



PWYLLGOR DIWYLLIANT, POBL A DATBLYGU SEFYDLIADOL
PEOPLE, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE COMMITTEE

DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:	19 June 2023
TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: TITLE OF REPORT:	WorkInConfidence platform – measuring its impact on a speak up safety culture
CYFARWYDDWR ARWEINIOL: LEAD DIRECTOR:	Lisa Gostling, Director of Workforce & Organisational Development (OD)
SWYDDOG ADRODD: REPORTING OFFICER:	Robert Blake, Head of Culture and Workforce Experience

Pwrpas yr Adroddiad (dewiswch fel yn addas)

Purpose of the Report (select as appropriate)

Er Sicrwydd/For Assurance

ADRODDIAD SCAA
SBAR REPORT

Sefyllfa / Situation

This paper outlines the progression of the WorkInConfidence platform which was implemented to support speaking up safely within the organisation.

The platform has now been in place for 12 months and a full analysis has been undertaken on the added value it has provided to the workforce

Cefndir / Background

The need for a speaking up safety culture across the NHS has never been so significant. Sir Robert Francis's published his 2015 independent review Freedom to Speak Up, this called for the creation of an open and honest reporting culture within the NHS. The report outlined two key themes –

1. NHS staff were afraid of possible repercussions that speaking up would have on them and their careers
2. Staff feeling it was futile to raise concerns because nothing would be done.

In 2022, Donna Ockenden published an independent review in response to the horrific incidents within maternity services at Shrewsbury and Telford hospital. The final report drew upon a culture of 'them and us' between midwives and obstetric staff, which engendered fear among midwives to escalate concerns to consultants. It established a lack of psychological safety in the organisation and reduced the ability for the service to make positive changes. Ms Ockenden said that "staff were frightened to speak out about failings amid a culture of undermining and bullying"

A recent 2021 National Guardians Office (NGO) survey claimed that there was a decline in speaking up safely cultures across NHS organisations in England. The survey was the fifth that collated qualitative data from Speaking Up Guardians. The new national guardian for the NHS, Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark, a registered nurse, said:

“As the sector works to recover from the pandemic, leadership in healthcare has never been more pressured. A strong speak up culture is essential in delivering high quality and safe services and supporting the wellbeing of workers.”

The impartial reviews and NGO survey demonstrate a huge lack of psychological safety across NHS organisations. This has been an ongoing challenge for healthcare providers. The safety element is a vital component for any organisational culture. Psychological safety plays a significant role in wellbeing, creates an environment in which change is embraced, where there are mechanisms to resolve concerns and conflict. A culture that supports new ways of working being tested and reflected on with no threat, that destigmatises failures and supports learning opportunities.

Asesiad / Assessment

The WorkInConfidence platform was implemented in May 2022. The need for such a platform was identified through several staff surveys

The National NHS Wales 2020 Staff Survey provided workforce statistics where:

- **15%** of responders felt they have been bullied or harassed
- **44%** of responders believed the organisation took appropriate actions against bullying and harassment

The survey also outlined that an area that staff felt the organisation could improve on would be the aspect of being listened to actively and taking actions.

Your Wellbeing Matters survey 2022, the second dedicated nursing survey for Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB), stated that:

“Some qualitative responses affirmed the high sense of psychological safety within immediate work teams; however, this appears to shift once the referent of ‘team’ is changed to include those of a higher level of seniority, including ward managers, senior nursing staff and directorate nurses. Particularly, the lower sense of psychological safety in relationships between nurses and higher levels of management may be concerning as qualitative data here indicates a level of apprehension in sharing information related to personal employee and patient safety.”

Historically, there have been many executive members who have received anonymous letters from staff feeling unsafe or unsure of who to contact to raise issues. This has proved to be problematic in gaining a deeper context around the situation raised, with very little evidence in the letter, and no way to open a dialogue with the sender so that issues can be worked through appropriately and constructively wherever possible.

How the Work in Confidence platform works

The platform provides the workforce with an ability to raise an anonymous concern or idea with a dedicated responder around several defined topic headings. These headings provide a reserved list of which responders are available for that topic, harnessing the best expertise of who will be able to progress concerns appropriately.

