

National Guardian Freedom to Speak Up News Conference Special



March 2017

Blackpool Guardian says “the key for us is togetherness”



What an incredible day the conference was for me. It was an immense privilege to share my story and I have been blown away by the feedback.

Whilst I appreciate that the events occurred nearly 20 years ago, the current culture shift is such that my experience is, in a peculiar way, more relevant today than it was 20 year ago.

Those events massively shaped me and, though they do not define me, it would be wrong for me not to contribute in whatever way I can to improving circumstances now for those with concerns. We must never forget that every concern is a gift – just brilliant, thank you Sean.

The real challenge for us is to maintain and drive forward the culture shift. That is no small task, though it is already starting to gather momentum, the sharing of my experience openly is absolute proof. Sir Robert’s reports set the scene and demonstrated the dangers if we don’t change.

The key for us is togetherness – working together, sharing good practice and assisting each other as we establish the culture of increased honesty and openness. We require speaking up to be business as usual.

Dr Nick Harper, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, Deputy Medical Director and Consultant Anaesthetist at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Wirral Guardian reflects on her journey and the “growing Freedom to Speak Up community”

It was a privilege to be a part of the National Conference and a great honour to chair a part of the proceedings. It was fantastic to see so many Trusts represented and to be able to support our growing Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) community in this vital agenda.



I was identified as one of the FTSU Guardians for Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in April 2015 and agreed to take on the role in addition to my part-time role as OD Facilitator.

Back then, when I attended my first NHS Employers share and learn forum, a handful of Guardians were present. What's amazing for me, is to see how the FTSU journey is unfolding, the lessons I'm learning along the way and the relationships being built with other colleagues across the country.

Most importantly, with thanks to Dr Nick Harper, Blackpool Teaching Hospital, his honest and detailed testimony further validated the reasons why we were all gathered together and why this agenda is so very important.

We cannot underestimate the support and encouragement we as Guardians can provide to those within our workplaces. Helping them to speak up is invaluable for all who use our services.

Sharon Landrum, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and OD Facilitator for Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and one of the Regional Leads for the North West

Wolverhampton Guardian launches local campaign at conference



Inspiring and encouraging are the two words I would use to describe the national conference last week; it built up my confidence to do my role at a local level.

It is fascinating to have the support nationally from Sir Robert Francis, Health Education England and, what I found most supportive, the time and presentation given by Phillip Dunne, Minister of State for Health. His words gave me that 'confidence boost' to go and make FTSU work!

I feel absolutely honoured to have the opportunity to host questions to a panel of five highly reputed individuals. Never had I done anything to this scale before and I must admit I felt I wasn't equipped. However, I fought off my nervousness and went with the aim of having fun! I really enjoyed the session and felt very proud.

I took the national conference as an opportunity to launch my local campaign, holding a series of *FTSU Road-Shows* throughout the week at various community

and acute venues in my organisation.

I have involved the Non-Executive Director, Chief Executive and Director of HR and Organisational Development to join me in the promotion of FTSU, giving executive, leadership support and raising the profile of the FTSU role at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and giving it the importance and dedication required.

I would like to say a special thanks to my organisation for providing me with the opportunity to be their FTSU Guardian and NGO for involving me in their national programme. I'm looking forward to the future of FTSU both locally and nationally.

Neelam Rai Mehay, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian for The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Regional Lead for West Midlands

The National Guardian's key announcements at the conference



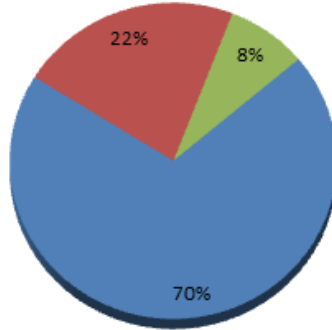
Dr Henrietta Hughes opened her address with the results of an informal pre-conference poll about how the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role is being implemented.

During the day, the audience participated in a number of other 'snap' polls, which gave further insight into the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role and the challenges that Guardians face.

