Raising Concerns
Why, How and What?

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Consultant Paediatrician 1992
Lead Clinician 1992-1998
Medical Director 1998-2003
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Trustee for AvMA
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Our NHS

I am (was) very proud of our NHS

Vast majority of care is of very high quality.

Move toward relationship rather than isolation.
Who do the Public Trust?

Doctors 91%
Teachers 86%
Clergy 78%
Police 63%
Man on the street 52%
Journalists 18%
Politicians 17%

*MORI May 2007 (After Shipman)*

Honor others. Say thank you.
The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

Happy Gandhi Jayanti
2nd October 1947 - 56th Anniversary

Listen eagerly, actively, and openly.
They were human beings!
Mid-Stafford Irony
What are your thoughts?
Why? Why and Why?

- Every one of us must look at our own conscience.
- We must make sure – Never again such a tragedy in our NHS.
- We must always put patients at the heart of everything we do.
- We as doctors nurses and other clinicians must take on leadership roles.

Deal with controversies and tough issues quickly and optimistically. Trustworthy leaders don’t sweep issues under the carpet.
Why do kind and caring doctors end up harming patients?
7 Deadly Sins

1. Poor culture, leadership and systems
2. Genuine human errors
3. Professional hazard
4. Difficult doctors/nurses
5. Doctors/nurses in difficulty
6. Poorly performing doctors/nurses
7. Criminals, perverts and those who exploit vulnerable patients and systems who happen to be doctors
Individual Doctor

- Is he ill
- Is he an alcoholic
- Is he stressed
- Are there family/personal problems
- Is he manipulative
- Is he nice but useless
- Is he rigid
- Is he controlling/bully

- Is he rude and dismissive
- Is he angry and shouting
- Does he have an attitude problem
- Is he in the wrong job
- Is he nasty
- Is he disruptive
- Is he impossible
- Is he a poor clinician

David Scott Chairman of BMA
CCSC Medical Managers sub-committee
Your Systems

- Poor Leadership
- Poor culture
- Bullying and victimisation
- Poor team working
- Poor communication
- Poor resource
- Poor HR policies and procedures
- High staff turnover
- Locums/agency staff
- Over worked staff

- Staff afraid to raise concerns
- Poor Governance
- Poor QA systems
- Ivory tower leadership
- Poor performance management
- Demoralised staff
Raising Concerns
Why It is Important?

- Consultant Anaesthetist
- Bullying Paediatrician
- Junior doctor who is not diligent
- Anaesthetist – Dismissed in a Trust
- Locum consultant – I had to dismiss!
Duty Of Candour
What Is Candour?

- Frankness
- Honesty
- Openness
- Truthfulness
- Sincerity
Why we should not expect anything less than being Open and Honest

- Most trusted profession
- Most respected profession
- Most noble profession
- Doctor patient relationship is based on trust and respect
Consequences for our patients

Consequences

- Death
- Disability
- Paralysis
- Admission to ITU
- More surgery, more suffering and more pain
- Many other physical, psychological and emotional trauma
- The family also suffers
One Message I want you to take home

Over 90% of tragedy to patients and also for staff are preventable if only someone raises concerns and someone acts quickly.

Nip it in the bud
Principles

- Honest acknowledgement
- Truthful and timely communication
- Sincere apology
- Recognising patients’ and carers’ expectations
- Professional support
Principles

- Learning lessons
- Support for the patients and family
- Support for the staff
- Punishment versus support
Healthcare Ombudsman

- Being open and accountable
  - Public bodies should be open and clear with complainants about what remedies may be available to them, and in what circumstances.
Being Open can help patients cope better with the after-effects of a patient safety incident.

Being Open can help doctors and nurses reduce the demoralisation and distress caused by a patient safety incident.

Being Open can help the NHS reduce costs through litigation and further treatment – patients and carers are much less likely to complain or make legal claims if they receive an apology and an explanation.
What Patients Want

The Public want:
- 34% an apology or explanation
- 23% an enquiry into the causes
- 17% support in coping with the consequences

Less important were:
- 11% financial compensation
- 6% disciplinary action

Source: MORI survey commissioned for the ‘Making Amends’ report, DOH, 2002
Duty Of Candour

- Being Open and Honest With Patients is not just a GMC’s advice but our moral duty.

- Every doctor must be open and honest with the patients more so when things go wrong.

- It is patient’s right and professional duty
Aug 2007 BMJ

NPSA and Audit Office

Only 4% GPs actually report clinical incidents
In One Trust

- Only 7% Clinical Incidents are reported by Doctors.

- Only 10% doctors have reported clinical incidents
Paediatricians

- Only 7% reported that they were not involved in any errors
- 39% Serious
- 72% Minor
- 61% Near misses

*Archives of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine 2007.*
Only 36% had ever disclosed a serious error to a patient's family.
Why?

- Poor NHS Medical Leadership
- Fear of reprisal
- Concerns about litigation
- Concerns over anonymity
- Concerns about media
- Concerns about professional reputation
- Ergonomics of incident reporting forms
- Confusion over what constitutes an adverse event
Being Open

- It is a duty of condor
- It is a duty of a doctor/nurse and the organisation
- Not wishful thinking
- Needs Strong Medical/Nursing Leadership
- Needs huge NHS Cultural change
Raining Concerns
How?
1. Good Leaders
2. Good Culture
3. Good Governance
4. Good Staff Engagement and Involvement
5. Good Patient Engagement and Involvement
Ensure Effective Policy, Practice & Culture

Culture eats policy for breakfast

Poor Leadership eats Good practice for breakfast, lunch and supper

So it is leadership which is the key

Good leaders promote good culture

Removed some ‘Poor leaders’
Good Culture

- Promote ‘Fair and Open’ culture
- Supportive and Learning culture
- Leaders must be visible and approachable
- Act on concerns quickly avoid knee jerk reaction
- Keep staff informed
- Thank them when they bring issues to your attention
Staff Support

- Support all staff who raise concerns
- Do not underestimate the challenge
- Our example –
  - Staff have direct access to all Executive Directors once they raise concerns with any one of us
- We investigate quickly
Support for the doctor

- Very important
- No one likes to be criticised
- I meet personally and tell them what is the allegation and how we are going to investigate
- My duty is to protect patients
- But I also got a duty to be fair to the doctor and work with the doctors
Good Governance
How to encourage your staff

- Support your staff
- Avoid Blame but accountability is a must
- Have clear policy for raising concerns
- Appoint right leaders at every level
- Zero tolerance for bullying
- Lead from the front and lead by example
- Challenge those who don’t want to change
Issues brought to my attention

- Consultant examining patients without washing hands
- Wrong bone removed
- Juniors have no confidence in consultant
- Leaving juniors unsupervised and unsupported
- Concerns about 4 consultants clinical management
Issues brought to my attention

- Missed cancer – 3 cases
- Consultants illness, alcohol problem
- Locum stealing drugs
- Bullying consultant – Dean rang me
My Message to Doctors

If you have made a mistake
- Talk to someone senior
- Be honest with patients/relatives
- Seek help
- DO NOT COVER IT UP
- DO NOT ALTER THE NOTES
- Do not suffer in silence
- Every genuine mistake even with serious outcome patients are willing to forgive but not any cover up!
- Only repeated mistakes, not learning lessons, not being open, altering case record – Should be referred to the regulators.
Two stories

Katie

Dr X
Raising Concerns

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.
Finally

- Patient safety should matter to us
- Staff Wellbeing should matter to us
- By identifying concerns early we can protect both staff and patients
- When things go wrong – Always be honest and sincere
- Learn lessons
We Owe it to Them
Our Award 2013