The launch was supported with a bespoke communication strategy that took advantage of all the usual methods of highlighting the platform. The team have also developed a Voice and Being Heard page where there is a constant link for staff to access the platform. The newly

designed staff intranet page also has an easily accessed link for staff to use. The team has also emphasised the platform in international nurses' induction, dedicated HAPI App messages and all Organisational Development (OD) interventions that explored staff voice.

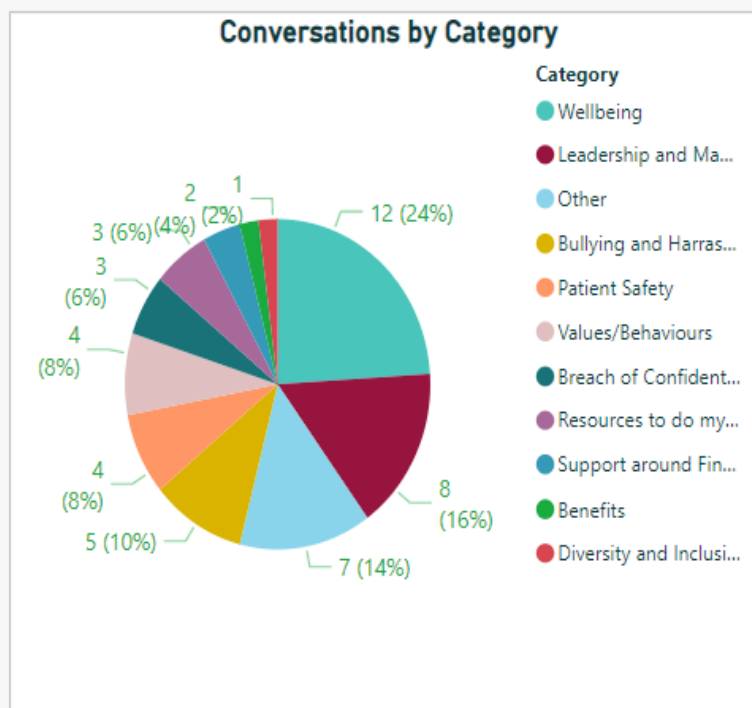
Raise an anonymous concern/ idea

Since launching the WorkInConfidence platform in HDdUHB, the organisation has seen:

- **177** users register to use the platform.
- **50** anonymous conversations raised.
- **41** concerns successfully resolved and closed.

The topic of conversations raised have been varied, however the most raised conversations focused on a wide range of concerns around psychological, physical, and emotional wellbeing. This trend provided focus to design a planning objective – implement a single point of access for wellbeing for clarity of support for physical and psychological wellbeing

Category	No of Conversations
Benefits	1
Diversity and Inclusion Matters	1
Support around Finances	2
Breach of Confidentiality	3
Resources to do my Job	3
Patient Safety	4
Values/Behaviours	4
Bullying and Harrassment	5
Other	7
Leadership and Management	8
Wellbeing	12
Total	50



