                  |
| Disagree   | 21%                  |
| Strongly disagree  | 8%                   |

Common sense suggests that Freedom to Speak Up activities require some budgetary investment though, given its cross-cutting nature, this may not always translate into the requirement to have a specific budget set aside and, depending on local change initiatives and other campaigns, Freedom to Speak Up messages can be incorporated in other activities.

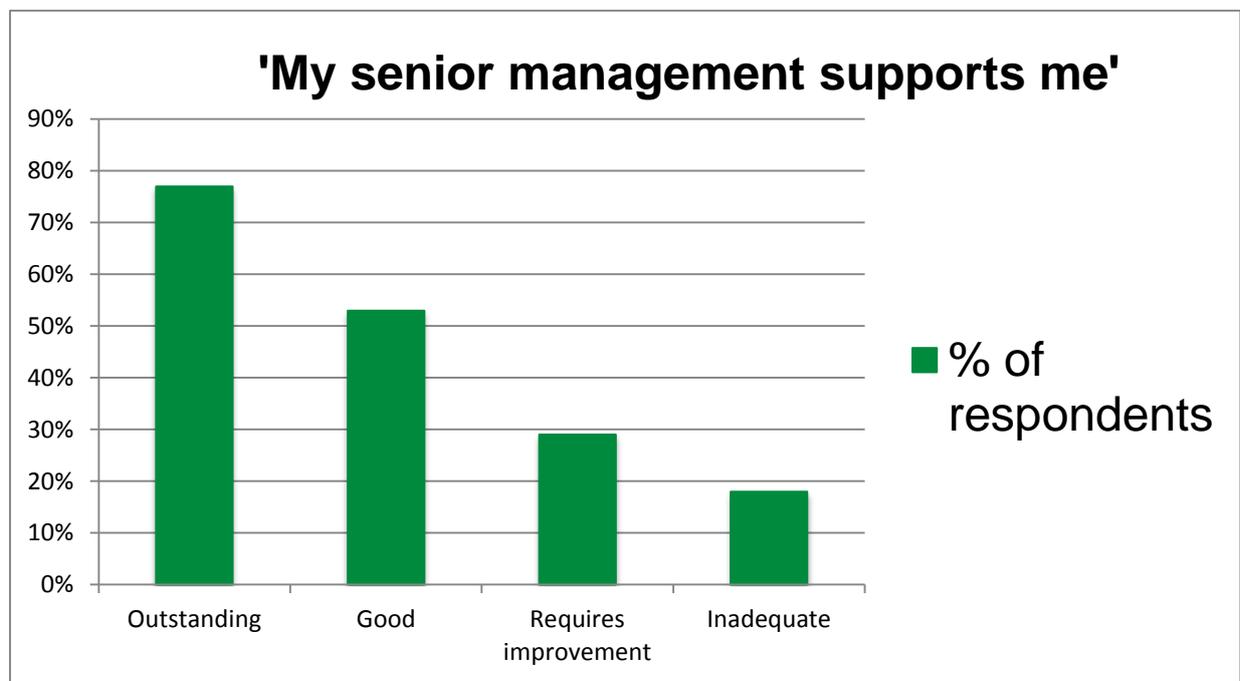
We asked respondents whether they felt supported by their chief executive and senior management team and the response was encouraging:

| <b>3.8</b>  | <b>"My senior management team supports me"</b> | <b>"My chief executive supports me"</b> |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement</b> | 81%  | 85%                                     |
| <b>Proportion of respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing</b>                 | 16%  | 12%                                     |
| <b>Proportion of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing</b>              | 3%   | 3%                                      |

We hope this support continues. Whilst Freedom to Speak Up, by its nature, can be challenging and can shine a light on sometimes uncomfortable truths, we would encourage all senior leaders to think of the issues it raises as opportunities for improvement and for all those involved to seek to continue to pursue the agenda in an open and transparent way, acknowledging issues and promoting the changes that we know organisations can and do make in response to them.

