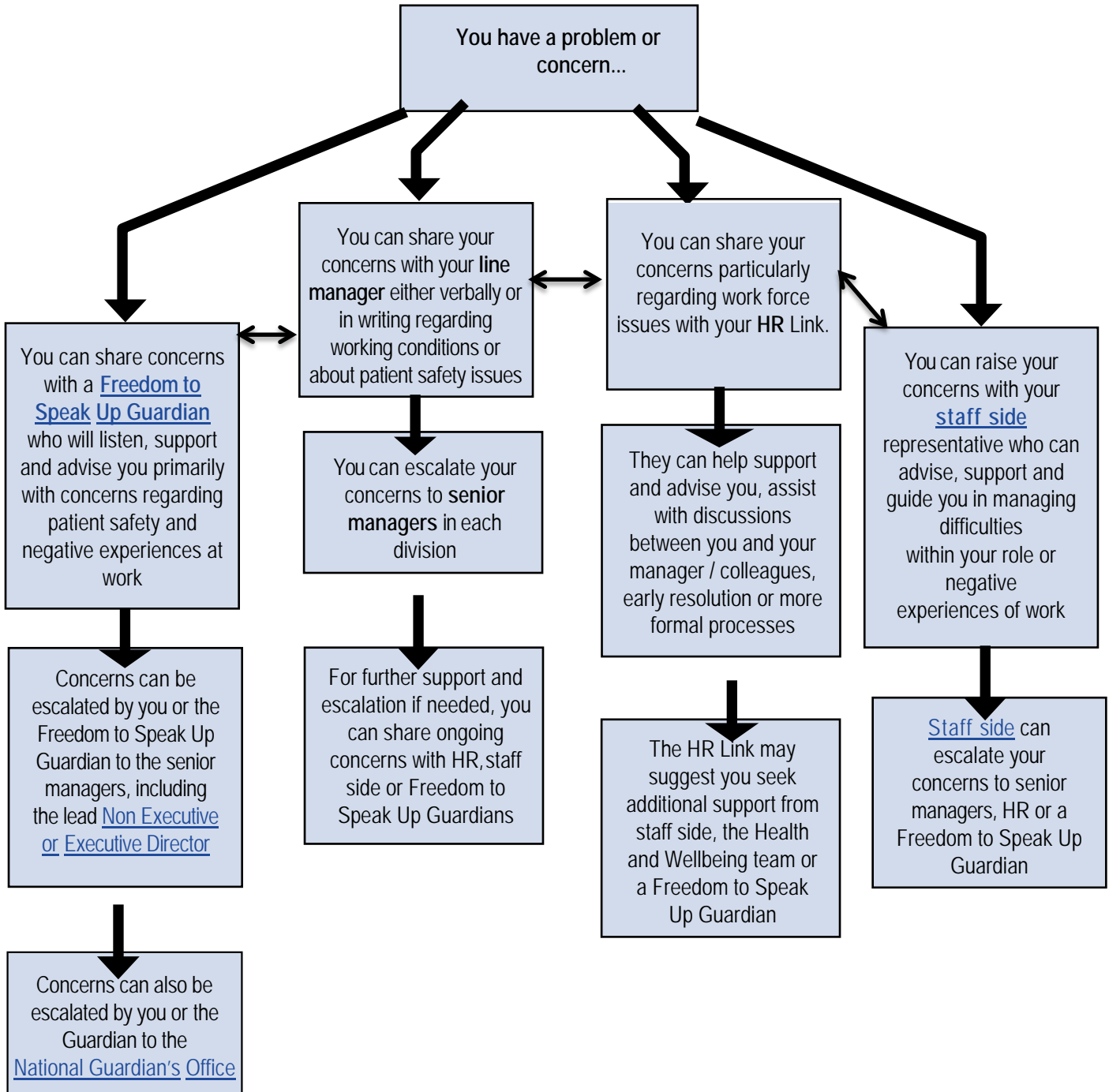


6.8 If there is any hesitation about speaking up about a concern then you must put the interests of the patients first and act to protect them, overriding personal and professional loyalties when necessary.



What happens next?