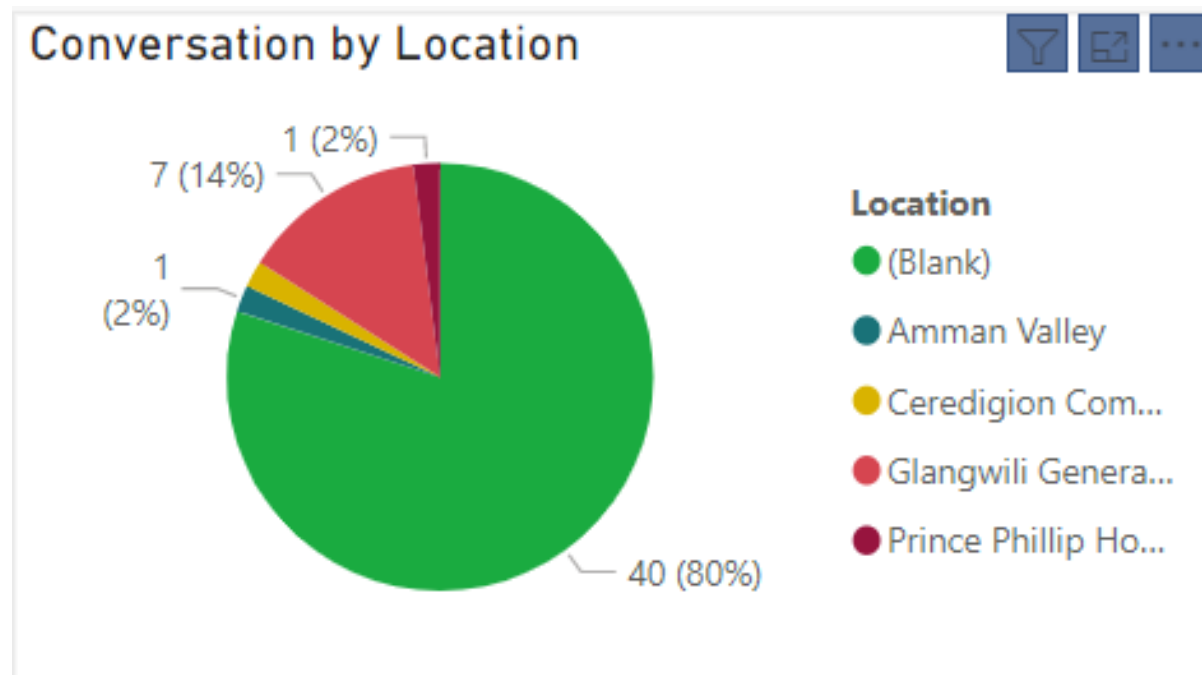
Any colleague raising an issue can select who they would like to respond; this adds to the safety factor. The chosen responder is alerted to the new message through email and will log into the platform to reply, opening a two-way discussion with the individual. There is no chance of knowing who the responders are talking with, unless the colleague divulges something in the discussion that can identify themselves.

Each conversation is totally anonymous and treated with the utmost sensitivity and compassion, the responder will try to resolve the concern themselves and only closes a conversation when the individual raising the concern is happy with the outcome or if there has been no response for 2 months.

There have been several conversations that have required the individual to release their anonymity to progress the concern. Some responders have initiated informal meetings with staff members to gain more context in the issue raised for them to review options to progress.

Many of the matters raised have been ongoing for years with staff feeling uncomfortable to raise until now. One colleague stated that they have worked with an issue for 14 years with no way to reach out for help and support.

The following graphs dictate conversations by staff group and location, and demonstrate that

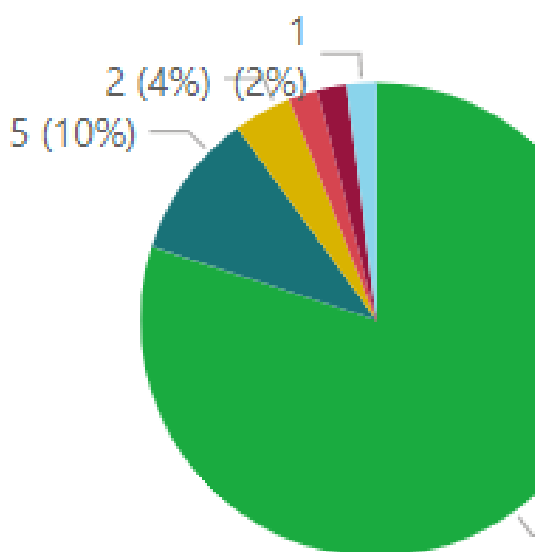


whilst the platform is totally anonymous, there is still a lack of psychological safety for responses. In both categories, staff refused to answer which staff group they belonged to and where they worked, which is concerning and reveals there is still much progression around this aspect of the organisational culture.

Discussion Boards

The platform also offers discussion forums. There are 14 discussions currently live, these are split as follows:

Conversation by Staff Gro



Discussion Thread	No Of Views	No Of Comments
Organisation's values	36	4
GGH Estates toilet facilities	27	2
Working from home - Save staff and organisation money	26	3
Carmarthenshire Rest Room ideas	23	7
Unclear text messages	22	3
Organisation Chart	21	5
Canteen consultation	13	2
Non attendance by patients	13	3
Access to Water	10	3
Policy	10	2
Physiotherapy phone number	8	9
Lack of Contact Details for Patients	5	2
Ceredigion Rest Areas	4	1
hybrid working	1	1
Total	219	47

Discussion Board	No Of Threads
Mission, Vision, Values & Strategy	4
Suggestions for Improvements	4
Information & Communications	3
Working Environment	3
Total	14

The table opposite outlines the various threads contained in the 14 discussions. The table also includes the number of views and comments for each thread.

