SOUTH TYNESIDE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Becoming a Governor

Information Pack 2017
Dear Member

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a Governor of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust.

‘NHS Foundation Trust Governors are the individuals that bind a Trust to its patients, staff and local stakeholders’

NHS Improvement

This information pack briefly explains how you can become involved in representing members through participation in the Council of Governors and what it means to be a Governor.

We look forward to receiving your nomination and to working with those of you who are elected to join the Council of Governors.

Neil Mundy
Chair

Ken Bremner
Chief Executive
ELECTION OF GOVERNORS 2017

6 Public Governors in the following constituencies:

- South Tyneside 2 vacancies
- Sunderland 2 vacancies
- Gateshead 1 vacancy

Following an amendment to the Constitution in June 2017, an additional seat for a Governor to represent the Rest of North East of England was agreed.

- Rest of North East of England 1 vacancy

3 Staff Governors in the following staff group:

- Clinical 3 vacancies

A nomination form to stand for election to these positions can be obtained from the Returning Officer in the following ways:

Telephone: 0208 889 9203
Email: ft nominationenquiries@electoralreform.co.uk
Text: Text 2FT ST and your name and address to 88802
Post: Electoral Reform Services Limited, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London, N8 0NW

All nomination papers should be received by the Returning Officer, at the address as detailed above, by 5pm on Monday 23rd October 2017.

Should any nominee wish to withdraw their nomination, they must put this in writing to the returning officer by 5pm on Thursday 30th October 2017.

Ballot papers will be distributed to qualifying members on Friday 10th November 2017. Completed ballot papers must be received by the Independent Scrutineer by 5pm on Thursday 30th November 2017.

The regulations governing this election can be obtained from Electoral Reform Services Ltd. The Independent Scrutineer for these elections is Electoral Reform Services Ltd. The Returning Officer for these elections is Ciara Norris of Electoral Reform Services Ltd (address as above).
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a Foundation Trust?

NHS foundation trusts were first set up in 2004 as part of the Government’s drive to make sure NHS organisations:

- make more local decisions
- have more financial freedom
- are more accountable to local people for the services they provide

NHS foundation trusts are different from NHS trusts because they:

- are not directed by Government so have greater freedom to decide, with their governors and members, their own strategy and the way services are run
- can retain their surpluses and borrow to invest in new and improved services for patients and service users
- are accountable to local communities through their members and governors and therefore can be more responsive to their needs and wishes

NHS foundation trusts are also accountable to:

- their commissioners (the people who buy their services) through contracts
- Parliament (each foundation trust must lay its annual report and accounts before Parliament)
- the Care Quality Commission (through the legal requirement to register and meet the associated standards for the quality of care provided)
- NHS Improvement – the regulator for NHS trusts and foundation trusts

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust was authorised as an NHS Foundation Trust by Monitor (now NHS Improvement), the Independent Regulator of Foundation Trusts, on 1 January 2005.

On 1 July, 2011 the Community Health Services for the Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland Primary Care Trusts transferred to the Trust under the Transforming Community Services initiative. Some Community Services in Gateshead transferred to Gateshead NHS Foundation Trust in 2016-17.
2. What is the role of the Council of Governors?

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.

The general duties of the Council of Governors are:

- **Hold the non-executive directors, individually and collectively, to account for the performance of the board of directors**
- **Represent the interests of the members of the trust as a whole and the interests of the public**

In addition, the duties of the Council of Governors include:

- Appoint, re-appoint and, if appropriate, remove the chair
- Appoint, re-appoint and, if appropriate, remove the other non-executive directors
- Decide the remuneration and allowances and other terms and conditions of office of the chair and the other non-executive directors;
- Approve (or not) any new appointment of a chief executive;
- Appoint and, if appropriate, remove the NHS foundation trust’s external auditor; and
- Receive the NHS foundation trust’s annual accounts, any report of the auditor on them, and the annual report at a general meeting of the council of governors.
- Approve “significant transactions”
- 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 and
- Approve amendments to the trust’s constitution

The Trust will take steps to secure that governors are equipped with the skills and knowledge they require to fulfil these duties.

Governors are **not** responsible for the day-to-day running of the Trust. This responsibility lies with the Board of Directors.

2. Why have Governors?

Governors represent the views of and provide a link to our public, staff and partner organisations. As a governor of the South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust you will:

- Ensure we are accountable to our members and the communities that we serve
- Represent the interests of our partner organisations
- Communicate effectively with our members and help us to develop networks for engaging with the wider community
• Help us plan for the future by canvassing the views and opinions of members and local communities
• Influence change, development and improvements to the way we deliver care to our patients and service users

Collectively, governors have an advisory, guardianship and strategic role within the governance of the Trust, which is crucial to our success.

