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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Meeting Date	15 June 2021	Agenda Item	3.2
Report Title	The Guardian Service Ltd. End of Year Report		
Report Author	Julie Lloyd, OD & Staff Experience Manager		
Report Sponsor	Kathryn Jones, Director of Workforce & OD		
Presented by	Julie Lloyd, OD & Staff Experience Manager		
Freedom of Information	Open		
Purpose of the Report	The purpose of this paper is to provide Workforce & OD Committee with an end of year report for the period of 1 st April 2020 to 31 st March 2021 from The Guardian Service Ltd.		
Key Issues	<p>The original Guardian Service contract was a 12-month pilot, which was due to come to an end at the height of first wave of the pandemic in May 2020. Due to the adverse circumstances and conditions our staff were working in, a decision had to be taken to extend for 6-months until November 2020 to ensure staff and volunteers continued to be supported.</p> <p>Following presenting the initial end of year report (retrospectively due to the pandemic) to HBPF on 22nd September 2020, a formal request was made for the Health Board to stop contracting with the Guardian Service Ltd. Concerns raised by HBPF colleagues we listened to and acknowledged and in response Trade Union colleagues have been invited to work in collaboration for the benefit of all.</p> <p>Due to the significant risks identified with stopping the Guardian Service as an additional support service; for staff, patients and the organisation, as we entered into a second wave of the pandemic in addition to winter pressures, Senior Leadership Team took the decision to contract for a further 12 months.</p> <p>During the last 12 months (1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021) there have been 66 concerns raised. Importantly, 36 cases have been also been resolved/closed during this period.</p>		

	A copy of the End of Year report and recommendations (1 st April 2020 to 31 st March 2021) from the Guardian Service is provided in appendix 1, appendix 2 provides feedback from contacts that have used the service.			
Specific Action Required <i>(please choose one only)</i>	Information	Discussion	Assurance	Approval
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the up-date and recommendations detailed in the End of Year Report from The Guardian Service for 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. • Take assurance that on-going feedback from staff relating to bullying continues to be listened to, through the continued action the Health Board has taken. 			

The Guardian Service Ltd. End of Year Report

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to provide Workforce & OD Committee with an end of year report for the period of 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 from The Guardian Service Ltd.

2. BACKGROUND

The NHS Wales Staff Survey 2018 results highlighted the need to focus on addressing bullying within the Health Board, with 20% of respondents confirming that they have experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work from their manager/team leader or other colleagues (an increase of 4% since 2016). Whilst this increase was reported across NHS Wales, the Health Board reported higher than the national overall score of 18%. Reviewing the qualitative comments that accompanied the staff survey results, of 959 comments and feedback provided in the free-text section, 59 (6% of the overall qualitative data) referred specifically to the term 'bullying' at work from manager/team leader or colleagues.

Subsequent blogs issued by the Chief Executive and Director of Workforce & OD at that time resulted in numerous comments from staff around the need to take action which will enable staff to speak up in a confidential way and the importance of resolution. This resulted in useful data which shaped and informed the organisation's thinking about what was important to staff. In listening to staff feedback, important features of a raising concerns service included impartiality, independence, accessibility and responsiveness. With only 22% of Staff Survey respondents in the Health Board believing that the organisation would take action, the Executive Team have continued to be fully committed to taking action to support staff and act on their feedback.

We sought experience and best practice in NHS England where **Freedom to Speak up** is mandated. This enabled us to design the service specification and test the market for a provider via the tender process. In response to the tender submission process, a multi-disciplinary panel, including Board trade union representation, awarded the contract to **The Guardian Service Ltd**. The contract was awarded for one year and the service was launched on **13th May 2019** for Bae Abertawe / Swansea Bay Health Board.

The original Guardian Service contract was a 12-month pilot, which was due to come to an end at the height of first wave of the pandemic in May 2020. Due to the adverse circumstances and conditions our staff were working in, a decision had to be taken to extend for 6-months until November 2020 to ensure staff and volunteers continued to be supported.

Following presenting the initial end of year report (retrospectively due to the pandemic) to HBPF on 22nd September 2020, a formal request was made for the Health Board to stop contracting with the Guardian Service Ltd. Concerns raised by HBPF colleagues were listened to and acknowledged and in response Trade Union colleagues have been invited to work in collaboration for the benefit of all.

Due to the significant risks identified with stopping the Guardian Service as an additional support service; for staff, patients and the organisation, as we entered into a second wave of the pandemic in addition to winter pressures, Senior Leadership Team took the decision to contract for a further **12 months**.

2.1 Progress to Date

Actions Taken in Response to HBPF Concerns

In listening to the concerns raised by HBPF in relation to the Guardian Service, the following outlines the actions were committed to:

- *We will work with Trade Union colleagues to appropriately support promotion of Trade Union membership.*
Trade Union information has been included in a presentation and recording along with the Staff Handbook for the recently launched virtual induction. Trade Unions were also sign-posted as part of the Health Board's Wellbeing Resilience Packages. At the beginning of March 2021 an invitation was made for the joint facilitation of post Staff Survey engagement Sessions; 'Thinking Allowed'.
- *We will invite Trade Unions to work with us in developing and supporting improvements in partnership working.*
An initial meeting was held with the Staff Side Lead for HBPF on 19th April 2021 to discuss the actions committed to including; monitoring and evaluation, partnership working and alternative solutions going forward.
- *We will offer an Executive Team point of contact and an Independent Member point of contact to whom TU Partners can escalate issues to if it is felt that concerns are not being acted on.*
Details of an Executive lead and non-officer member have been confirmed with HBPF, as key points of contact.