These threads are continually monitored by the Culture and Workforce Experience (C&WE) team. The team are replying to comments where they can but also seeking comments from other directorates, when appropriate.

Platform feedback

Throughout its first year, the C&WE team has constantly analysed the platform. The team has built an excellent working relationship with the software provider 'WorkInConfidence', who have raised many points for improvement. HDdUHB has been asked to be part of their reference programme based on the relationship that has been established.

WorkInConfidence are a growing business and utilise excellent customer practices as references which offers insights to prospective customers on how the platform helps and supports organisations in listening to their employees. This not only supports them building their customer base but also supports the employee reputation of HDdUHB as an employer who listens to employees' concerns. It supports the continued development of the organisation being recognised as an employer of choice.

Staff feedback

The C&WE team have sought both quantitative and qualitative data from users, which has proved problematic due to the confidential nature of the platform. The team has developed a quick survey for staff accessing the platform which is not mandatory, therefore has been limited compliance.

One of the questions asks, 'how helpful was the response from the responder/manager'. Currently, the average score obtained is **4.6** out of **5**.

About the service you received:



The key themes identified from this feedback survey were:

- Being reassured about the confidentiality, being listened to, and having helpful responses
- Providing a forum to make suggestions to improve complaints
- Having a resource to provide a safe place to raise concerns
- The kindness and support of the responder/manager dealing with the concern
- That the experience was cathartic after years of frustration
- Even if the outcome was not as expected, it was still a positive experience
- How confidentiality of this platform is key

These are some of the qualitative comments that have been captured from the survey:

"It was very easy to use and would be quite happy to raise a concern again as I have found the experience a positive one regarding getting it off my chest. I suppose it will heavily depend on the outcome of the issues raised in my ongoing statement as to whether it is worth going through the process again should I unfortunately needed to. It is not a pleasant experience having to raise a concern regarding a fellow work colleague. No matter how right you believe you are in the concern being reported, it is never pleasant thing to get to this point. I will say that the advice and support I have received has been fantastic. It is my belief that people will play a big part in this service. I was fortunate to have XXXX dealing with my concern and if all the responders are as good a listener/advisor as he has been, the platform will prove a very beneficial and much needed route to take for employees who feel they have nowhere to turn."

"I have no regrets on contacting this service as XXXX has been fantastic in his kind words and overall support. It was cathartic to get it all off my chest and although I am a few years away and working for a different service, I was surprised at how easily the tears flowed and had no idea the effect all the frustrations I had felt over the years would be so evident on speaking about them after so much time had passed."

"If nothing develops on my current concern I would still recommend the service because it is great to have a voice and speak to someone who offers the support and guidance you need. Some outcomes might not prove to be as you would have imagined they would be, but I did feel that I was listened to and was extremely grateful knowing this was in complete confidence".

"The service has great potential!"

Disadvantages of the platform

The many opportunities that the platform offers to build psychological safety and staff voice have been outlined in this report, however some challenges have also been identified. The major disabler are the staff expectations of what actions can be taken because of speaking out. Whilst some staff have felt comfortable in identifying themselves to progress matters, others have not felt safe in doing so. The degree of disclosure influences the range of management actions that can ensue. At times, the lack of disclosure lessens impacts of the management actions that are possible. This may result in some staff feeling frustrated with a perception that nothing can be done.

"Nothing was done. We were told that we would need to be identified for an investigation to happen. We as a group of staff only came forward as we were assured that our identities would be protected and that the information, we gave would remain anonymous. This has been very taxing on my mental health and has not been easy. Firstly, the fact that I had to report the issues I was dealing with whilst supporting colleagues who were having the same concerns and issues. Then to be told we would be expected to come forward unprotected was ridiculous. I feel that this platform doesn't work and am very disappointed. I would never put myself forward again.... what's the point???"