Freedom to Speak Up is now an integral part of the well-led domain of Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections. Whilst this is a recent initiative, listening and responding to people who speak up, and tackling the barriers to speaking up, is a natural ingredient of good leadership, which itself has always been a significant element of the CQC-rating process. It is therefore with interest that we observed the apparent correlation between CQC-rating and perceptions of the support that respondents felt they received from senior managers and chief executives.

| <b>3.9 CQC rating</b>       | <b>Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “My senior management team supports me”</b> | <b>Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “My Chief Executive supports me”</b> |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Outstanding</b>          | 92%   | 92%  |
| <b>Good</b>                 | 84%   | 89%  |
| <b>Requires improvement</b> | 83%   | 84%  |
| <b>Inadequate</b>           | 54%   | 64%  |



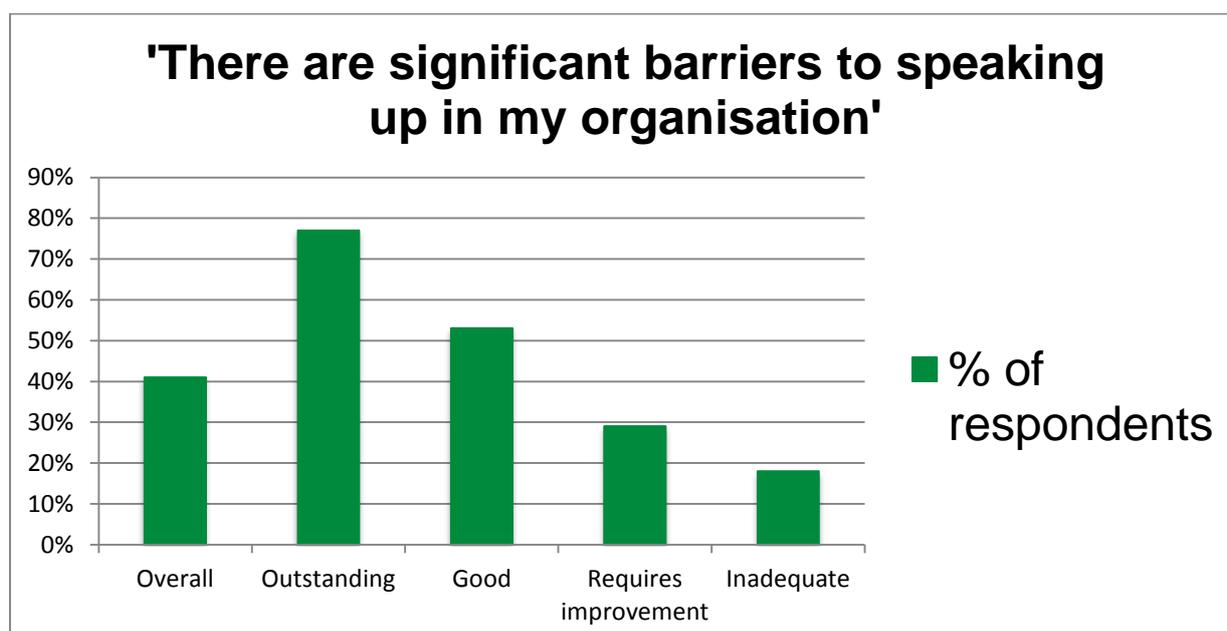
Whilst we have not carried out any analysis beyond looking at this simple trend, this result does suggest that trusts and foundation trusts which have higher CQC-ratings do tend to be the ones that support their guardians most, and emphasises the correlation between Freedom to Speak Up and the general quality of service that an organisation delivers.

With regard to support more generally, **78%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I have access to the support I need', **15%** neither agreed or disagreed, and **8%** disagreed or strongly disagreed.

| <b>3.10 Response to the question 'I have access to the support I need'</b> | <b>% respondents</b> |
|--|----------------------|
| Strongly agree   | 34%                  |
| Agree  | 44%                  |
| Neither agree nor disagree   | 15%                  |
| Disagree   | 8%                   |
| Strongly disagree  | 0%                   |

Again, there may be a correlation between CQC rating and perceived levels of support with a higher proportion of respondents in outstanding trusts responding positively to this question:

