

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe Swansea Bay University Health Board



Meeting Date	13 October 2022	Agenda Item	2.1
Report Title	Guardian Service Bi-annua September 2022	I Up-date, April to	
Report Author	Julie Lloyd, OD & Staff Exper	rience Manager	
Report Sponsor	Debbie Eyitayo, Director for V		
Presented by	Julie Lloyd, OD & Staff Exper		
Freedom of	Open		
Information			
Purpose of the Report	The purpose of this paper is to date from the Guardian Servi to August 2022, and outline to towards recommendations de report.	ce Ltd. for the period on the actions taken to date	of April te
Key Issues	There is significant research, staff experience in Health Ca and improved quality of care able to raise concerns in a ca important part of enabling sta work, supports staff retention improving our services to environment for our staff. Th in the current post pander progress organisational re- sustainability.	are links to positive ou for our patients. Sta onfidential and safe wa aff to feel well and eng on and will help us t patients and the is could not be more pr nic climate and the r	itcomes ff being ay is an aged in to keep working revalent need to
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Specific Action	Information	Discussion	Assurance	Approval
Required (please choose one only)				
Recommendations	Service Note th 	asked to: ne bi-annual up-o e for 1 st April 202 ne actions taken mendations deta	2 to 31 st Augus to date, towards	t 2022. S

Guardian Service Bi-annual Up-date, April to September 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to provide a bi-annual up-date from the Guardian Service Ltd. for the period of April to September 2022, and outline the actions taken to date towards recommendations detailed in their end of year report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Historical Context

There is significant research, which confirms that a positive staff experience in Health Care links to positive outcomes and improved quality of care for our patients. Staff being able to raise concerns in a confidential and safe way is an important part of enabling staff to feel well and engaged in work, supports staff retention and will help us to keep improving our services to patients and the working environment for our staff. This could not be more prevalent in the current post pandemic climate and the need to progress organisational recovery, transformation and sustainability.

Prior to the Guardian Service being commissioned, there was evidence of the clear need to focus on addressing Bullying within ABMU (our predecessor organisation), in line with improving the experience and wellbeing of our staff and ultimately leading to better patient experience and outcomes. Evidence to support the need to address it included the tragic outcome of an inquest at that time, into the suicide of one of our staff. It was also the significant volume of responses to both the Chief Executive and Director of Workforce & OD's intranet blogs and the volume of e-mails of this nature sent direct to them both, as well as issues reported via Partnership Forum and e-mails received via the Raising Concerns Inbox, previously monitored by the OD & Staff Experience Team.

Both the 2018 and 2020 NHS Wales Staff Survey results also confirmed there is still the need to focus on Healthier Working Relationships and improving behaviours and culture across the organisation and NHS Wales. As a reminder, the 2020 national survey responses were as follows from those who said they had experienced bullying, harassment and abuse from:

- their manager 9.1%
- another colleague 16.2%
- a member of the public 14.8%

2.2 Progress to Date

The Guardian Service has been available as an additional way for staff, students and volunteers to raise work-related concerns independently, anonymously and 24/7 within SBUHB since May 2019 and it continues to be an integral part of implementing our culture change programme and supporting our Health Board Values to become a lived experience for all.

In evaluating the impact of the Guardian Service Ltd cumulatively to date, the following points should be noted as key deliverables/outcomes:

- Provision of an independent, safe, confidential, bilingual service for staff, volunteers and students to raise any work-related concerns
- Available **24/7**, **365 days** a year majority of contacts are reported to want to meet outside of work hours
- As a Health Board, we **listened** to staff and **delivered** what they asked for
- The number of staff raising concerns and speaking up has significantly increased (from the former internal process – only 5 concerns raised between November 2018 and May 2019)
- Number of concerns raised aligned to the 100 projected per year for the size of the organisation (**96** by the end of the first 12 months). See Table 1 below for a comparison of activity for the same period, by financial year to date.
- **251 staff** listened to/spoken up and or sign posted in confidence (May 2019 to August 2022)
- **185 concerns resolved/closed** (74% of total concerns raised to date, May 2019 to August 2022)
- Provides an infrastructure to support and deliver the All Wales 'Procedure for NHS Staff to Raise Concerns' and the expectation to improve raising concerns across NHS Wales by Welsh Government
- Compliant with the Welsh Active Offer with the service available to contacts in Welsh.
- The service is positively received by those contacts completing the anonymous feedback forms after using the service and raising a concern.
- There have been a total of **57 promotional/communications activities** (including evenings, weekends and bank holidays) between April and September 2022.