There have been a number of conversations where resolution has not been found due to staff still feeling insecure around releasing their anonymity. This is in spite of much reassurance that it would not damage careers and they would not face any retribution from speaking out. Even if disclosure is not forthcoming, the cultural intelligence is not lost and will be linked and discussed with the relevant ODRM to seek further triangulation of evidence which may or may not support appropriate OD interventions.

The other challenge has been that without staff coming forward the severity of appropriate actions taken is diluted. There have been one or two occasions where senior leaders wanted to take a level of action, which was restricted due to no firm evidence. These cultural embedded norms will take time to break down. This platform is one of the mechanisms in achieving this across Hywel Dda.

Future progression

The C&WE team are currently developing staff experience reports to highlight themes and a dashboard to highlight the conversation and discussion subjects. The team will review how these themes are fed into staff experience and retention threads to support subsequent workforce strategies.

The team are trying to develop staff testimonials to further highlight and educate the organisation in what WorkInConfidence offers. The problems in trying to obtain these stories is locating staff willing to voice their experiences with the platform.

The team are also reviewing the case management platform that WorkInConfidence offers and are meeting with workforce colleagues to assess if this element would be beneficial to utilise.

Conclusion

The need to develop a rich vein of psychological safety that underpins a culture of innovation, destigmatising failures that supports learning from mistakes and resolving

concerns and dysfunctional conflict is vital. The WorkInConfidence platform has supported the building of safety across HDdUHB. It is recognised that the platform offers a unique support mechanism for staff who feel uncomfortable to raise a concern or idea. It is early days in the implementation of the platform, and with only 12 months data, it is still too early to assess the added value. The platform will form a small part of the wider strategy of speaking up safely for the organisation.

Argymhelliad / Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the continued direction of travel
- Take assurance from the cultural shift and progress.
- Note that the work to fully embed speaking up safely will be maintained and built upon.

Amcanion: (rhaid cwblhau) Objectives: (must be completed)	
Committee ToR Reference: Cyfeirnod Cylch Gorchwyl y Pwyllgor:	2.3 To provide assurance to the Board on the organisation's ability to create and manage strong, high performance, organisational culture arrangements
Cyfeirnod Cofrestr Risg Datix a Sgôr Cyfredol: Datix Risk Register Reference and Score:	Not applicable
Parthau Ansawdd: Domains of Quality Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	1. Safe 3. Effective 5. Equitable 6. Person-Centred
Galluogwyr Ansawdd: Enablers of Quality: Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	Choose an item. 6. All Apply Choose an item. Choose an item.
Amcanion Strategol y BIP: UHB Strategic Objectives:	All Strategic Objectives are applicable Choose an item. Choose an item. Choose an item.
Amcanion Cynllunio Planning Objectives	1a Recruitment plan 2a Staff health and wellbeing 2c Workforce and OD strategy Choose an item.
Amcanion Llesiant BIP: UHB Well-being Objectives: Hyperlink to HDdUHB Well-being Objectives Annual Report 2021-2022	2. Develop a skilled and flexible workforce to meet the changing needs of the modern NHS Choose an item. Choose an item. Choose an item.

Further Information:	
Ar sail tystiolaeth: Evidence Base:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom to Speak Up report Sir Robert Francis 2015 2. Ockenden Review Ms Donna Ockenden 2022 3. Decline in NHS speaking up culture 'very concerning' Nursing Times 4. Amy. Edmondson – Psychological Safety 5. National Staff Survey NHS Wales 2018 6. Your Wellbeing matters Survey 2020
Rhestr Termiau: Glossary of Terms:	Not applicable
Partion / Pwyllgorau â ymgynhorwyd ymlaen llaw y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Pobl a Datblygu Sefydliadol: Parties / Committees consulted prior to People, Organisational Development & Culture Committee:	Not applicable

Effaith: (rhaid cwblhau) Impact: (must be completed)	
Ariannol / Gwerth am Arian: Financial / Service:	Not applicable
Ansawdd / Gofal Claf: Quality / Patient Care:	Not applicable
Gweithlu: Workforce:	Potential positive impact on staff morale and future engagement opportunities
Risg: Risk:	Not applicable
Cyfreithiol: Legal:	Not applicable
Enw Da: Reputational:	Not applicable
Gyfrinachedd: Privacy:	Not applicable
Cydraddoldeb: Equality:	Not applicable