

# Session Script

If you are the facilitator for the *SPEAK UP, Stand Strong: Raising Concerns with Confidence* learning session please follow this script.

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## Slide 1

Hello and welcome to this learning session: Speak Up, Stand Strong: Raising Concerns with Confidence!

➡ *Advance to the next slide.*

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## Slide 2

Here are the session learning objectives. By the end of the session, you will be able to the following:

➡ *(Click once per bullet point)*

1. Understand how to spot concerns in practice and explain why raising them is essential for safe and ethical care.
2. Identify ways to prepare what to say and select appropriate methods for expressing concerns professionally.
3. Demonstrate effective communication while maintaining patient and colleague confidentiality.
4. Explain the importance of acting in accordance with HCPC Standards and fulfilling the duty of candour.
5. Recognise common barriers to speaking up and know where to seek support or escalate concerns when needed.

And finally,

6. Apply the SPEAK UP model confidently to real-life scenarios, demonstrating professionalism, reflection, and alignment with HCPC standards.

➡ *Advance to the next slide.*

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## Slide 3

Let's do an icebreaker scenario activity!

➡ *Click to reveal scenario.*

You see a colleague skip hand hygiene before assessing a patient. What would you do? Put your hand up if you hear which option you would choose or just keep your choice in mind for now. We'll come back to this later in the session and see if your answer changes!

➡ *Click to reveal options and read out loud:*

- a) Say nothing
- b) Remind them gently
- c) Report this to a supervisor immediately
- Or d) Post about it on social media

➡ *Click*

Let's break down the steps of what we should do before we speak up!

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## Slide 4

### S – Spot the concern

Speaking up is about raising anything that could affect safety, quality of care, or the working environment.

This includes:

- ➡ *Click:* Minor issues – for example a missed hand hygiene opportunity, a one-off, or something that "doesn't feel right".
- ➡ *Click:* Concerns that could escalate – such as repeated mistakes, unsafe shortcuts, patterns of poor behaviour or communication breakdowns.
- ➡ *Click:* Urgent risks – like immediate threats to patient safety, safeguarding concerns, serious misconduct, or dangerous decisions.

Speaking up isn't just about clinical concerns — it also includes raising issues that make the working environment difficult. This might involve excessive workload, chronic understaffing, lack of appropriate equipment, or signs of burnout among staff. These factors can affect patient care and staff wellbeing, so it's important they are recognised and addressed.

Even when things are going well but could be improved, we should feel able to speak up and expect to be listened to. Speaking up is a gift—it helps organisations learn, adapt and improve for patients, staff and service users.

➡ *Click:* Here are some different words that also mean speaking up: Make a suggestion, provide feedback, highlight, question, challenge, call out, whistleblowing, being honest, flag, raise an issue, disclose, alert, report, escalate and raise a concern.

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## Slide 5

So, why does speaking up matter?

- It Protects patient safety – Raising concerns helps prevent harm, ensuring care remains safe, effective, and ethical (Okuyama et al. 2014).
- It Promotes accountability – Encouraging a culture where individuals and teams take responsibility for actions and outcomes.
- It Upholds professional integrity – Demonstrating commitment to ethical standards, transparency, and doing the right thing even when it's difficult.
- It Supports colleagues – Speaking up can highlight discrimination, bullying, or unsafe behaviour, helping to create a respectful and inclusive environment.

➡ *Click:* Speaking up is a professional duty, not just a choice. Fulfilling the **duty of candour** means being open and honest with patients when something goes wrong. It is both a **legal duty** under Regulation 20 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and a **professional responsibility** under HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics 8, promoting trust, learning, and transparency in healthcare.

In the 2024 NHS Staff Survey, **71.5%** of staff felt safe raising concerns, this was unchanged from 2023 and down from **75% in 2021**, showing a worrying plateau (National Guardian's Office, 2025).