- 6.9 On receipt of your concern, the FTSU Guardian will record it in their central log and we aim for you to receive an acknowledgement within 3 working days.
- 6.10 The central record will only record key data needed, for example (but not restricted to) the date the concern was received, whether you have requested confidentiality, anonymity or are 'owning' the concern (openly identifying yourself), a summary of the concerns, risks, areas involved. You will not be identifiable on this central log. In addition, the FTSU Guardian will keep a separate record of your contact details, updates and any reports / documentation generated.
- 6.11 The FTSU Guardian will make contact with you (unless anonymous route taken) and arrange to meet to discuss the matter further. It is your preference if you would prefer the meeting to take place purely in writing, over the phone, at your work place or another place off site which would be more convenient, private or appropriate to discussing the concerns raised.
- 6.12 The FTSU Guardian will listen to your concerns, clarify and summarise these with you. Remember you do not have to have concrete proof and supporting evidence and documents to confirm what you are saying, only to have just cause for concern and act honestly. The FTSU Guardian will then guide you through Stage 1 of this process, next steps and ensure that you have any additional support that you may need.
- 6.13 Where possible the aim will always be to resolve at a local informal level. But there will be occasions when this may need to be addressed more formally.

Informal Resolution

- 6.14 The FTSU Guardian will work with you to identify where appropriate, if and how the issues and concerns can be resolved informally and locally in the first instance. This may take the form of supporting you, through advocacy, to raise the matter with the appropriate person – this may or may not be your direct line manager. It may be necessary to escalate your concerns via the levels of managerial responsibility through to senior leaders in both the division and or the Trust.
- 6.15 The length of time this may take understandably will vary depending on the nature of the concern but the aim is to resolve all concerns appropriately and as soon as possible. You will be guided, supported and updated throughout this process.
- 6.16 The FTSUG may also feel that your concern needs dealing with via Workforce polices and therefore may advice that you seek support from a Union representative. They can help put you in touch with a staff side representative and or a Human Recourse advisor / manager.

Investigation

- 6.17 If local resolution cannot be achieved or the matter is more complex, the next step would involve undertaking a fact finding investigation. Where possible any investigation undertaken will involve current policies and procedures most

suitable for reviewing your concerns, for example early resolution procedures, incident review processes.

- 6.18 Where this is not possible due to the bespoke nature of your concern the FTSU Guardian will liaise with the Associate Director responsible for FTSU management who will organise this process and outline the Terms of Reference for any investigation.
- 6.19 You will be informed in writing of a summary of your concerns, how we propose handling the matter and who will be involved, how you can contact them and whether your further assistance is needed at this time. The FTSU Guardian will remain involved and support you through this process.
- 6.20 You will be kept up to date with the review process normally by the lead reviewer, any delays will be shared with you and explanations given.
- 6.21 Care will be taken to appoint an investigator who is as objective as possible, in undertaking reviews and able to spend sufficient time on the work to enable it to be completed in a timely manner.
- 6.22 The investigating officer will take statements from all people involved, including you, as well as any witnesses. Documentary and other evidence may also be gathered. Where applicable, a referral may be made to the Anti-Fraud Specialist or other appropriate body. It must also be noted that if the concern raised becomes the subject of a police or other agency investigation the Trust investigation may be temporarily halted.
- 6.23 Whilst the FTSU Guardian walks alongside the investigation process, supporting the process and people involved, the FTSU Guardian does not get involved in the actual investigation. When the investigator finishes the investigation a report will be produced. These findings of the report will be shared with you and your FTSU Guardian, you have the right to challenge the findings and request further clarification.
- 6.24 If the disagreement or discrepancy relates to matters of factual accuracy, then you can challenge these facts in writing and they will be reviewed. Any changes or adjustments made to the report as a result of a factual accuracy review, will result in an amended report / outcome being documented and shared with you; with any further appropriate action taken as a result. You will be informed of what this is.
- 6.25 The finalised and agreed report and outcomes will be kept on the FTSU data base.
- 6.26 Depending on the nature of the concern the outcome of the report may involve changes to policies and procedures, management systems, referrals to external bodies / counter fraud or disciplinary action against a member of staff. We will not however always be able to tell you the precise action we take if disciplinary action is involved with another member of staff, as that may breach confidentiality.
- 6.27 The Trust will aim to close any investigatory process within 25 working days, if this is not possible due to the complex nature of the issues then you will be kept up to date with progress. The investigation should not take longer than six months.