

# Member Information 2017: The Role of a Governor

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# 1. Membership

**As an NHS Foundation Trust, we have a duty to engage with our local community and encourage local people to join as members.** We must also ensure that our membership is representative of the communities we serve. This gives local people a bigger say in health services in the area and ensures the trust is more transparent with how it provides a service and how money is spent. Anyone who lives in the area, works for the trust, or has been a patient or a service user, can become a member of our trust. This provides staff and local people a real stake in the future of their hospitals.

## 1.1. Eligibility, Constituencies and Boundaries for Membership

There are two constituencies of membership, public membership and staff membership for Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

**The public constituency comprises of those members that live in one of the following sixteen public areas:**

1. Daresbury, Windmill Hill, Norton North, Castlefields
2. Beechwood, Mersey, Heath, Grange
3. Norton South, Halton Brook, Halton Lea
4. Appleton, Farnworth, Hough Green, Halton View, Birchfield
5. Broadheath, Ditton, Hale, Kingsway, Riverside
6. Lymm, Grappenhall and Thelwall
7. Appleton, Stockton Heath, Hatton, Stretton and Walton
8. Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft, Poulton North
9. Penketh and Cuerdley, Great Sankey North, Great Sankey South
10. Latchford East, Latchford West, Poulton South
11. Bewsey and Whitecross, Fairfield and Howley
12. Poplars and Hulme, Orford
13. Birchwood, Rixton and Woolston
14. Burtonwood and Winwick, Whittle Hall, Westbrook
15. North Mersey
16. Rest of England

Public membership is available to any individual aged 16 years and over who lives in the areas above. The North Mersey and South Mersey areas take in the geographic areas around our core catchment areas of Warrington, Runcorn and Widnes and allow for representation of patients who travel to the hospitals from these areas.

**The staff constituency comprise of staff who work at the Trust:**

- Medical & Dental
- Nursing and Midwifery
- Support
- Clinical Scientist or Allied Health Professionals
- Estates, Administration and Managerial

## 2. Types of governor

**The Council of Governors has responsibility for representing the interests of the members, partner organisations and members of the public in discharging its statutory duties** and is made up of the following representative Constituencies:

- 16 Public Governors - elected by the trust's public membership who represents the local community
- 5 Staff Governors - elected by the trust's staff members, who they represent
- 6 Partner Governors - nominated by partner organisations who work closely with the trust

### Public Governors

Public governors are elected by the trust's public membership. Public members within the electoral areas are able to vote during an electoral process on the person they wish to represent them as a governor of the trust.

### Staff Governors

Staff governors are elected by the trust's staff membership. Staff members within the electoral staff groups are able to vote during an electoral process on the person they wish to represent them as a governor of the trust. Staff governors bring their own knowledge and skills from working in the organisation.

### Partner Governors

Partner governors are nominated by key local partnership organisations that work closely with the trust. They bring their knowledge and experience to the Council and help the trust to work in partnership with the community. The Trusts partner governors are:

- Warrington Borough Council
- Halton Borough Council
- University of Chester
- Warrington Wolves Foundation
- To be appointed
- To be appointed

### 2.1. The Governor Role – Statutory Duties

Governors perform a range of statutory and non-statutory duties. The statutory duties are set out in the NHS Act 2006 and the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Governor Statutory duties include:

- holding the non-executive directors to account individually and collectively for the performance of the board;
- the appointment and, if appropriate, removal of the chair;
- the appointment and, if appropriate, remove the other non-executive directors;
- approve the remuneration and allowances, and other terms and conditions of office, of the chair and other non-executive directors;
- approve the appointment of the Chief Executive on recommendation from the board Nominations and Remuneration Committee;
- appoint, re-appoint and, if appropriate, remove the auditor;
- receive the annual report and accounts and any report on these provided by the auditor;
- approve any 'significant transactions' as defined within the trust's constitution;
- approve an application by the trust to enter into a merger, acquisition, separation or dissolution;
- decide whether the Trust's non-NHS work would significantly interfere with its principal purpose, which is to provide goods and services for the health service in England, or performing its other functions;
- approve amendments to the Trust's constitution.

## 2.2. Who can become a governor?

Governors are local people who have an interest in healthcare and care about helping to improve their local healthcare services for the good of the whole community and who are keen to develop stronger links between the Trust and the community it serves. Governors need to:

- Recognise that a health service is complex with many issues to address to ensure its smooth running and be able to operate effectively
- Be able to put the needs of the community above personal preference
- Be keen to understand and be able to champion the needs of the local community
- Actively listen and value the contributions of different people
- Be enthusiastic and committed and want to work as part of a cohesive team
- Be keen to learn and keep updated
- Be able to ask questions in a constructive, not a confrontational manner
- Be willing to read relevant documents and papers, attend relevant meetings and training the Trust will provide

**To apply to become a governor you will need to:**

- Be a member of the foundation trust
- Be over 16 years of age
- Live in the area that is open for election

## 2.3. What will I do as a governor?

To fulfil the statutory duties, Governors would be expected to:

- Attend meetings of the Council of Governors including the Annual Members meeting
- Attend at least one Trust Board meeting per year to seek assurance that the Non-Executive Directors are holding the trust board to account.
- Attend Governor Committees which aids understanding and assurance
- Have an ambassadorial role in representing and promoting the Trust via patients, members and the public. To do this governors have to meet and engage with their members.

