

Holly Ashforth
Deputy Chief Nurse
3rd Floor Soho Centre for Health
1 Frith Street
London W1D 3HZ

Email: holly.ashforth@nhs.net

6 November 2023

Dear Mr. Brown

Re: CLCH actions in relation to the Lucy Letby verdict

Thank you for your letter sent to John Harle, CLCH Divisional Director of Nursing and Therapies, asking about any actions the Trust is taking following the Lucy Letby verdict. Please find an overview of what the Trust is doing to support staff raising concerns and oversight of this.

All staff have easy access to information on how to speak up. Information is available through the Trust Intranet outlining all of the avenues to support staff which includes – Patient Safety, Human Resources, Staff Side, Line Managers, Senior Leadership team and a Trust Freedom to Speak Up Guardian supported by a number of Freedom to Speak Up Champions. Following the verdict, we placed an article in our monthly Spotlight on Quality bulletin to remind staff of the support available with contact details and sign posting. As part of Speaking up month in October 2023, we also held webinars for staff on Listening Up (aimed at managers), raising concerns about safeguarding and raising concerns in relation to health and well-being.

The Trust is currently updating our Freedom to Speak Up Policy to ensure it aligns with the NHSE Policy. Relevant staff are aware of the National Speaking Up Support Scheme and actively refer individuals to the scheme as appropriate. The Trust Freedom to Speak Up Lead also works with the London Network of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, sharing good practice, and enabling staff to feel valued for having raised their concerns in CLCH as required.

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian has embarked on an engagement programme with all staff groups as part of a “*Know your FTSU*” campaign with a view to supporting staff voice and promoting the Speaking Up agenda. Mechanisms are in place to support staff who may have cultural barriers to speaking up include a ‘whats app’ group for our internationally recruited staff, a regular meeting with the International Recruitment team, and a pastoral support role for international recruits who is available for any support. We have implemented pastoral/induction facilitators in each division to support staff and to provide a buddy scheme for all new starters. We have a new staff side led bullying and harassment hotline for staff to contact anonymously and an active tackling unacceptable behaviour campaign in place. For staff working unsociable hours, we have dedicated email addresses for staff to use to raise a concern and out of hours, an on call system if needed.

There are a number of avenues for communicating with staff to build healthy and supporting cultures where everyone feels safe to speak up. This includes staff networks and professional conferences, a monthly bulletin – Spotlight on Quality and Spotlight on People (alternate each month), a bullying and harassment hotline, CEO connect events held by the Chief Executive

Chair: Tom Kibasi
Chief Executive Officer: James Benson

and Executives held in local boroughs, Clinical visits to teams from the Senior Leadership teams, divisional and local team meetings and, health and wellbeing seminars. We have also developed a new wellbeing conversations digital handbook and template to support staff in their wellbeing conversations and to make note of the wellbeing support they require and develop a personalised wellbeing action plan.

Active Bystander training continues to be implemented to help promote a psychologically safe culture in which staff feel safe to speak up and tackle inappropriate behaviour. The aim is to deliver 2 sessions/month. Each session is 75 minutes in total and delivered via MS Teams. Staff attend 1 session only.

Meetings are taking place monthly with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, Deputy Chief Nurse and Director of Patient Safety and Quality and Associate Director of Safeguarding to triangulate concerns being raised by staff and take action where any themes are emerging. The Trust Board also receive regular reports on speaking up through specific Quality, Safeguarding and HR reports in addition to a specific FTSU report presented to the Trust People Committee and Trust Board.

The recently revised NHS England Fit and Proper Person Framework has been reviewed to ensure that we are compliant with this and co-ordinated by the Trust Secretary.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Holly Ashforth', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Holly Ashforth
Deputy Chief Nurse (Director of Patient Experience and Education)
Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust