



**National
Guardian**

Freedom to Speak Up

Press release

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National Guardian's Office launches Freedom to Speak Up training for all workers

'Speak Up, Listen Up, Follow Up', a new e-learning package, is aimed at anyone who works in healthcare. Divided into three modules, it 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.

The National Guardian's Office, in association with Health Education England, has launched the first module aimed at all workers as part of its annual Speak Up Month campaign.

The first module 'Speak Up' is Core Training for all workers including volunteers, students and those in training, regardless of their contract terms. Its aim is to help everyone working in health to understand what speaking up is, how to speak up and what to expect when they do.

Dr Henrietta Hughes OBE, National Guardian for the NHS, said: "Workers' voices form a key pillar of the [People Plan](#). This e-learning will give all workers the tools to speak up, particularly those who may feel they are unable to, like trainees, bank staff, or volunteers. But it is beholden on all leaders and managers within health to support this work, by listening to what workers are saying and acting upon what they hear."

Importantly, this e-learning package is available to anybody, no matter where they work in health. Access is via Health Education England's e-Learning for Healthcare <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/freedom-to-speak-up/>

Dr Navina Evans, Chief Executive, HEE said: *"From the front line to the Board table the ability to Speak Up is vital to patient safety. The culture and processes that make Speaking up possible must be underpinned by the knowledge of how to Speak Up and how to respond when somebody does. This new e-learning package makes sure that knowledge is in place so that the NHS really can ensure Freedom to Speak Up is embedded in every service, every team and every organisation."*

"I am proud that we have worked with the National Guardian's Office to make this happen and urge every Board to ensure their organisation uses this resource as we will ourselves."



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The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian network is now nearly 600 strong, of which nearly 30% are from independent sector providers, national bodies and primary care organisations. Over 35,000 cases have been raised to Freedom to Speak Up guardians since 2017.

Dr Henrietta Hughes OBE said: “A positive speaking up culture leads to better care for patients. And this is what drives over a million people to go to work for the NHS every day. By making this training available to all workers, wherever they work in health, our ambition is to give everybody the tools and the understanding so they feel empowered to speak up and supported when they do.”

This e-learning module is the first of three sessions for organisations to build upon their speaking up culture. Subsequent modules for all line and middle managers, and senior leaders including executive and Non-Executive Directors, lay members and governors, will be launched later in the year.

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. It will help learners understand the vital role they play and the support available to encourage a healthy speaking up culture for the benefit of patients and colleagues.

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 focussed more on listening up and the barriers that can get in the way of speaking up (available soon).
- **Follow Up:** This training is aimed at all senior leaders including Executive and Non-Executive Directors (and equivalents), lay-members and governors to



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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 (available soon).

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 conducts case reviews into the handling of speaking up cases.

The role of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians and the National Guardian were established in 2016 following the events at Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and recommendations from Sir Robert Francis' Freedom to Speak Up Inquiry.

There are now nearly 600 Freedom to Speak Up guardians in NHS 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. The National Guardian's Office also provides challenge and learning to the healthcare system as a whole as part of its remit.

About the National Guardian for the NHS

Dr Henrietta Hughes OBE FRCGP was appointed as the National Guardian in July 2016. She provides leadership and support to Freedom to Speak Up Guardians across England in national bodies, NHS and independent sector organisations to ensure that speaking up becomes business as usual. Previously a Medical Director at NHS England, Dr Hughes continues her clinical role one day a week as a GP in central London.

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 programme 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.