

Council of Governors

Information for Prospective
Governors

We are
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Council of Governors

Information for Prospective Governors

The following has been developed to help members decide if they would like to stand for election to the Council of Governors, including the commitment and involvement required.

Background

NHS Foundation Trust governors lie at the heart of the organisation and reflect local interests within Foundation Trusts. Governors are part of the corporate governance structure of the Trust, representing members and holding the Non-Executive Directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board. They appoint the Non-Executive Directors and advise the Trust on strategy. They stand outside the day to day management of the Trust, bringing a unique and independent view to its operations.

Governors are the eyes and ears of the public, patients and staff. They are essential to help the Trust understand and respond to what patients and local people expect from their local NHS Trust. Therefore people of all backgrounds and experiences are encouraged to stand for election to help ensure that the voice of our Council of Governors is representative of our diverse workforce and the diverse communities that we serve.

The governor duties are both formal and informal, and they are about the services the Trust provides rather than being based on personal issues. As governors are volunteers – apart from some expenses – they are not paid. This is not a job and they are not part of the operational management of the Trust. Nor are governors expected to act as delegates for members of the public; they are representatives.

The composition of the Council of Governors

The Council of Governors is made up of 27 governors. 23 are elected by members of the Trust and 4 are nominated (partners). There are:

- Sixteen public governors, representing the five constituencies of the Trust
- One public governor, representing the Trust's Out of Area constituency
- Seven staff governors
- Four nominated (appointed) partnership governors, currently representing Age UK, Lancashire County Council, NCompass, and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

The governors elect a Lead Governor who is principally responsible for liaison between the Trust and the Council of Governors. The Lead Governor also has formal responsibilities with NHS Improvement in the event that the Trust has financial challenges.

The general responsibilities of the Council of Governors are to:

- To represent the views of staff, patients and the public, particularly in relation to the Trust's strategic direction. The Council help the Board to make sure that the views of local communities, staff and people who use the Trust's services are taken into account when plans for services are being developed.

- To hold the Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board of Directors. Governors are given various opportunities to hold Non-Executive Directors to account, for example by observing their activities, or meeting with them and asking questions.
- Review annually the extent to which the Trust is meeting its objective of delivering high quality services;
- Work with the Board of Directors on other matters for the benefit of the Trust.

The Council of Governors:

- Appoints or removes the Trust Chair and other Non-Executive Directors of the Trust;
- Approves the appointment of the Chief Executive of the Trust by the Non-Executive Directors;
- Decides the remuneration, expenses and other terms and conditions of office of the Non-Executive Directors;
- Appoints or removes the Trust's auditor;
- Receives and considers the Trust's annual accounts, any auditors reports on those annual accounts and the Annual Report from the Board of Directors;
- Is consulted by the Board of Directors regarding the annual planning which is provided to the independent regulator; and
- Responds as appropriate when consulted by the Board of Directors

Time commitment

Governors are invited to give whatever time they have available. There are meetings and events for which attendance is generally expected, as follows:

- A quarterly Council of Governors meeting, starting to be held in person at Sceptre Point HQ. Meeting normally commence at 13:00pm and last for 2.5 hours. There is also usually a half hour Pre-Meeting that takes place from 12noon beforehand.
- Two separate working groups (Committees of the Council) which concentrate on specific issues and which meet 4 times per year. Governors are encouraged to attend at least one regularly. Meetings usually last for approximately 2 hours. The working groups are:
 - Membership and Engagement Committee
 - Quality Assurance Committee
- The Annual Members Meeting and Membership Conference (usually held in September/October).
- Training and development opportunities (including the new governor Induction Programme)
- Governors are also invited to attend the Public meeting of the Board of Directors and its Committee's in an observatory capacity.

Terms of Office

The Trust constitution states that a Governor is elected for a period of three years, with the opportunity to stand for re-election for a second and final three-year term.