

## QUALITY CONFERENCE: OUR COLLECTIVE MINDSET FOR HIGH VALUE CARE

### JUST CULTURE: HOW WELL ARE WE RESPONDING TO THE FRANCIS RECOMMENDATIONS

**Chair:** Sir Stephen Moss, non-executive director, Health Education England

**Speakers:** Dr Jocelyn Cornwell, chief executive, The Point of Care Foundation

Helené Donnelly OBE, ambassador for cultural change/freedom to speak up guardian, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent NHS Trust

Dr Henrietta Hughes, national guardian, National Guardian's Office

Dr Suzette Woodward, national director, Sign Up to Safety

This session focused on the progress the NHS has made towards the recommendation made by the Francis inquiry to develop a just culture, as well as the challenges that remain and how boards can be supported to deliver this.

- Dr Jocelyn Cornwell explored how organisations can use evidence to build open cultures and improve both patient and staff experience. Although good staff experience is a national priority and the antecedent of good patient experience, the annual staff survey 2016 showed an overall fall in staff satisfaction with their organisation. Jocelyn cited Jill Maben's study which concluded that organisations could improve staff and patient wellbeing by improving whole organisational climate, perceived organisational support, local work group climate, co-worker support, supervisor support, staff's emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. She outlined how staff forums called Schwartz rounds enable staff to share and reflect on their experiences which leads to decreased stress and isolation, increased connectedness between staff across the system and a culture of openness.
- Henrietta Hughes presented the work that the National Guardian's Office is doing to support Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) guardians. While there is a national job description and expectations, trusts have established FTSU guardians in bespoke ways and local networks are already forming. The FTSU guardians aim to instil a speaking up culture in their organisation and ensure that staff have the capability and support to speak up effectively, speaking up processes are effective and continuously improved, and the board is engaged in all FTSU matters. The National Guardian also takes referrals from FTSU guardians, and current or past NHS staff to review how organisations carry out investigations. The CQC, NHS Improvement and NHS England are working together to embed this work in their well-led line of enquiry, as well as to review certain policies and clauses.
- Helené Donnelly shared her experience as a nurse at Mid Staffs where she repeatedly raised concerns about poor care, and subsequently gave evidence at the Francis review inquiry. Helené emphasised the importance of creating an open, learning culture in the NHS and suggested that FTSU guardians might fail if leaders and organisational culture do not support them. To work effectively, FTSU guardians need independence, autonomy and protected time to fulfil their responsibilities; they also need to sit outside the HR directorate, report directly to CEOs and regularly to chairs and boards, and be encouraged and supported to escalate concerns. Other important points include the appropriate person taking on the role of FTSU guardian, having a NED responsible for oversight of the role, and the development at a national level of standardised reporting and data collection.
- Suzette Woodward facilitated a group discussion on the definition and requirements of a just culture, as well as the characteristics of an unjust culture and what can be done to change this. She asked the groups to consider how they would implement a just culture and the importance of leaders modelling how to speak up.