

Different Minds (ADHD-ASD Norfolk) Ltd

Freedom to Speak Up Policy

1. Purpose

Different Minds (ADHD-ASD Norfolk) Ltd is committed to creating a culture of openness, honesty, and accountability. This Freedom to Speak Up Policy is designed to ensure that all staff members and sub-contractors feel empowered and supported to raise concerns about any aspect of our services, working environment, or practices without fear of detriment or reprisal.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, agency workers, contractors, volunteers, and sub-contractors working with or on behalf of Different Minds (ADHD-ASD Norfolk) Ltd.

3. Principles

- Every individual has the right and is encouraged to speak up about concerns relating to safety, quality of care, working practices, or any form of malpractice.
- All concerns will be taken seriously, investigated fairly, and dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Individuals who speak up will be protected from any form of detriment, harassment, or discrimination as a result of raising a concern.
- All matters raised will be treated sensitively and confidentially where possible.

4. What to Speak Up About

You may wish to speak up about concerns including (but not limited to):

- The safety or well-being of clients, staff, or others
- Breaches of professional or ethical standards
- Poor working practices or conditions
- Inappropriate behaviour or conduct
- Discrimination, bullying or harassment
- Financial malpractice or fraud
- Suggestions for improvement in service delivery or operations

5. How to Raise a Concern

Staff and contractors can raise concerns through the following means:

- **Direct line management:** Where appropriate, concerns should initially be raised with your immediate line manager.
- **Freedom to Speak Up Guardian:** An appointed Freedom to Speak Up Guardian is available to offer confidential guidance and support.
- **HR or Senior Management:** Where concerns involve your line manager or require escalation, you may approach a senior manager or HR directly.
- **Written reports:** Concerns may also be raised in writing, either by letter or email, clearly marked as “confidential”.

6. Handling of Concerns

- All concerns will be acknowledged within five working days.
- An investigation will be carried out promptly and proportionately.
- Feedback will be provided to the person raising the concern, subject to any confidentiality constraints.
- Records of concerns and investigations will be maintained securely and in line with data protection legislation.

7. Support Available

- Support and advice are available to individuals who raise concerns, including access to internal and external counselling or advocacy services.
- Individuals are encouraged to seek help from the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian if they feel unsure or worried about raising an issue.

8. Protection and Confidentiality

- Different Minds (ADHD-ASD Norfolk) Ltd will not tolerate any form of victimisation against individuals who raise concerns in good faith.
- Any acts of retaliation or unfair treatment against those who speak up will be addressed promptly and may lead to disciplinary action.
- Wherever possible, confidentiality will be maintained to protect the identity of the individual raising the concern.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by legislation or organisational changes. Monitoring will include evaluating the types of concerns raised and how effectively they are managed, to ensure continuous improvement in our culture and service delivery.

Approved by:

Graham Boulter MSc

Director

Different Minds (ADHD-ASD Norfolk) Ltd

3/4/25 to be reviewed 3/4/26