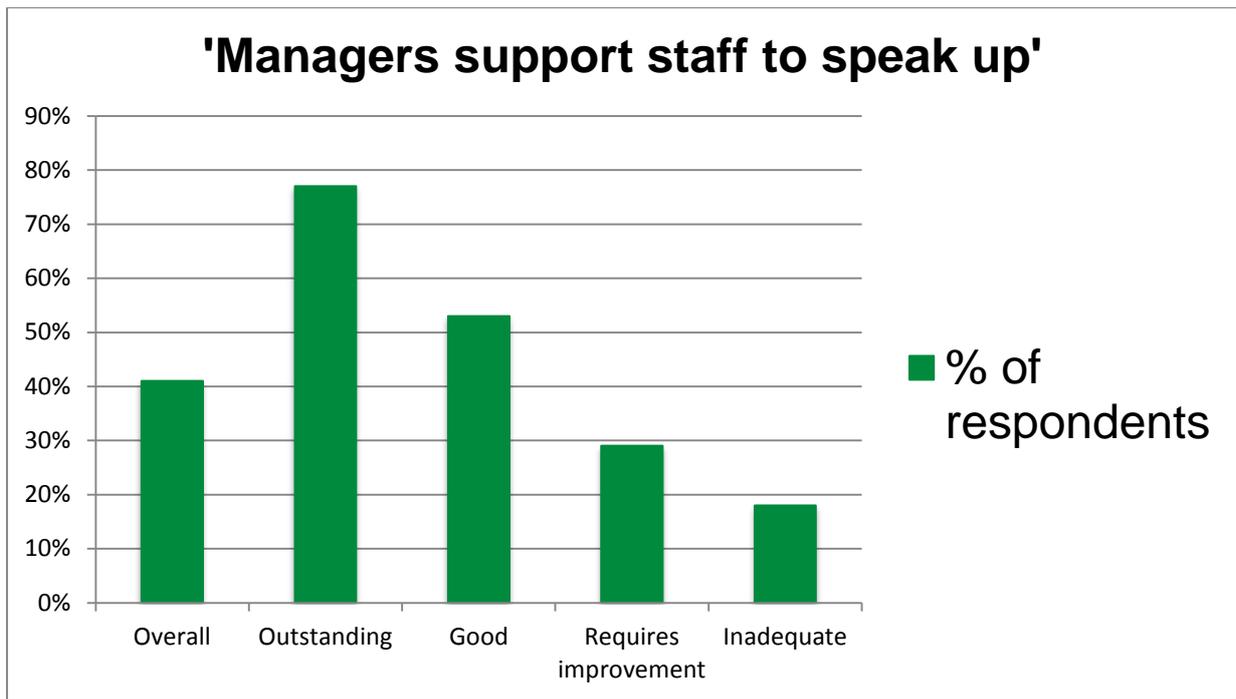
| <b>3.11 CQC rating</b>      | <b>Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement "I have access to the support I need"</b> |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Outstanding</b>          | 92%   |
| <b>Good</b>                 | 77%   |
| <b>Requires Improvement</b> | 77%   |
| <b>Inadequate</b>           | 72%   |



## 4. Perceptions of Freedom to Speak Up

We asked respondents for their opinions about a number of elements of speaking up

| 4.1 Statement  | Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement |             |      |                      |            |
|--|--|-------------|------|----------------------|------------|
|  | CQC rating   |             |      |                      |            |
|  | Overall  | Outstanding | Good | Requires improvement | Inadequate |
| <b>The guardian role is making a difference</b>                                      | 60%  | 70%         | 51%  | 66%                  | 54%        |
| <b>My organisation has a positive culture of speaking up</b>                         | 55%  | 77%         | 65%  | 43%                  | 45%        |
| <b>Speaking up is taken seriously in my organisation</b>                             | 72%  | 84%         | 81%  | 68%                  | 36%        |
| <b>There are significant barriers to speaking up in my organisation (graph p.22)</b> | 25%  | 0%          | 21%  | 27%                  | 45%        |
| <b>My organisation is actively tackling barriers to speaking up</b>                  | 70%  | 85%         | 72%  | 71%                  | 45%        |
| <b>People in my organisation do not suffer detriment as a result of speaking up</b>  | 43%  | 62%         | 54%  | 34%                  | 27%        |
| <b>Managers support staff to speak up (graph p.24)</b>                               | 41%  | 77%         | 53%  | 29%                  | 18%        |
| <b>Senior leaders support staff to speak up</b>                                      | 67%  | 85%         | 78%  | 55%                  | 45%        |
| <b>My organisation sees speaking up as an opportunity to learn and improve</b>       | 75%  | 69%         | 81%  | 71%                  | 64%        |



Overall these results indicate that there is a way to go in creating the culture change that we wish Freedom to Speak Up to generate, particularly in relation to perceptions of the support that managers give to speaking up. However, there are some encouraging responses: **72%** of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement “speaking up is taken seriously in my organisation”; **70%** of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement “my organisation is actively tackling barriers to speaking up” ; and **75%** agree or strongly agree with the statement “my organisation sees speaking up as an opportunity to learn and improve”. Our ambition is that responses to these questions will become more positive as the guardian role becomes embedded into the fabric of the NHS.

Whilst the trend towards more positive responses being given by trusts that are rated as ‘outstanding’ is of interest, we should note that the numbers of responses received from outstanding (and inadequate) trusts is small compared to trusts rated as good or requiring improvement.

