



# Making it easy for staff to **SPEAK UP** in the NHS with digital technology

The NHS is committed to ensuring staff [feel comfortable raising concerns about what is happening in their workplace](#), whether it involves unsafe patient care, bullying, fraud or other unethical misconduct. Speaking up not only protects patients by highlighting bad practice and wrongdoing by staff, but it is also crucial to building [an open, feedback driven culture](#) that listens to employees and acts on their concerns.

Based on the findings of the [Freedom to Speak Up review](#), the NHS's [new national policy on whistleblowing](#) aims to establish consistent practices and sets out minimum standards that should be followed across the NHS. It makes it easy for staff to speak up, covering questions including:

- » What concerns can be raised?
- » Who can staff report their concerns to?
- » How can they raise their concerns? How can they be escalated?
- » How will concerns be actioned and how will the whistleblower be protected and supported?

Trusts need to adopt the new policy by March 2017, including the appointment of an independent [Freedom to Speak Up Guardian](#), training managers and supervisors on whistleblowing processes, and creating and communicating clear policies to all staff. Essentially they need to ensure that they are fostering an open, transparent culture that is built on trust between everyone in the organisation.



EMPLOYERS ARE COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT EVERY MEMBER OF STAFF  
FEELS ABLE TO RAISE ANY CONCERNS AND KNOW THAT APPROPRIATE  
ACTION WILL BE TAKEN.

- DANNY MORTIMER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NHS EMPLOYERS

## CHALLENGES

» The options that let staff speak up to report misconduct need to be simple, straightforward and easy to use. They must be visible and well-communicated and staff must be able to access them at a time that suits them – 24/7.

» Encouraging staff to raise concerns is vital, but it can be daunting for nervous employees to take the first step. NHS organisations therefore need to ensure that the process is anonymous, safeguarding them against potential bullying or discrimination.

» As with any feedback it needs to be actioned quickly in order to protect patients and staff and improve ongoing operations. The process must be efficient and straightforward for the organisation to manage. There needs to be a clear link between reporting concerns, their investigation and action taken. The employee needs to be kept informed, and given confidence that their issue is being addressed.

## THE QUESTBACK NHS SPEAK UP SOLUTION

Most existing methods that allow staff to speak up rely on a combination of telephone, paper and email channels. These can be complex to manage, difficult for staff to access, and above all fail to preserve confidentiality. Questback's [NHS Speak Up Solution](#) has been created specifically to address these challenges. Already deployed and proven in the public sector in Scandinavia, it is an easily accessible online solution that has been developed to ensure anonymity and security at all times.

Staff simply make contact online by visiting a specific web page and book an appointment to discuss their concerns through an anonymous online chat session. No information about their location, IP/email address or the device they are using or other ways of identifying them is stored. During the chat session they can share documents while remaining completely anonymous. The chat moderator follows a script to gain all relevant information in order to follow up on the case.

Alternatively, if the employee is willing to waive anonymity they can file a report online, based on pre-configured options, such as for financial irregularities, personnel matters and other issues requiring attention. These options can be customised by individual Trusts in line with their needs. The moderator receives the report and can then contact the member of staff for clarification/confirmation and to progress the case.



# THE QUESTBACK NHS SPEAK UP SOLUTION PROVIDES:



Guaranteed anonymity/security - [powerful encryption](#) protects the identity of the employee, giving them confidence to speak up without fear of negative consequences.



Simplicity for staff - the straightforward, easy to use solution guides staff through the process of raising concerns, removing hurdles in the process.



Web-based - it can be accessed by staff through any internet connected device, from PCs to smartphones.



Compliance - using Questback makes it straightforward to create and enforce processes that meet the NHS national policy.



Simplicity for the Trust - administration is streamlined through the digital solution, making it simpler to investigate issues and take faster, more effective action.



24/7 availability - unlike telephone hotlines which are not manned 24 hours a day, the Questback solution enables staff to make contact at any time - whether they are at work or at home.



Open culture - deploying Questback enables trusts to show their commitment to listening to staff, [helping to build an open, feedback-driven culture](#).

## BENEFITS

Deeper analysis of multiple types of feedback, providing holistic, actionable insight to drive change

Improved staff engagement, leading to greater retention and reduced recruitment/agency costs

Greater communication with staff, reinforcing openness and cultural change

Improved staff consultation, ensuring buy-in and understanding

Ability to capture ideas and identify innovation and improvements to processes across operations



## ABOUT QUESTBACK

Questback is a global leader in enterprise feedback management technology, helping organisations transform customer, employee and market research programmes. We work closely with NHS Trusts including:

» Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, which has seen its ranking for employee engagement rise from 153rd in the country to 5th

Taunton and Somerset   
NHS Foundation Trust

» Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust, which is [unifying feedback and launching a new engagement and innovation community with Questback](#)

Northern Devon Healthcare   
NHS Trust

More than 5,000 companies worldwide, including one third of the Forbes Global 2000 such as DHL, Coca-Cola, General Mills and John Lewis rely on Questback's platform to gather, analyse and act on feedback. Questback technology has helped to improve customer and employee satisfaction, drive better business decision making and improve financial performance.

Like Questback our customers believe that people and businesses need feedback to learn and grow. We have 7 offices in Europe and the United States, global partner organisations, and serve customers globally.

### LEARN MORE

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW WE CAN HELP YOU MEET THE NHS NATIONAL POLICY ON WHISTLEBLOWING CALL US ON +44 (0) 207 403 3900 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE: <https://www.questback.com/uk/healthcare-uk>