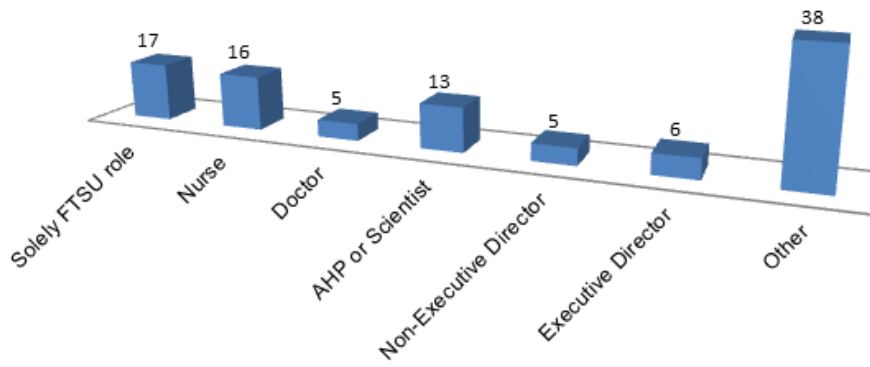
155 Guardians participated in the pre-conference poll. Please see the results below.

Protected time for FTSU role

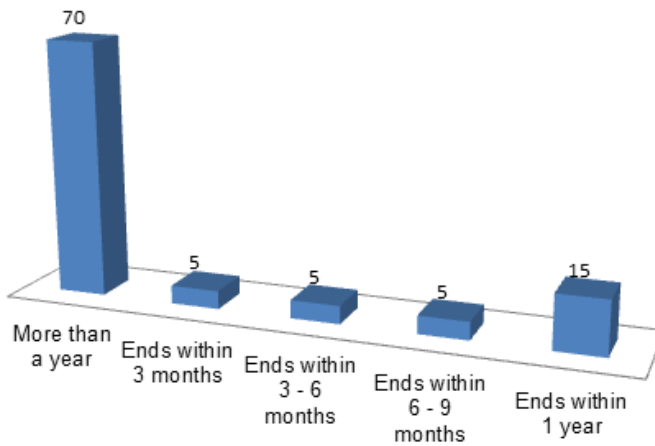
■ Less than 1 day per week ■ 2 - 3 days per week ■ More than 4 days per week

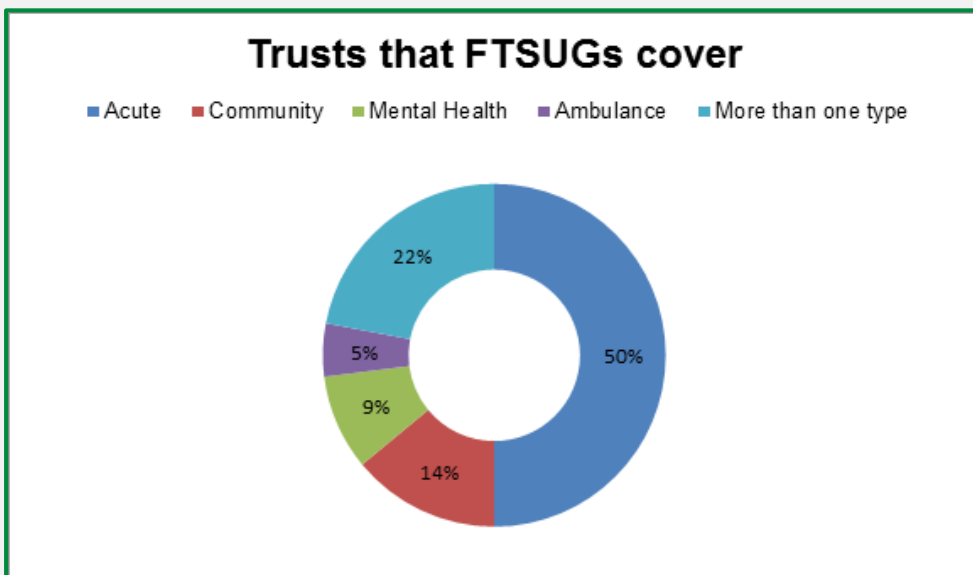
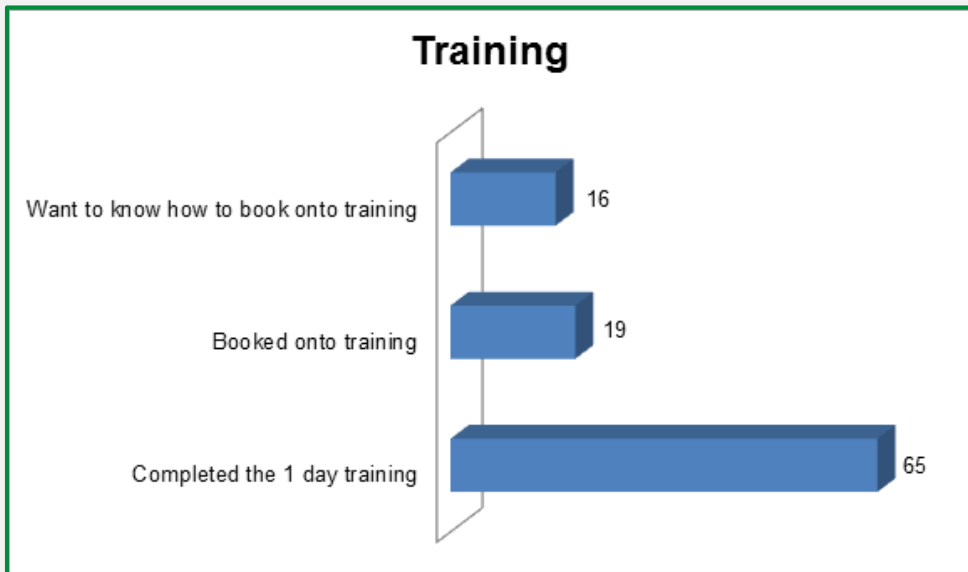