Month	Contacts per month 2019-20	Contacts per month 2020-21	Contacts per month 2021-22	Contacts per month 2022-23
April	N/A	5	5	3
Мау	2	5	10	4
June	7	8	5	3
July	6	4	5	6

Table 1.

August	10	10	5	4
Total for period	25	32	30	20

2.2.1 The Guardian Service Cumulative Report, August 2022 – Key Points

- There has been a steady average of 4 contacts per month during the current reporting year to date (April to August 2022)
- The number of contacts is lower than during the same period in previous reporting years, however this is also reflected in other areas such as up-take of leadership and wellbeing programmes and sessions and our staff recognition events, so we need to consider the current climate across the organisation.
- It is positive to see that there have been no concerns raised under the theme of Bullying and Harassment, although Management Issue remains the main reason for contacting the service (April to August 2022)
- Whilst we had seen positive progress towards our aim of creating a culture of openness and honesty, with less contacts wanting to keep their concern confidential at the end of the last reporting year (reducing from 94% to 74%) year), this year is currently reporting at 80%. In terms of reasons for using the service, fear of reprisal is up from 3.33% last year to 15% this year, so are points to note and keep an eye on.

2.3 Actions Taken Towards Guardian Service Recommendations

The following table outlines a summary of the recommendations from the Guardian Service End of Year Report and the actions that have either been taken or are in progress, along with who is responsible for their delivery.

Table 2.

Recommendation	Action	Who and Timeline
There has been a marked increase in staff believing that they have raised the concern before but have not been listened to / nothing has been done. The figures would suggest that the organization has much work to do dealing with long standing issues that maybe due to the pandemic have not been addressed.	the Consultant Development	Service Groups, all levels of managers and Workforce & OD, on-going until 31 st March 2023

		1
Fully embed SBU values across the organisation with a view of improving culture and behaviours.	175 new starters have completed our virtual Values Led Corporate Induction Programme.	
	Data is being shared and triangulated on a monthly basis with HR Business Partners and OD Leads, the Patient Feedback Team, Datix and the mediation co-ordinator to gain a picture of hot spot areas and enable targeted prioritisation of OD support. Appendix 2 provides a high-level dashboard detailing some of the triangulation with wider Workforce data.	
	Awareness sessions have been arranged at most leadership forums across Service Groups, as well as Grand Round to communicate about the Guardian Service and what we know from our experience of using the service so far. There have been a total of 57 promotional/communications activities (including evenings, weekends and bank holidays) between April and September 2022.	Workforce & OD, service groups, between July and November 2022
	Promotion of national 'Speak Up Month' in October 2022, making links with world Mental Health Day and including sessions with our Mediators, Chaplains, Guardian Service and Civility Saves Lives, link to our values and providing an introduction to the Respect & Resolution Policy.	Learning, OD & Staff Experience, Wellbeing, Mediators, Chaplaincy, the Guardians, October 2022
	Interview and appointment of 'The Big Conversation and OD Culture Project Lead' to lead the culture programme of work,	Workforce & OD, Trade Union Partners, Service Groups, all