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## Slide 6

P- Prepare how and what to say

→ *Click:* Before speaking up, take a moment to prepare yourself:

→ *Click:*

- Plan out what you want to say — or what you'd like someone to say on your behalf.
- Reflect on what you've seen, heard, or felt — and try to separate facts from feelings.
- Think about the outcome you're hoping for — what change, or action would help?
- You don't need proof, just a genuine concern or uncertainty.
- Decide how you'll speak up — Openly: This is when the person you speak to knows your identity and you're happy for anyone else involved to know this too. Confidentially: When you share your details on condition that they won't be shared without consent. Or anonymously where no one knows your identity. Anonymous reporting is an option, although it may limit and make it harder to give you updates or follow up on the concern.

→ *Click:* Plan how to express your concern — you can speak up in the way that feels most comfortable, safe, and appropriate. Here are different ways to raise a concern:

→ *Click to reveal list:*

For example, **in person, by phone, email, written report or form**, or via an **online reporting system**, including anonymous options. You can also speak up during **team debriefs** or **reflective sessions**. You might also raise concerns through a **trusted colleague**, your **union**, such as, *Unite or UNISON*, a **professional body** such as the *College of Paramedics, Royal College of Podiatry, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, Society of Radiographers*, or your **regulatory body**, the *Health and Care Professions Council*. Additionally, Freedom to Speak Up Guardians are available in many NHS organisations. They provide confidential advice, support and can raise the matter on your behalf. They don't conduct investigations; they remain impartial and focus on improving speaking up culture.

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## Slide 7

E- Express yourself constructively. Here are some common pitfalls when expressing concerns.

→ *Click: Image will appear*

*Read out loud*

1. Using Aggressive or Emotional Language: Letting frustration or anger dictate your words can make the conversation confrontational and less productive.
2. Focusing on Blame Rather Than Solutions: Pointing fingers can create defensiveness and hinder constructive dialogue.
3. Being Vague or Unspecific: Not providing clear examples or details can make it hard for others to understand the concern or take appropriate action.
4. Ignoring Confidentiality: Sharing sensitive information inappropriately can breach trust and professional standards.

→ *Click:* Use respectful, calm language: "I noticed that..." "I'm concerned about..." "I just wanted to raise something I observed..." "Can I check something I saw earlier?" Avoid: "Why would you do that?" "You're wrong." "You're being unsafe." "What were you thinking?"

→ *Advance to the next slide.*

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## Slide 8

### DOs and DON'Ts for Maintaining Confidentiality When Raising Concerns

→ Click:

Speaking up is important — but so is protecting patient and colleague confidentiality. Confidentiality must be respected under HCPC Standards and the Data Protection Act 2018.

→ Click:

#### **DON'Ts**

- Don't name individuals in public or group settings
- Don't share concerns in WhatsApp chats or social media
- Don't include screenshots or private messages without consent
- Don't share details that could indirectly identify someone
- Don't disclose information unless you're sure it's safe and appropriate
- Don't include opinions, assumptions, or blame

#### **DO's**

- Stick to the facts — share only what's necessary to explain the concern
- Use private and secure methods, such as:
  - In person, in a private setting
  - A phone call in a private room
  - Email- using a secure university or workplace account
  - Official reporting tools (e.g. incident forms)
- Protect identities — avoid using names unless absolutely appropriate
- Raise concerns through trusted people within your university or workplace, rather than friends or family outside these settings.

→ Click:

🔒 When raising a concern confidentially, your identity should only be shared if there is a legal requirement. Wherever possible, this should not happen without your consent — and if disclosure is necessary, it should be discussed with you beforehand.

→ Advance to the next slide.

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## Slide 9

### A – Act according to HCPC standards

→ Click

The HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics listed here are related to speaking up and raising concerns. They are not quoted word-for-word but are simplified summaries of the original standards for ease of learning. You should always refer to the full HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics for the exact wording.

→ Read each summarised standard out loud.

→ Click: Standards 8.1 & 8.2 link directly to the Duty of Candour —the legal requirement to be open and honest when things go wrong, inform others, explain, and apologise.