Guardian Service End of Year Report

During the last 12 months (1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021) there have been **66 concerns** raised. Importantly, **36 cases** have been also been resolved/closed during this period in spite of the impact of the pandemic and staff having been redeployed to support other services.

The Raising Concern Guardians ceased conducting promotional visits onsite and followed Government guidelines to work from home. There has been limited promotion of the service to staff up until recently, in order not to impact staff capacity and recognising the pressure on services. Virtual drop-in sessions were arranged via MS Teams to run during March and April 2021 to replace the onsite promotional visits along with the offer of virtual presentations for teams and departments. There have been **14 virtual drop-in** sessions arranged so far to trial how they are received and

so far every session (including those running on evenings and weekends) has seen staff attend to find out more. Out of the 14 sessions, 5 have been held so far and from those 5 sessions there have been 7 contacts/engagements with staff. It is therefore planned, that further on-line drop-in sessions will be arranged and that a blended approach to promotion will be used when it is appropriate and safe to do so.

A total of **43** communications/promotional visits have been held during the year overall.

A copy of the End of Year report and recommendations (1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021) from the Guardian Service is provided in appendix 1.

In addition to the continuation of the Guardian Service for a further 12 months, a final tranche of ACAS Training was rolled out virtually, targeting the remaining leaders and managers of identified hotspot areas. There were **8 x 2 hour sessions** run during March 2021 and total of **42** leaders and managers attended.

Appendix 2 provides a copy of an anonymous user feedback report from the Guardian Service. In addition to this, we remain keen to work in partnership with HBPF leads to further progress evaluation of the service and test demand for and experience of the service with the wider organisation. The following measures are proposed, as part of a joint overarching evaluation and for consideration in discussions around alternative solutions for staff to raise concerns.

Benefit	Measure	Baseline Value	Target Value	Benchmark value
Availability of an independent service for all Staff, Volunteers and Students to raise any work-related concern 24/7 365 days a year	Service accessibility and responsiveness	24/7 365 days a year	24/7 365 days a year	We offer the most accessible and responsive crises / support service to staff in NHS Wales
Reduction in the number of staff reporting bullying or harassment	NHS Wales Staff Survey	16.2% in 2020 reporting bullying, harassment from colleagues	As minimal as possible – Benchmarked against September’s 2021 National Survey	20% in 2018 for former ABMU

Reduction in grievance and dignity at work cases and so the legal costs associated with such cases	NHS Wales Workforce Key Performance Indicators (benchmarking)	49 cases (November 2018)	As minimal as possible	31 cases (March 2021)
Increase in number of Staff speaking up and raising concerns	Comparison / benchmarking with NHS England where concept is mandated	5 Contacts (Nov 18 to May 19) internal process	Average of 60 - 100 contacts per year As close to 100% resolution as possible	66 concerns raised (1 st April 2020 to 31 st March 2021) 36 cases have been also been resolved/closed
Reduction in the number of staff to staff incidents	Reported via Datix	74 cumulatively up to June 2020	As minimal as possible	44 staff to staff incidents reports (April 20 to March 2021) Benchmarking with other NHS Wales Health Boards

3 GOVERNANCE AND RISK ISSUES

- As we remain the first 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 test and trial 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 taken a multi-faceted, multi-levelled approach as part of the Healthier Working Relationships agenda and a Just & Learning Culture to support a culture of openness, honesty and trust, it is difficult to fully evaluate the benefits of The Guardian Service and are unable to attribute reductions in disciplinary and grievance 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.

4 RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

- Note the up-date and recommendations detailed in the End of Year Report from The Guardian Service for 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.
- Take assurance that on-going feedback from staff relating to bullying continues to be listened to, through the continued action the Health Board has taken.

Governance and Assurance		
Link to Enabling Objectives <i>(please choose)</i>	Supporting better health and wellbeing by actively promoting and empowering people to live well in resilient communities	
	Partnerships for Improving Health and Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Co-Production and Health Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Health and Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver better care through excellent health and care services achieving the outcomes that matter most to people	
	Best Value Outcomes and High Quality Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Partnerships for Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Excellent Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outstanding Research, Innovation, Education and Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and Care Standards		
<i>(please choose)</i>	Staying Healthy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Safe Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Effective Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Dignified Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Timely Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Staff and Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Quality, Safety and Patient Experience		
<p>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.</p> <p>The previous Raising concerns process with no dedicated pathway or infrastructure to support staff creates risk to staff, patients and the wider organisation.</p>		
Legal Implications (including equality and diversity assessment)		
<p>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.</p> <p>Internal policies include but are not limited to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Grievance Policy -Disciplinary Policy -Dignity at Work Policy -Raising Concerns Policy <p>Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998</p> <p>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'.</p>		

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.	
Report History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 WOD Forum, 14th 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented to Partnership Forum, 13th 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
Appendices	1, 2