	which will progress through an informed, co-productive 'big conversation' style staff engagement programme.	managers and staff, Autumn 2022 on-going.
	Integrate the Guardian Service and wider options of support into service transformation plans as a way of promoting a culture of speaking up and being able to learn from staff concerns.	Workforce & OD, Service Groups
While the commitment of the Board and Executive team at Swansea Bay University Health Board to the Guardian Service has been excellent, consideration should be given to publicising personal commitments from each member with regard to "raising concerns" in order to further cement to staff that the Board/Executive team are committed to the "Raising Concerns" Policy.	Build in Board and Executive Team commitment statements as part of communication and promotion of the national speak up safely launch during Autumn 2022 as well as national campaigns such as anti-bullying week and safeguarding week in November 2022. Executives and Senior leaders have signed personal pledges in support of national speak up month and have had photos taken to support our Twitter campaign throughout the month. The Director of Workforce & OD is also quoted as part of an article, featuring in Bay News and a bulletin article	Workforce & OD & Corporate Communications, October/November 2022
A series of 1-1 meetings should be arranged with each member of the Board and Executive Team, further strengthening the understanding of the Service as an agent for change working with the organisation for the betterment of staff.	promoting the campaign. Awareness and promotion of the service and escalation protocol via Executive Team, Audit Committee, Workforce & OD Committee, LNC on a quarterly, 6-monthly and annual basis, as well as via the on-call rota.	Workforce & OD, Executive Team, Service Group Directors, on-going
A continued focus on reducing the number of "open" Guardian Service cases	The Guardians hold regular reviews with their operational manager to go through each contact and follow up the position. Progress is however very much determined by the individual	SBU's Independent Guardians, on- going

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	contact and whether they wish to escalate. It is also determined by the responsiveness of line managers where a concern has been agreed to escalate.	
The issue of staff turnover is common theme from staff and there needs to be a concerted effort to publicise to staff the considerable extent of the efforts being undertaken to recruit new staff while ensuring that the programmes to retain and value existing staff continue. There is still work to do to educate around the	Newly formed Resourcing & Retention team in place, focusing on the promotion and marketing of Swansea Bay as an employer of choice. All communication media (including social media) used to promote vacancies, spotlighting vacancies of the week and supporting applicants/potential applicants with useful information.	Workforce & OD, on-going
recruitment activity that is taking place. Focus is needed to improve consistency of policy with regard to exit interviews across the Health Board to avoid learning and improvement opportunities being missed.	Retention group now in place looking at developing and roll out of a retention plan Plans to work with Hywel Dda Health Board to understand their 'Thinking of Leaving' process and adoption within Swansea Bay are underway.	Workforce & OD, Autumn/Winter 2022
Continue to improve the length of time it takes to		Trade Union
	There is currently work taking place on the new Workforce & OD SharePoint site for staff, where Speaking Up Safely will have a dedicated, easy access section and see the integration/offering of support	Workforce & OD Intranet SharePoint Delivery Group, July 2022

	available providing clarity on	
A continued programme of communication and engagement sessions is required to promote the Guardian Service to all staff groups wherever they are located.	where to go. There have been a total of 57 promotional/communications activities (including evenings, weekends and bank holidays) between April and September 2022.	The Guardian Service, Workforce & OD, Corporate Communications
	The Guardian Service along with other staff support services are promoted via the Health Board's Staff Briefing from the CEO, Virtual Induction for new starters, via Wellbeing, periodically via the quarterly Staff Experience e-Newsletter and via the Staff Experience SharePoint Site, The Guardian Service's dedicated Intranet/staff internet pages, ESR, Datix and via relevant campaigns such as Adult Learners Week and Anti- bullying Week as well as leadership development programmes, such as Footprints, Bridges and REACT Mental Health Training.	
	Awareness sessions currently on-going at all local leadership forums to communicate about the Guardian Service and what we know from our experience of using the service so far.	The Guardian
	New, up-dated promotional material has been produced and is being disseminated across Service Groups by The Guardian Service for use and display (infection control compliant) widely across the Health Board. The new resources will be bilingual and include a QR code for staff to quickly and confidentially access details of the service on their personal devices without	Sign off from Service Groups and co-ordination via the Guardians Service & OD and Staff Experience Manager

	the need to have access to a work PC or be concerned about being seen writing down the contact details.	
partnership working between the Guardian	Work continues to foster positive relationships with Trade Union Partners and has been reported encouraging from the Guardians, to see some increase in engagement.	Workforce & OD and Chair of Health Board Partnership

2.3 Speak Up Safely – Sub-group of Welsh Partnership Forum

The subgroup of Welsh Partnership forum set up to discuss and develop proposals for an All Wales approach to Raising Concerns has received the findings and recommendations from research undertaken by Professor Aled Jones of Cardiff University in relation to Freedom to Speak Up in NHS England (based mainly on internal Speak Up Guardians) which has been further supported by a recent article in the Nursing Times (31st March 2022) that talked about a decline in the speaking up culture in NHS England in spite of it being a mandate and monitoring by the National Guardian Office (NGO).