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## Slide 10

K- Know your escalation route and support

Let's discuss identifying and overcoming barriers to speaking up. Recognising a barrier to speaking up is a concern in itself — it signals that the environment may not feel psychologically safe or supportive. If something is stopping you from speaking up, that's something to speak up about too.

→ *Click:* Read each row on the table out loud and with each click the next row will appear.

→ *Advance to the next slide.*

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## Slide 11

Contact and Support Systems

→ *Click:* You are **never alone** when raising a concern! For guidance and support, turn to:

→ *With each click a resource will appear*

1. Practice Educators or University Personal Tutor- your first point of contact during placement for advice and escalation.
2. Safeguarding Leads or Teams- for concerns involving abuse, harm or vulnerable individuals
3. HCPC Guidance- official standards and resources on raising concerns and the duty of candour
4. Union Representatives or University Support Services- for confidential support, advocacy, or if you feel unsafe speaking up alone.

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## Slide 12

Now... Let's put this all together.... Introducing **you** to The SPEAK UP Model!

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## Slide 13

It's not always easy to raise a concern. The SPEAK UP model can be used to help you do this!

This is the SPEAK UP mnemonic:

**S** – Spot the concern, **P** – Prepare how and what to say, **E** – Express yourself constructively, **A** – Act according to HCPC standards and **K** – Know your escalation route and support

Please refer to your SPEAK UP Handout now!

Now that you know the SPEAK UP model, think back to the hand hygiene example from earlier. Would your answer be the same, or would you approach it differently?

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## Slide 14

The SPEAK UP Model in Action!

→ *Click:* Here is a scenario: You witness verbal bullying between colleagues.

→ *Click:* Your task: In small groups or individually, write out the individual steps of the SPEAK UP model to guide how you would respond in this situation. Focus on staying calm, professional, and aligning your actions with HCPC standards — including how to protect confidentiality and raise the concern appropriately. You now have 3 minutes to do this!

→ **(For Classroom Video Playback):** *Pause the video here, once the activity is finished, continue the video.*

→ **(For Live Delivery):** *Once the activity has finished, advance to the next slide.*

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## Slide 15

Now that we have covered all the content and introduced the SPEAK UP model, let's test your understanding! Scan or click on the QR code to play our short quiz on Kahoot. You have just under 5 minutes to complete this.

➡ **(For Classroom Video Playback):** *Pause the video here, once the activity is finished, continue the video.*

➡ **(For Live Delivery):** *Once the activity has finished, advance to the next slide.*

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## Slide 16

Here are the key resources on raising concerns. Scan or click on the following QR codes:

➡ *With each click a resource will appear and read the following out loud:*

1. The HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics
  2. The Duty of Candour Guide
  3. The "Getting It Right When Things Go Wrong" Webinar on YouTube
  4. The HCPC Student Hub
  5. The Freedom to Speak Up – Core Training (NHS eLearning) - I really recommend doing this!
- And of course, don't forget to use the SPEAK UP model.

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## Slide 17

Everyone faces barriers to raising concerns — but recognising them is the first step to overcoming them. Scan or click on the QR code to access this session's Padlet Discussion Board. Choose one or more prompts or share your own reflection. You can post anonymously or include your name, whichever feels comfortable. You now have 5 minutes to do this, but you're welcome to return to it later and add more reflections in your own time.

➡ **(For Classroom Video Playback):** *Pause the video here, once the activity is finished, continue the video.*

➡ **(For Live Delivery):** *Once the activity has finished, advance to the next slide.*

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## Slide 18

Thank you for taking part in the SPEAK UP, Stand Strong: Raising Concerns With Confidence Learning Session! A Situational Judgement Quiz Handout has also been provided, please complete this in your own time.

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## Slide 19

Here are all of the references for this session. Please note, the photos in this session were AI-generated and the SPEAK UP model is an original, student-developed resource and is not an official HCPC resource.

*This is the end of the learning session.*

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