For all meetings, governors are required to read agendas and supporting documents in advance of each meeting. They are expected to comment on documents and plans and ask relevant questions at the meeting.

## 2.4. Governor training

Governors will also receive appropriate training to be able to undertake the role and be expected to attend induction meetings, ongoing training events, board to governor events and others.

## 2.5. What is the time commitment?

Basically it can be as busy as you want it to be. Governors are expected to attend minimum of three out of four council of governor meetings in any one financial year. However, there are a number of Governor Committees held throughout the year and many other ways to be involved. Some commitment to attend the committees is a must as it provides a greater understanding of the issues facing the trust. Most meetings of the Council of

Governors and Committees tend to take place on weekdays in the afternoon. Before making a decision to stand for election, consideration will be required to the amount of time you have available. Check with your employer whether you will be allowed time off, if needed. There is no requirement on employers to provide time off, as there is for undertaking some other public duties.

## 2.5. Will I get paid for being a governor?

As the governor role is voluntary you will not be paid, although reasonable expenses will be reimbursed by the trust in accordance with the trusts expenses policy.

# 3. Governor Meetings

## 3.1. Council of Governors' meetings

**The Council of Governors meets formally up to four times per year in public and anyone can attend to listen to the meeting.** At the meeting, governors receive the latest performance information and have the chance to analyse it and raise questions. The meeting is chaired by the Trust Chairman and attended by Executive and Non-Executive Directors.

The formal public Council of Governors meeting program is a small part of the Governors' work in the trust. Governors have a number of committees which they lead on which allows them to bring information and views to the main council meeting. A committee structure has also been put in place with two Governor led committees, each chaired by a Governor and with membership made up of Governors supported by directors and staff:

**3.2. Quality in Care Committee** - The purpose of the Committee is to assist the Council of Governors in the performance of its duties in the provision of assurance concerning the delivery of quality and safe healthcare; by gaining greater understanding of the influences that impact on the provision of care and services in support of getting the best outcomes and experience for patients and staff.

**3.3. Governor Engagement Committee** – The purpose of the Committee is to assist the Council of Governors' in the performance of its duties, including recommending objectives and strategy for the trust in the development of communications and membership matters, having regard to the interests of its public and staff members, its patients and other stakeholders.

**3.4. Nomination and Remuneration Committee** – This is the only statutory Committee of the Council of Governors and recommends to the Council the nomination of appropriate candidates to the posts of non-executive directors, including the chair and deputy chair. The Committee makes recommendations as to the remuneration and allowances, and other terms and conditions, of office for non-executive directors (NEDs) and is involved in the appraisal process of the Chairman and NEDs.

# 4. Other meetings and involvement

**Alongside the formal meetings and committees, a wide range of briefing sessions and workshops take place throughout the year to both inform the governors of trust initiatives and work programmes and gain their views and support.**

**4.1. Ward Observation Visits** – Governors undertake a programme of ward and service visits throughout the year, where they meet patients, relatives and staff and ask a variety of questions relating to their care, the environment and their experience. The outcomes of these visits are reported to the Quality in Care committee.

**4.2 Trust Board meeting observation** - Governors, members and the public are able to attend Trust Board meetings as an observer to enable them to fulfil the statutory duty to hold the non-executive directors, individually, and collectively, to account for the performance of the board. Governors who attend the board meeting are able to provide feedback to the council on any matters arising from the board.

**4.3. Board/Governor Workshops** - During each year Governors are involved in a number of workshops to consider the priorities of the Trust and consider the priorities of the Quality Accounts:

**Quality Accounts** - The Governors are involved in a workshop with a range of other community stakeholders to consider the quality improvement priorities for the trust for the forthcoming year. The Quality in Care Committee receives feedback on the findings of the workshop, consider the improvement priorities and agree a local indicator priority. The Committee on behalf of the Council considers the Quality Accounts and provides a statement on its appropriateness that is included in the Quality Accounts.

**4.3. Governor attendance at organised and supported events** - The Governors' continue to support the trust and engage with both the membership and the public across the trust's catchment area attending events such as the Hospital's Conversation Cafes, Warrington Disability Day and the Annual Members Meeting at Halton Hospital. Governors have actively sought to engage with patients and contribute to a process of improving services.

## 5. How to apply to become a governor

**UK Engage, the organisation that we have appointed to run the elections on our behalf, will issue a postcard to members during Sept-Oct 2017 that provides information on how you can obtain a self-nomination form.** For more information about the election process, the governor role or to fill out a self-nomination form online please visit our UK Engage election webpage <https://pre.ukevote.uk/whh> from Thursday 14th September 2017. The deadline for completed nominations is Tuesday, 17 October 2017.

You can contact UK Engage on 0345 209 3770