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Karen Taylor
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18 October 2023

Dear Neil and Geoff

Thank you for your letter regarding the conclusion of Lucy Letby case. The events identified by the court case are important for the NHS and the communities we support and at HPFT we have considered the very serious issues raised and are committed to ensuring we identify and implement the learning this case has highlighted.

I would first like to confirm that the Trust is compliant with all the requirements set out in the letter from NHS England dated 18 August 2023, and our Freedom to Speak up policy reflects the national policy. We have a full time Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, supported by an active group of Freedom to Speak Up Champions all based in services, where staff can readily access support and the ability to raise concerns.

We have an active campaign for 'speaking up' including a reminder to all new starters that the ask of them is not to walk by poor practice or poor behaviour, but to call it out. Although already in place, since Letby we have again increased our communication to staff, service users and families on how to raise concerns. We have also put systems in place to support those members of staff who may have cultural barriers to speaking up or who are in lower paid roles and may be less confident to do so. Also, for those who work unsociable hours and may not always be aware of, or have access to the policy or processes supporting speaking up.

Our Integrated Governance Committee and Trust Board receive regular reports on the Freedom to Speak Up concerns that have been received. The reports provide an analysis of trends, the services involved and timescales to resolve. It is worth noting that the number of anonymous concerns raised is very small and has decreased over recent years, evidence that those raising concerns are happy to do this freely and be involved in the resolution. It is also worth noting that despite the national coverage, and indeed our own campaign, we have not seen a rise in the number of Freedom to Speak Up cases since the outcome of the court case, but we continue to monitor the situation closely.

The letter from NHS England also sets out requirements regarding obligations under the Fit and Proper Person Requirements. Recently NHS England issued new guidance that has strengthened the Fit and Proper Person Framework. The changes have brought in the need for additional background checks, including a Board member reference template. The Trust have implemented the changes ahead of the required timescale and will continue to monitor compliance on an annual basis.

In addition to the immediate response and assurances regarding the requirements set out by NHS England's letter, we have reviewed information on our responsiveness when concerns are raised. This has involved us scrutinising all open Freedom to Speak Up

cases, Grievances, Complaints, Serious Incidents and concerns raised by the Care Quality Commission. Our Integrated Governance Committee and Board have received full reports and have been assured that the Trust has applied the appropriate level of scrutiny to this important aspect of quality of care provided to service users. We have also reported to our most recent Board meeting the response to NHS England's letter. We will continue to report on the quality of services to our Integrated Governance Committee and Trust Board ensuring that we are completely open and transparent with the information and actions being taken.

Importantly as well, from the outset we have supported staff affected by the Letby case, emphasising the wellbeing support available, the different routes to raise concerns and need to always be curious and challenge practice.

I trust this provides an overview of the actions we have taken and I would like to thank you for reaching out to us on this matter. We appreciate your support and working with you to ensure we continue to provide high quality care to our local communities.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "KTaylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Taylor
Chief Executive Officer