Looking at these responses based on the services provided by an organisation, it is interesting to note that guardians / ambassadors / champions that work in organisations that provide mental health services tend to respond most positively to the questions we asked about Freedom to Speak Up culture, with those who work in ambulance services responding the most negatively.

| 4.2 Statement  | Proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement |           |               |           |            |
|--|--|-----------|---------------|-----------|------------|
|  | Services provided  |           |               |           |            |
|  | Acute  | Community | Mental Health | Ambulance | Specialist |
| The guardian role is making a difference                                     | 57%  | 65% +     | 65% +         | 61%       | 50% -      |
| My organisation has a positive culture of speaking up                        | 48%  | 59%       | 66% +         | 44% -     | 52%        |
| Speaking up is taken seriously in my organisation                            | 66%  | 73%       | 82% +         | 44% -     | 62%        |
| There are significant barriers to speaking up in my organisation             | 25%  | 29%       | 23% +         | 39% -     | 32%        |
| My organisation is actively tackling barriers to speaking up                 | 68%  | 69%       | 74% +         | 50% -     | 64%        |
| People in my organisation do not suffer detriment as a result of speaking up | 35%  | 41%       | 44% +         | 23% -     | 28%        |
| Managers support staff to speak up   | 36%  | 38%       | 39% +         | 33% -     | 36%        |
| Senior leaders support staff to speak up                                     | 62%  | 69%       | 75% +         | 55% -     | 64%        |
| My organisation sees speaking up as an opportunity to learn and improve      | 73%  | 76%       | 80% +         | 55% -     | 66%        |

+ most positive response

- least positive response

## 5. Successes and challenges

We asked respondents to provide examples of success and challenges. Whilst many respondents felt it was too early to give specific examples, there were some clear themes.

**Successes:** The most common examples of success were around communication where successful awareness campaigns had been run and messages sent out in corporate communications. There were also common themes around staff confidence and supporting staff with guardians having examples of feedback to suggest that they had given individuals more confidence to speak up and being thanked for the support they had given individuals at a difficult time.

Other successes included the emergence of strong leadership for speaking up amongst senior leaders, the development of good partnership working, a sense of achievement from making progress with individual cases, and comments about how Freedom to Speak Up has supported more general change in an organisation.

**Challenges:** By far the most cited challenge was around not having sufficient time to do all that that the role encompasses. Compounding challenges were ones of geography, where services are spread out and delivered in a large number of sites, and the need to balance the workload against pressures of another role that a guardian may hold.

Other sources of challenge were lack of support or general wariness of managers, potential conflicts with other responsibilities that a guardian may hold, general feelings of a lack of support (particularly amongst senior managers), and an existing lack of confidence amongst staff about speaking speaking up.

**Other:** We asked respondents whether they had been on the introductory / foundation training for the guardian role, how supported they felt by the National Guardian's Office, and what other training and support they felt that they needed. **70%** of respondents had attended introductory / foundation training, with **47%** of respondents also attending other training connected to the role. Respondents gave a range of opinions on their requirements for further training and guidance. The National Guardian's Office will continue to offer foundation training sessions and move to a model where initial training can be delivered at the regional level.

The National Guardian's Office will also work with Health Education England and the NHS Leadership Academy to source appropriate training and development to help to continually develop and improve the skills that individuals in the guardian network possess. Respondents gave a range of suggestions about how the National Guardian's Office can better support the guardian network. It will look into those suggestions and work with the network to ensure that all guardians receive the support they need.

# Annex

## Survey questions

### A. ABOUT YOU AND WHAT YOU DO

#### B.

#### 1. How were you appointed?

- I was personally approached and interviewed
- I was personally approached but was not interviewed
- I volunteered and was interviewed
- I volunteered but was not interviewed
- I was elected and interviewed
- I was elected but was not interviewed
- I was nominated and interviewed
- I was nominated but was not interviewed
- I was recruited internally through open competition
- I was recruited externally through open competition
- I work for an external provider
- Other (please specify)

#### 2. How long have you been in post?

- Not yet started
- Less than 3 months
- 3 – 6 months
- 7 – 12 months
- 13 – 18 months
- 18 months or longer

#### 3. Do you have another role?

- Yes
- No

#### 4. If yes, please select from the following which best describes you

- Doctor
- Nurse
- Healthcare Assistant
- Midwife
- Dentist
- AHP
- Healthcare Scientist
- Therapist

- Admin & Clerical
- Maintenance / Ancillary
- Technician
- HR
- Corporate Services
- OD
- Safety
- Chaplain
- Governor
- Other (please specify)

**5. What grade or band are you?**

- VSM
- 9
- 8d
- 8c
- 8b
- 8a
- 7
- 6
- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- Volunteer
- Other (please specify)

**6. How much time is ring-fenced for you to carry out the guardian role?**

- None
- Up to 0.5 days per week
- Up to 1 day per week
- Up to 2 days per week
- Up to 3 days per week
- Up to 4 days per week
- Up to 5 days per week

