

Speaking Up Safely Guidance

Disclaimer:

If the review date of this document has passed (**November 2028**), please ensure that the version you are using is the most up to date version either by contacting the Lead of People Policy or CTM_Corporate_Governance@wales.nhs.uk



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1. AIM

The Speaking Up Safely initiative supports and complements existing policies, including procedures for NHS Staff to Raise Concerns and the NHS Wales Respect and Resolution at Work. This initiative will help Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTM) create a culture where everyone feels safe to speak up and able to share concerns about anything that affects safe, high-quality care and/or their experience.

Speaking up benefits everyone. It creates a more open culture, in which leadership encourages learning and improvement, leads to safer care, improved patient experience, and higher staff satisfaction. Staff insights can act as an early warning system when policies, processes, or decisions are not working as intended.

There are several routes for speaking up. Line managers, People Services, or Trade Union representatives are good first contacts particularly for urgent or high-risk concerns. In addition, at CTM, Speaking Up Safely Guardians act as independent contacts, outside Care Group structures, trained to listen and advise confidentially. Concerns can be raised to the Guardians via a number of channels, openly or anonymously through [Work In Confidence](#), via the Speaking up Safely email, or via the Speaking Up Safely hotline.

The ultimate aim is to improve patient safety and staff experience. Concerns will be reviewed for trends, with insights shared to support organisational learning.

2. SCOPE

This guidance applies to all employees, consultants, contractors, students, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers and outlines how concerns may be raised and managed under Speaking Up Safely.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Speaking up is a positive thing to do. Those who speak up will not suffer detriment or victimisation for raising a concern in good faith.
- Staff are encouraged to raise concerns via their Line Management chain in the first instance. If staff feel unable to raise with Line Management, or wish to remain anonymous, they should use the Speaking Up Safely initiative and raise their concern via a Guardian.
- Anonymous concerns will always be reviewed as far as practically possible. Investigations will be based on seriousness, evidence, and impact.
- Guardians act as independent and confidential support to anyone raising a concern, to support existing processes.
- Guardians and the Speaking Up Safely administrator act as independent and confidential support to anyone raising a concern, to support existing processes.
- You are welcome to raise a concern in English or Welsh, and the Work in Confidence platform is bilingual.

4. SPEAKING UP SAFELY

The Speaking Up Safely (SUS) initiative is here to empower you to raise concerns without fear of retaliation. Your voice matters, and when you speak up you can trust your concerns will be listened to and acted on.

This is about creating an environment where highlighting risks, suggesting improvements, or reporting issues such as unsafe care, bullying or financial malpractice is encouraged and supported. By doing so, we strengthen our services and protect the wellbeing of both patients and staff.

At CTM we are committed to **listening, learning, and improving**. We recognise that most concerns arise from mistakes or habits; not from people intentionally doing the wrong thing. Everyone is human, slips and lapses happen. These will be treated as opportunities for learning and system improvement, not for blame.

Sometimes people take shortcuts or may not realise the risk involved. In those cases, we'll provide coaching, feedback, and support to help you work safely. However, if someone knowingly ignores serious risks or deliberately disregards the rules, this may be dealt with through our disciplinary process.

Independent Support

Our [Speaking Up Safely Guardians](#) offer independent and confidential support to anyone raising a concern. They act as a supportive point of contact, a link to

senior leadership to foster a more open culture, and a catalyst for learning and improvement within CTM.

Alongside the Guardians, we also provide access to the [Work In Confidence platform](#); a secure, standalone system that enables two-way confidential communication between you and a Guardian. You can choose to remain anonymous if you wish. Use either of the following methods to raise concern using the platform:

1. Visit the website – [WorkInConfidence](#) | Sign In

2. Scan the following QR code



Options to register on the Work in Confidence website:

- Register with CTM Email @wales.nhs.uk
- Register with a personal email address (Registration code: CTMSUS)
- Email-less registration (you can register without needing an email address by using <https://speak2us.at/ctmuhb>) to remain anonymous.