3. Who is on the Council of Governors?

The Council of Governors is made up of a number of elected and appointed governors and is chaired by the Trust’s Chairman. The Council has 32 governors, each representing the different areas which make up each constituency:

Chairman (also Chairman of the Board of Directors)

18 Public Governors
• 9 South Tyneside
• 4 Gateshead
• 4 Sunderland
• 1 Rest of North East of England

6 Staff Governors
• 4 Clinical Staff
• 2 Non Clinical Staff

8 Appointed Governors
• 1 Clinical Commissioning Groups
• 3 Voluntary Sector, one from each locality
• 3 Local Authority, one from each locality
• 1 Higher Education

4. Who can be a Governor?

You can stand for election to the Council of Governors if:

• You are a member of the NHS Foundation Trust,
• You are 16 years or over,
• You are a member of the constituency you wish to represent
• You can be appointed to the Council of Governors if you are asked by your organisation to do so, following a formal approach from the Trust.

However, there are a very small number of people who can be a member, but not a Governor. These include people who:

• are a Director or a Governor of another NHS Foundation Trust;
• are the spouse, partner, parent or child of a member of the Board of Directors of the NHS Foundation Trust;
• are a member of a local authority’s Scrutiny Committee covering health matters;
• are subject to a sex offenders order;
• have been declared bankrupt
• have been convicted of any offence,
• have within the preceding two years been dismissed, otherwise than by reason of redundancy, from any paid employment with a health service body;

If you are not sure if you are eligible, please contact us for a confidential discussion. A full list is available in Annex 4 of the Constitution

Governors will be expected to abide by the seven principles of public life, otherwise known as the Nolan principles – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, and will be expected to abide by the Code of Conduct. Annex 8 of the Constitution

5. What qualifications do I need?

To be a governor you need to be at least 16 years of age at the date you nominate yourself for election or are appointed.

No special skills, educational achievements or other qualifications are required but potential candidates should:

• Have an interest in and basic understanding of Health Services
• Keep pace with strategic issues affecting the Trust and the NHS sector as a whole
• Be willing to take the time to contribute towards the future plans of the Trust
• Act and behave in the interests of the Trust in line with the Code of Conduct.
• Represent the interests of members as a whole and of the wider public.
• Receive, read and understand relevant documents and papers and attend relevant meetings and training offered.

6. How do I get elected?

A notice of election will be issued on Friday 6th October 2017. This will be circulated to all members of the constituencies we are electing to and will be published on our website. In this notice of election, members will be asked if they wish to stand as a governor.

If you would like to stand as a governor, you need to complete a simple form which includes a short statement saying why you want to do so. You may also want to include a photograph of yourself. You will not be required to campaign or attend election events.

The Trust has appointed the Electoral Reform Service (ERS) to undertake elections to the Council of Governors.
7. What happens if only one person stands for election?

If only one person stands for election in a particular constituency, they will automatically become a Governor.

8. How long are the terms of office?

Governors will be elected or appointed for a period of up to 3 years, but you can stand down earlier if you wish or become ineligible.

9. How much time will I need to give?

The Council of Governors must meet at least 4 times each financial year (including one Annual Members’ Meeting), but can meet more frequently as and when required, depending on the business of the Trust. Governor development sessions are also held on a monthly basis.

Governors may also be invited to attend sub-groups to look at various key issues, so if you have a particular area of interest you may want to get involved in those groups. It’s really up to you.

Governors are also invited to Trust Board - Governor visits to a varied mix of areas around the Foundation Trust, these visits are available to all Governors with a maximum of 6 per visit.

10. Will I be paid?

No, Governor positions are unpaid but we will reimburse travel expenses and other reasonable costs by agreement.

11. What support is available?

We support all Governors in developing the knowledge and skills they require to perform their role effectively, through a variety of means including a comprehensive induction package, with information about services, and bespoke training sessions on specific aspects of their role i.e., their role in the appointment process for the Chairman/Non-Executive Directors.

We regard the role a Governor plays as a very important element of working in the NHS. We also talk to Governors on a regular basis about what would help them to get the best out of their role and make sure we do all that we can to see that this happens.

12. Why we want you

One of the main reasons for the introduction of NHS Foundation Trusts was to actively involve the public, service users, carers and staff through a membership representative of the people it serves. This membership is then represented by individuals elected to a Council of Governors.

Some examples of why people choose to become a Governor:
- To make a positive contribution to ensure patients and service users receive the best care possible;
- To help the Trust respond to the wider challenges it faces i.e., financial constraints, national NHS restructuring; increased levels of demand and future changes to demographical need
- To be a voice/advocate for patients, staff and service users and share their perspective with the Board of Directors
- To work collectively with governor colleagues with the Trust’s Board of Directors to understanding the challenges facing the NHS and collaboratively form solutions
- To use their personal skills in the service of others i.e., financial experience, nursing/clinical experience
- To support the Trust to keep patients and sustainability of services at the centre of all decision making
- better understand and respond to the views of our service users, carers, staff, partners and members of the public,
- recruit more members, thus ensuring our local community continued to have a voice

13. What’s in it for me?

Across the country there are over one million members of NHS Foundation Trusts, all represented by Governors who are people just like you. By becoming a Governor of our NHS Foundation Trust you will have the opportunity to be an active part of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and represent your community.

14. Want to know more?

If you would like more information about becoming a Governor or want to talk to a member of the Foundation Trust Membership Office, please contact us on 0191 2024121.

A full copy of the constitution is available on request from the Private Office, South Tyneside District Hospital, Harton Lane, South Shields, NE34 0PL and on the website www.stft.nhs.uk