

## SpeakInConfidence: The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

### The Client

Serving a population of around 820,000, The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust operates across four sites: Fairfield General Hospital in Bury, North Manchester General Hospital, The Royal Oldham Hospital and Rochdale Infirmary. The Trust employs around 9,400 staff and after forming a new partnership with the University of Manchester Medical School in May 2016, is training more doctors as a Teaching Hospital Trust.

### The Challenge

The Pennine Acute Hospitals' strategic goals is to support staff, nurturing their talent in order that they can continue to give quality care to patients.

Part of this investment into staff includes reviewing policies and processes on a regular basis. As part of a programme to renew its raising concerns process, management felt they could do more to aid staff in this area.

On seeking feedback from staff about the whistleblowing process, one issue that arose was confidentiality – staff members were seeking anonymity when raising concerns. Honouring this request, the Trust began to seek a solution that allowed staff to remain anonymous.

### Key Objectives

- To support the Trust's renewed whistleblowing policy
- To encourage staff to raise concerns with the reassurance of anonymity

### The Solution

**SpeakInConfidence** was the ideal solution for The Pennine Acute Hospitals; not only did the system allow staff to remain anonymous but management found it straightforward to introduce and easy to use.

The Trust launched the system to all staff in December 2015. Staff were given the opportunity to register to the system with their own login, and once doing so could access the system whenever it was needed. A range of executives and deputies were appointed to respond to dialogues, with quarterly reminders being sent out to staff ensuring awareness whenever they required it.

The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust is also taking advantage of **SpeakInConfidence's** Push Questions functionality, which enables managers to push questions to staff. When the Trust was in the process of appointing a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, managers used **SpeakInConfidence** as a neutral, trusted means to ask staff whether the new recruit should be an internal or external hire.

The Pennine Acute Hospitals   
NHS Trust



The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust serves the communities of North Manchester, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham, along with the surrounding towns and villages. This area is collectively known as the North-East sector of Greater Manchester and has a population of around 820,000.

It is a large Trust with a total operating budget of over half a billion pounds. Its main commissioners are NHS Bury, NHS Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale, NHS Oldham and NHS Manchester.

The Trust provides a range of elective emergency, district general services, some specialist services and operates from four sites:

- Fairfield General Hospital, Bury
- North Manchester General Hospital
- The Royal Oldham Hospital
- Rochdale Infirmary

The Pennine Acute Hospitals' major services are largely situated on two sites at North Manchester General Hospital and The Royal Oldham Hospital, each serving a population of approximately 400,000. This population base ties in with the recommendations of various Royal Colleges (the bodies that plan doctors' training) about the size of population needed to maintain services.

**SpeakInConfidence** has been encouraged amongst The Pennine Acute Hospitals' junior doctors; the Trust welcomes a large intake of new doctors every August, all of whom have access to the system.

“ ***SpeakInConfidence** has been very easy to set up, and the training has been good* ”

#### The Results

On a recent report outlining the usage of **SpeakInConfidence** in 2016, The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust recorded at least one dialogue per week. Staff were raising a range of issues, concerns and questions and management was able to track major themes through **SpeakInConfidence**'s usage reports.

The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust appointed a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian based on staff responses through **SpeakInConfidence**. Around 69% of responses indicated a desire for an external acquisition, so management used these results as an influence when hiring.

“ *We've gone deliberately out of the trust and recruited somebody external – so that's a positive way that we've used the system.* ”



#### The Results

**SpeakInConfidence** has enabled The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust to conduct open and honest dialogues with staff while offering complete anonymity. Since implementing the system, the Trust has updated one of its policies to include **SpeakInConfidence** as an official channel for raising concerns.

For managers, **SpeakInConfidence** has eased the way concerns from staff are processed. The way **SpeakInConfidence** stores dialogues means that the administrator can identify which issues have been addressed, along with those which still need to be actioned, whilst retaining the anonymity of the staff member where they desire this.