The sub-group has also undertaken an evaluation into the current/existing arrangements across NHS Wales for staff to speak up and raise concerns, which is to be shared with Welsh Partnership Forum. A framework and toolkit is currently being finalised by the sub-group to supplement and enhance the All Wales Procedure for NHS Staff Raising Concerns and this work is to be linked with the Healthy Working Relationship agenda, Just & Learning Culture implementation.

In line with the recent change in legislation, the operational lead has met with the Executive Director of Nursing and those leading on the work in Welsh Government to ensure Swansea Bay UHB is compliant with the Duty of Candour in the operation of the Guardian Service from March 2022. The lead has also ensured connections have been made between the Duty of Candour Leads and the Lead for the National Speak Up Safely Group to ensure there isn't any duplication in the work being taken forward.

3 GOVERNANCE AND RISK ISSUES

- As we remain the first and only Health Board in Wales to take forward the service, we can only refer to colleagues and Trusts in England that have taken it forward and use it to learn lessons as we continue to monitor and evaluate the service.
- There is still the need to manage perception around the service and educate managers and staff about the service to be clear that this is an additional avenue for staff to reach out in confidence and that it does not replace

manager's managing staff, trade union support, HR processes or wellbeing support available.

- As we continue to take a multi-faceted, multi-levelled approach as part of the Healthier Working Relationships agenda, improving partnership working with staff side and developing an organisational culture of openness, honesty and trust, it is difficult to fully evaluate the benefits of The Guardian Service and are unable to attribute reductions formal cases purely to the Guardian Service.
- Whilst there may have been a reduction in the number of formal Employee Relations cases, the introduction of the Guardian Service has resulted in further enquiries and investigations for operational HR colleagues to respond to, raised at an earlier stage in the process.
- As previously committed, the Local Partnership Forum will be offered to engage in a full evaluation of the Guardian Service and be an integral part of the wider speaking up safely agenda.

4 **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to:

- Note the bi-annual up-date from the Guardian Service for 1st April 2022 to 31st August 2022.
- Note the actions taken to date, towards recommendations detailed in their end of year report.

Link to		promoting and
Enabling	empowering people to live well in resilient communities	
Objectives	Partnerships for Improving Health and Wellbeing	
(please choose)	Co-Production and Health Literacy	
	Digitally Enabled Health and Wellbeing	
	Deliver better care through excellent health and care service	es achieving the
	outcomes that matter most to people	
	Best Value Outcomes and High Quality Care	
	Partnerships for Care	
	Excellent Staff	\boxtimes
	Digitally Enabled Care	
	Outstanding Research, Innovation, Education and Learning	
Health and Ca	re Standards	
(please choose)	Staying Healthy	
	Safe Care	
	Effective Care	
	Dignified Care	
	Timely Care	
	Individual Care	

The Guardian Service aims to improve staff experience through helping to create a culture of openness and honesty and demonstrate we are listening by responding to what staff asked for. The direct correlation between patient experience and staff experience is well documented.

The previous Raising concerns process with no dedicated pathway or infrastructure to support staff creates risk to staff, patients and the wider organisation.

Legal Implications (including equality and diversity assessment)

It is important to consider the internal policies and the legislation which are linked to the provision of a confidential, safe and effective pathway and process for staff to raise concerns.