Important – when creating an account, make a note of your username, if you lose or forget this, there will be no way of accessing your account.

Should you raise a concern anonymously, you will not receive a notification that a Guardian has responded, so it is important to note your username and password as you will be required to log in to track the progress of your concern yourself.

Speaking Up Safely concerns can also be raised via the SUS inbox or SUS hotline (voicemail service where a member of the Speaking Up Safely team can call you back to discuss your concern):



CTM.SUS@wales.nhs.uk



01443 443796

You can raise a concern through a Guardian at any point, for example:

- If you think there is a serious safety risk.
- Your concern relates to the conduct or practice of one or more individuals in

- the line management who would normally consider the concern.
- You feel that similar concerns raised in the past have been ignored.
 - You feel that the raising of concern would place you at risk of harassment or victimisation from colleagues or managers.

Remember that if you are a **healthcare professional you may have a professional duty of care to report a concern**. If in doubt, please raise it.

To learn more about this initiative, visit [CTM Speaking Up Safely intranet site](#).

5. WHO DEALS WITH OPEN OR ANONYMOUS CONCERNS?

We want everyone in CTM to feel safe raising concerns and to trust that they will be listened to. Speaking up should make a difference, and we are committed to turning concerns into positive change.

The **Executive Director of Governance** is the senior lead for Speaking Up Safely. Their job is to make sure staff who raise concerns are supported and treated fairly.

If you have a concern – or hear about one – the first step is usually to tell your **Line Manager** and keep the details between you. If your Line Manager is part of the concern, raise it instead with your **Senior Manager**. Managers will handle the concern confidentially and pass it on to the right lead or team.

Alternatively, if you feel unable to raise the concern with your Line Manager or Senior Manager, or want to remain anonymous, you can raise the concern with our **Speaking Up Safely Guardians** (refer to Appendix 2).

If you raise a concern **anonymously**, it will be looked into. While we may not be able to give you feedback directly, we will take the information seriously and act on it where possible. However, there may be limitations with progressing anonymous reports, as gaps in information may limit the effectiveness of an investigation.

You may also raise a concern in Welsh and any subsequent proceedings will be conducted in Welsh or a simultaneous translation service provided.

6. VEXATIOUS AND MALICIOUS CONCERNS

The vast majority of concerns are raised in good faith and are treated with respect. Anyone who raises a concern honestly, even if it later proven unfounded, is protected. No one will suffer detriment, harassment, or victimisation for raising a concern in good faith. CTM acknowledges that in a very small number of cases, allegations may be malicious or vexatious. These will be managed under the All-Wales Disciplinary Policy.

Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Summary of Changes
1	Karen Wright	25-08-2021	Procedure for Dealing with Anonymous Communications This procedure was changed in-line with the introduction of Speaking Up Safely initiative

APPENDIX 1 – GOVERNANCE, LEGAL, NHS WALES AND HEALTH BOARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURE INFORMATION

Document Type:	Non Clinical Procedure
Ref:	People 50
Executive Sponsor:	Director of Corporate Governance
Approved By:	Choose an item.
Approval / Effective Date:	
Review Date:	October 2028
Version:	2
People who need to know about this document in detail	Employees and workers who want to raise a concern or received a concern
People who need to have a broad understanding of this document	Employees, workers, and managers
People who need to know that this document exists	Employees, workers, managers, and trade union colleagues
Equality and Welsh language Impact Assessment	Date Undertaken:
	Outcome for Equality: POSITIVE Outcome for Welsh Language: POSITIVE
Aligns to the following Wellbeing of Future Generation Act Objective	Co-create with staff and partners a learning and growing culture

Legislation: There are legislations in place to support speaking up safely: -

- Welsh Government Law: The Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020
- UK healthcare regulation: codes of practice provided by the NMC, HCPC and GMC
- UK Law: Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Equality: The Health Board provides services that meet public needs. It also aims to treat all employees and workers fairly and without discrimination. We have done an Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment on this guideline. This helps us see how it may affect employees with protected characteristics or specific needs. The assessment found a positive impact for all protected characteristics in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. The guideline is also available in Welsh for those who wish to access it in their first language.