Background and other roles



Contract length





We are keen to ensure that the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role meets the needs of staff and the expectations of the role as set out in the example job description. Later in the year we will be carrying out some further research into the variety of ways in which the role is being implemented.

Dr Hughes also outlined the office’s proposed approach to case review and announced plans for Freedom to Speak Up Awards.

Watch out for further information about both of these areas. We would like the planned awards to be reflective of the hard work Guardians are doing so, if you have suggestions of award categories, we are keen to hear from you.

Health Minister Philip Dunne speaks at national conference



At the Conference, Philip Dunne, Minister of State for Health, said that he applauded the crucial work Freedom to Speak Up Guardians are doing to enable staff to speak up at NHS trusts.

In a statement, Health Minister Philip Dunne said: “For the first time, the Freedom to Speak Up Guardians from trusts across the country have come together to exchange their experiences as they work to develop a culture of openness and honesty in the NHS. These roles are incredibly important to ensure staff are able to raise patient safety and staffing concerns without fear as we work towards making the NHS the safest healthcare system in the world.”

Making Speaking Up Business as Usual video

At the Conference, HEE launched the video ‘Making Speaking Up Business as Usual’. This video is designed to show the difficult experiences that staff who have spoken up in the past have had, and explain the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role. Many thanks to Chris McGhee, Nick Harper, Helené Donnelly and Sonia Pearcey for their participation and their willingness to share their stories.

We think the video is a powerful way to highlight the importance of speaking up, encourage people to open up about previous experience they may have had, and showcase the Guardian role.

We would encourage all Guardians to use the video in their engagement activities, such as when speaking at team meetings or inductions, or as a tool to engage their Board or other staff groups.

The video will be available shortly on the HEE e-learning site and can also be accessed from the links below:

Click here for [non-subtitled video](#)

Click here for [subtitled video](#)

Outputs from the Conference

There were four workshops held during the Conference and HEE have produced short videos showing the reflections of workshop leads. These are available to view online by clicking on the topics below.

[What do I need to know? Assessing my current and future training needs](#)

[Building relationships with the HR team](#)

[Visibility and reach](#)

[Measuring effectiveness](#)

We also have photos from the conference and these will be made available to Guardians shortly.

We will shortly be sending out a post-conference pack including slides used during the day, outputs from the workshops and responses to the many questions that were raised on Sli.do during the day.

You asked, we did: Lanyards

Many Freedom to Speak Up Guardians have asked for branded lanyards to help with their visibility when walking the floor. In response, we are pleased to announce that we have purchased a number of three-point break lanyards.

We made these available at the Conference, alongside other marketing material, and they proved extremely popular.

We currently have more lanyards on order but if you did not have the chance to collect a Freedom to Speak Up lanyard you can still order them from us by contacting us on enquiries@nationalguardian.org.uk

Our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian badges are also proving popular, however, we understand that they may not be suitable for all clinical environments. We are keen to hear from Guardians if there are alternatives that may be helpful.

Please let us know how you get on with these resources, and let us know if there are other materials that you would find helpful.

If you have a news story or would like to share a personal or professional achievement for our newsletter, we would love to hear about it so please get in touch. If you have any feedback or queries about the contents of this newsletter, please contact us on enquiries@nationalguardian.org.uk