**7. Are you part of a network of guardian champions / ambassadors (or similar) in your organisation?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**8. Do you have a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian ‘buddy’?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**9. What communication and training activities do you carry out as part of your role?**

- Communication / publicity of your role through internal channels (e.g. staff newsletters)
- Communication / publicity of your role externally (e.g. local press, speaking engagements)
- Attending or incorporating Freedom to Speak Up messages in staff inductions
- Attending or incorporating Freedom to Speak Up messages in other staff training
- Attending team meetings
- Carrying out surveys about Freedom to Speak Up
- Other (please specify)

**10. Which parts of your organisation do you regularly work with?**

- Senior leaders / the Board
- HR
- Communication teams
- Organisational Development teams (or similar)
- Training and development teams
- Union / staff side representatives
- Staff diversity networks
- Patient representative groups
- Other (please specify)

**11. Do you have direct access to my CEO?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**12. Do you have direct access to the Non-Executive Director who has speaking up as part of their portfolio?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**13. Do you present reports to Board meetings in person?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**14. Do you gather feedback on your performance?**

- Yes
- No

**15. What non-pay budget is there for guardian activities in your trust (budget per annum)?**

- There is no specific budget set aside for guardian activities
- Less than £500
- Over £500 but less than £1000
- Over £1000 but less than £2000
- Over £2000 but less than £5000
- Over £5000 but less than £10,000
- More than £10,000
- Don't know

**16. Do you have personal experience of speaking up?**

- Yes
- No

*It would be helpful to know a little more of your experience if you are willing to describe it below. This information will be used to help the NGO understand the speaking up experience that exists within the guardian network*

**C. ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION**

**17. What service/s does your trust provide (select all that apply)?**

- Acute
- Community
- Mental Health
- Ambulance
- Specialist
- Other (please specify)

**18. Approximately, how many staff are employed in your Trust?**

**19. On how many sites?**

- 1
- 2 – 3

- 4 – 7
- 8 – 10
- More than 10 sites

**20. What is your organisation's current CQC rating?**

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

**D. YOUR THOUGHTS ON YOUR ROLE AND YOUR ORGANISATION**

**21. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

- I have sufficient time to carry out the guardian role appropriately for my organisation
- I am confident that I am meeting the needs of staff in my trust
- My senior management team supports me
- My Chief Executive supports me
- I have access to the support I need
- I have access to the budget I need

**22. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

- The guardian role is making a difference
- My organisation has a positive culture of speaking up
- Speaking up is taken seriously in my organisation
- There are significant barriers to speaking up in my organisation
- My organisation is actively tackling barriers to speaking up
- People in my organisation do not suffer detriment as a result of speaking up
- Managers support staff to speak up
- Senior leaders support staff to speak up
- My organisation sees speaking up as an opportunity to learn and improve

**E. TRAINING**

**23. Have you attended the introductory guardian-training workshop? (tick one)**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**24. Have you attended any other training connected to your guardian role?  
(tick one)**

- Yes
- No

**25. What other training and support would you find helpful**

- None
- Influencing skills
- Equality / diversity training
- Presentation skills
- Listening skills
- Report writing / general writing skills
- Dealing with difficult conversations training
- Personal resilience
- Network building
- Other (please specify)

**26. On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'fully supported' please indicate your response to the following statement: I am sufficiently supported by the National Guardian's Office?**

**27. What further support from the National Guardian's Office would you find helpful?**

## **F. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES**

**28. What success have you had in your guardian role? Please describe your achievements so far.**

**29. What are the most challenging aspects of your role?**

## **G. PERSONAL DETAILS**

**30. What is your age?**

- 16-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55+
- Prefer not to say

**31. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?**

- Yes
- No

- Prefer not to say

**32. What is your ethnic group? Please choose an answer that best describes your ethnic group or background**

- White
- Mixed / multiple ethnic groups
- Asian / Asian British
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- Chinese
- Other ethnic group

**33. What is your religion or belief?**

- No religion
- Buddhist
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Agnostic
- Christian
- Sikh
- Hindu
- Prefer not to say
- Other

**34. What is your sexuality?**

- Bisexual
- Gay man
- Gay woman / lesbian
- Heterosexual / straight
- Prefer not to say
- Other

**35. Are you**

- Single
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Married or in a civil partnership
- Prefer not to say

**36. What is your gender?**

- Male

- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other

**37. Is your gender the same as the gender identity that you were born with?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**38. Are you currently pregnant or have you been pregnant in the last year?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**39. Have you been on maternity leave within the past year?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say