Internal policies include but are not limited to -

- -Grievance Policy
- -Disciplinary Policy
- -Dignity at Work Policy
- -Raising Concerns Policy

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

If workers bring information about a wrongdoing to the attention of their employers or a relevant organisation, they are protected in certain circumstances under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. This is commonly referred to as 'blowing the whistle'. The law that protects whistle-blowers is for the public interest - so people can speak out if they find malpractice in an organisation. Blowing the whistle is more formally known as 'making a disclosure in the public interest'.

Staffing Implications

Consideration continues to need to be given for the time and resource required for roll-out of the Guardian service and continued education and collaboration with stakeholders i.e. Union representatives, HR, Staff Experience Team, Wellbeing, Communications, Patient Feedback Team and PALS, Executive and Non-Executive Lead.

Long Term Implications (including the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015)

Briefly identify how the paper will have an impact of the "The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015", 5 ways of working.

The paper impacts on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as it will impact on the long-term culture and behaviours of the organisation and its staff now and in the future. It aims to support staff, through working together to improve staff wellbeing and improve the quality of patient care and outcomes through early intervention and nipping concerns in the bud before they escalate.

 Presented to Partnership Forum, 18th March 2019 - Addressing concerns around bullying in ABMU – Freedom to Speak up Service & ACAS Training Presented to Executive Team, 3rd April 2019 - Enhanced Raising Concerns – Appointment of The Guardian Service Ltd Presented to Partnership Forum, 3rd June 2019 - #LivingOurValues campaign Presented to Audit Committee – 15th July 2019 – Raising Concerns Report Presentation from The Guardian Service Lt, Dr Simon McRory, Founder/Director - 16th July 2019, Special Partnership Forum Presented to Partnership Forum, 24th September 2019 - #LivingOurValues & Guardian Service Up-date Presented to Senior Leadership Team, 2nd October 2019 - #LivingOurValues & Guardian Service Up-date Presented to Local Negotiating Committee, 7th November 2019 – Guardian Service Up-date & #LivingOurValues Presented to Audit Committee, 21st November 2019 - Guardian Service up-date & #LivingOurValues Presented to Audit Committee, 21st November 2019, Guardian Service & #ShapingSBUHB Presented to Senior Leadership Team, 4th December 2019 – Retendering of an independent service for Staff to Raise Work-related Concerns Presented to IBG, 19th December 2019 - Retendering of an independent service for Staff to Raise Work- related Concerns

	Presented to Partnership Forum, 13 th March 2020 -
	#LivingOurValues & The Guardian Service Up-date
	 Presented to Partnership Forum, 22nd October 2020 -
	The Guardian Service Ltd. End of Year Report
	 Presented to SLT, 4th November 2020 – The
	Guardian Service Ltd. End of Year Report and
	Decision to Contract
	 Presented to Audit Committee, 12th November 2020 –
	The Guardian Service Ltd. End of Year Report
	 Presented to Full Board, 26th November 2020 - The
	Guardian Service Ltd. End of Year Report
	 Presented to Executive Board, 28th April 2021 – The
	Guardian Service Ltd End of Year Report
	 Presented to LNC, 18th May 2021 – The Guardian
	Service Ltd End of Year Report
	Presented to Quality & Safety Committee, 25 th May
	2021 – The Guardian Service Ltd End of Year Report
	Presented to WOD Committee, 15 th June 2021 - The Cuerdian Service Ltd End of Year Depart
	 Guardian Service Ltd End of Year Report Presented to Executive Team, 22nd September 2021 -
	• Presented to Executive Team, 22 th September 2021 - The Guardian Service Ltd. Up-date Report – 1 st April
	2021 to 31^{st} August 2021
	 Presented to WOD Committee, 12th October 2021 – A
	Deep Dive into the Guardian Service Ltd.
	 Presented to LNC, 18th January 2022 – Speak Up
	Safely Up-date
	Presented to Audit Committee, 19th May 2022 – The
	Guardian Service End of Year Report, 1 st April 2021
	to 31 st March 2022
	 Presented to Workforce & OD Committee, 14th June
	2022 - Deep Dive into Speaking Up Safely in SBUHB,
	2021-22
Annondicos	1.2
Appendices	1, 2