

Suzanne McCarthy announced as Independent Chair of National Guardian's Office

Tuesday 2 May, 2023

Suzanne McCarthy has been appointed as Independent Chair of the Accountability and Liaison Board for the National Guardian's Office.

A lawyer by background, she has held several senior public sector positions including Chief Executive of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and Chief Executive of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. She previously served as a Non-Executive Board member on the Boards of the General Medical Council, the Human Tissue Authority and the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. She is currently the Independent Chair of the Fire Standards Board and the Chair of two charities.

The National Guardian's Office leads, trains and supports the network of Freedom to Speak Up guardians throughout healthcare in England to support workers to speak up about anything which gets in the way of them doing their job. The National Guardian also provides challenge and learning to the healthcare system on matters related to speaking up as part of her remit.

The Accountability and Liaison Board seeks assurance and gives strategic advice to the National Guardian to promote her mission to make speaking up business as usual throughout healthcare. Members of the Accountability and Liaison Board are representatives of the funding bodies of the National Guardian's Office.

As the work of the National Guardian has developed, the Board wished to appoint an Independent Chair in line with good corporate governance. The role of the Independent Chair is to provide leadership of the Board, and to bring together the views of each of the individual members.

Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark, National Guardian for the NHS said: *"I am delighted that Suzanne has accepted the position as Chair for our Accountability and Liaison Board.*

My office has a vital role in encouraging and supporting people to speak up safely about anything which gets in the way of providing great care, and I am excited to start working in partnership with Suzanne. Her extensive experience will be of great benefit, not just to myself and the Board, but for the work we do to improve the speaking up culture of the healthcare sector."

Sir Andrew Morris OBE Hon FRCP, Deputy Chair of NHS England and outgoing Chair of the Accountability and Liaison Board, said: *"I welcome Suzanne's appointment as Independent Chair and look forward to working with her as a member of the National Guardian's Office Accountability and Liaison Board. The role of Independent Chair is vital to harness the talents of the individual members of the Board and to bring together the funders of the National Guardian's work. Her experience will be of great benefit the National Guardian's Office and the embedding of Freedom to Speak Up throughout the NHS."*

Suzanne McCarthy said: *"I am honoured to have been asked to take on this role from Sir Andrew Morris and Sir Robert Francis KC. I greatly look forward to leading the Accountability and Liaison Board and in doing so facilitate its contributions to the work of the NGO. I hope that together the National Guardian, her office and the Board will achieve a Speaking Up culture that is supported at all levels within the healthcare sector and consistently implemented."*

Suzanne McCarthy will take up her role on 2nd May 2023.

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