Training Implications: The Speaking Up Safely Team will provide advice and support to managers in respect of implementing this guidance should they require it.

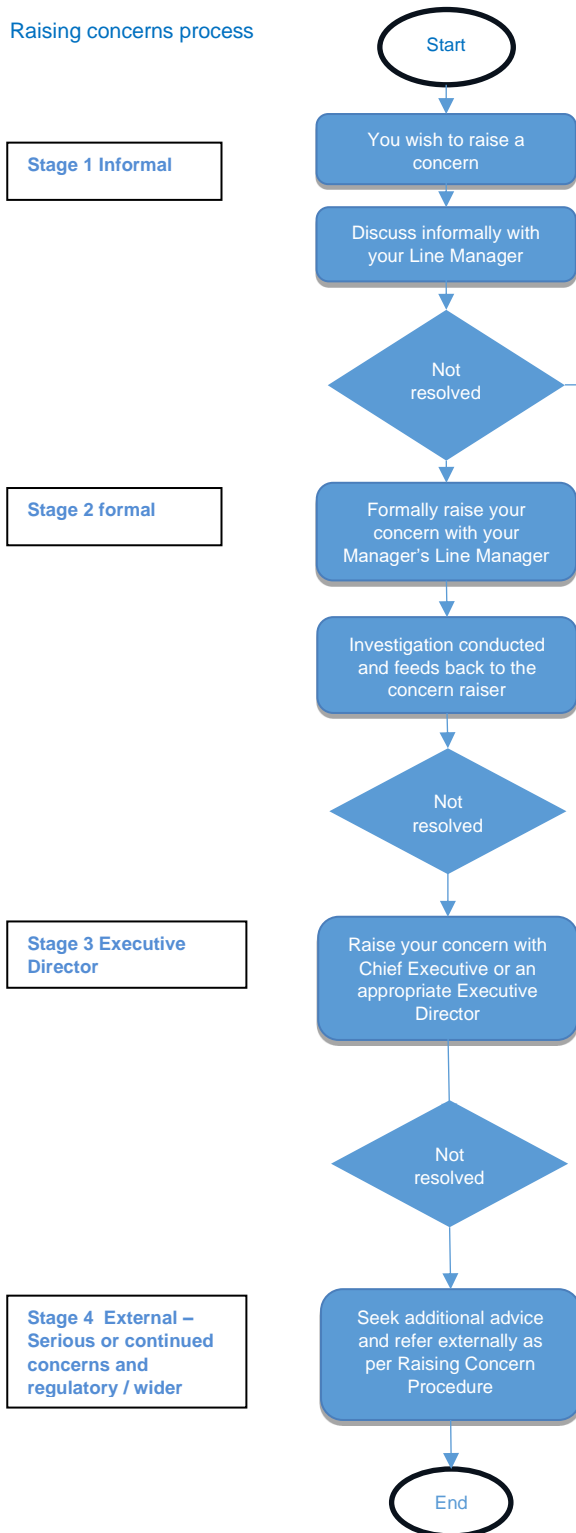
Review, Monitoring and Audit Arrangements: This guideline will be reviewed every three years. Additional changes may be required earlier, based on insights gained from the implementation reviews, changes to legislation, etc.

Retention/Archiving

The Lead for People Policy is responsible for archiving this guideline when it is amended or replaced and ensuring a copy is available for reference if needed, in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

APPENDIX 2 - SPEAKING UP SAFELY FLOWCHART

Raising concerns process



Speaking Up Safely process

Alternatively, if you feel unable to raise the concern with your Line Manager or Senior Manager, or want to remain anonymous

