

Join the Chelsea and Westminster team – Guidance for prospective governors

Being a member of Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust means that you've shown an interest in being involved with your hospital of choice. While some people see their role as a member as simply receiving regular information about the hospital, you may not realise that this position allows you to vote on electing people to the role of Governor.

Governors are key players in deciding the future direction of the hospital. Working like represented Councillors in Local Authorities, Governors act as the eyes and ears of local people, making sure that their voice is heard when important decisions about healthcare provision are being made.

Governors are part of the Council of Governors. The Governors meet quarterly and at this meeting Governors provide feedback as critical friends to the Trust when formal decisions are about to be made by the Trust Board.

We have three different types of elected Governor – patient, public and staff. Each type of Governor provides a different perspective on decisions to do with Chelsea and Westminster and these different views and experiences help us make sure that every decision takes into account the diverse opinions of everyone that cares about the hospital. As a member, you should be aware of both the type of membership you have and the geographical area you represent if you are a public member.

There are a lot of important decisions that will need to be made over the next few years at Chelsea and Westminster.

If you are considering becoming a governor please read this information pack for detailed guidance on how to apply.

About Chelsea and Westminster Hospital

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital was opened by Her Majesty the Queen in May 1993. This hospital, based on the Fulham Road in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, brought teams and services from the following hospitals together on one site:

- St Mary Abbots Hospital, Kensington
- St Stephen's Hospital, Chelsea
- West London Hospital, Hammersmith
- Westminster Hospital
- Westminster Children's Hospital

We became a Foundation Trust in October 2006 – one of the first in England. Giving staff, patients and members of the local community a greater say in how their hospitals are run is the driving force behind the creation of NHS foundation trusts.

Being a foundation trust we remain firmly part of the NHS but have been set free from central Government control to manage our own budgets and shape the services we provide to better

reflect the needs and priorities of our local community. Through the Council of Governors we are able to listen to the views of patients, local people, staff and partners and by doing so, offer patients faster, better and more responsive healthcare.

How the organisation works

We are led by the Board of Directors; there are Non-Executive Directors (including the Chairman, Sir Tom Hughes-Hallett) and Executive Directors (including the Chief Executive, Tony Bell OBE). Together, they form the Trust Board.

Governors are the link between our membership and the Trust Board. Governors – chosen by their membership constituency - sit on the Council of Governors where key decisions affecting the hospital are reported and discussed before approval by the Trust Board.

The Council of Governors as a body has the following roles and responsibilities:

- To give their views to the Trust Board about future plans and priorities, reflecting the health needs of the constituencies they serve
- To monitor key activities and decisions with a view to making sure they are consistent with its licence and the Terms of its Constitution
- To appoint and remove the Chair and Non-Executive Directors
- To approve the appointment of the Chief Executive
- To decide the remuneration and other terms of office of the Non-Executive Directors
- To support the Trust in recruiting a membership that truly reflects the populations we serve
- To approve any required amendments to the Trust's Constitution

The Health and Social Care Act (2012) sets out two general duties for the Council of Governors

- To hold the Non-Executive Directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors, and
- To represent the interests of the members of the trust as a whole and the interests of the public.

We hold joint away days with Governors and Trust Board members to ensure that all key views are reflected in any hospital decisions we make.

The role of a governor

A governor is elected for a period of three years starting immediately after the election results are announced. You may not hold office for more than nine years in a row.

The Governors attend the Council of Governors meetings. There will be at least 4 meetings per year, including an Annual Members' Meeting. All meetings of the Council of Governors are open to the public.

Although Governors are not paid, they can claim reasonable expenses (such as travel and other costs) that come from carrying out their duties.

The Council of Governors has three sub-committees and one committee which meet to discuss specific issues. These are:

- Agenda Sub-Committee

- Membership Sub-Committee
- Quality Sub-Committee
- Nominations Committee for Appointment of Non-Executive Directors and Chairman

The Trust wants to make the role of Governor as convenient as possible, so that you can dedicate your time to the important decision making that the post requires. The team we have in place to support the Council of Governors are:

Board Governance Manager, Vida Djelic
 Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Sian Nelson
 Head of Communications and Marketing, Layla Hawkins

How do I stand for a governor?

We are delighted that you are considering representing your family, friends and local community by standing as Governor.

If you would like to put yourself forward as a candidate for the role of Governor you will need to:

- Make sure you are registered as a member of the Trust. To become a member you will need to fill in a membership form or apply online at our website. If you are unsure of your membership status, please contact the Board Governance Manager on 02033156716 or e-mail vida.djelic@chelwest.nhs.uk
- Meet the eligibility criteria for being a Governor
- Disclose any material interests held by themselves, their spouse or partner, which are then recorded in the Register of Interest of Governors. The register is available to the public on request (interests to be formally documented, on an annual basis, via completion of a Declaration of Interest Form).
- Be sure that you can commit the time necessary to be an effective governor, including attendance at induction and training sessions and attending the Council meetings
- Read carefully information included in the Frequently Asked Questions – appendix 1

Are you eligible?

A person may not become a Governor of the Foundation Trust if:

- they are under sixteen years of age
- they are a Director of the Foundation Trust, or a governor or director of a health service body (unless they are appointed by an appointing organisation which is a health service body)
- they are the spouse, partner, parent or child of a member of the Board of Directors
- they are a member of a local authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee covering health matters;
- being a member of one of the public constituencies or the patients constituency, they refuse to sign a declaration in the form specified by the Secretary of particulars of their qualification to vote as a member of the Foundation Trust, and that they are not prevented from being a member of the Council of Governors
- if they are subject to a sex offender order
- they have been declared bankrupt or their estate has been sequestrated and in either case they have not been discharged

- they have made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, their creditors and have not been discharged in respect of it
- they have within the last five years been convicted in the British Islands of any offence, and a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more (without the option of a fine) was imposed
- they have within the last two years been dismissed, otherwise than by reason of redundancy, from any paid employment with a health service body
- they are a person whose tenure of office as a chairman or as a member or director of a health service body has been terminated on the grounds that their appointment is not in the interests of the health service for non-attendance at meetings or for non-disclosure of a pecuniary interest

Frequently asked questions

Why is the Trust having an election?

The Trust holds elections to fill vacant seats on its Council of Governors in the Public, Patient and Staff Constituencies.

Who runs the election?

The election will be conducted by an independent organisation Electoral Reform Services which specialises in elections. Electoral Reform Services is the Returning Officer.

Is the Council of Governors the same as the Trust Board?

No, the Board of Directors is made up of executive and non-executive board members with collective responsibility for the performance of the Trust and which exercises power on behalf of the Trust.

What's the difference between a member of the Council of Governors and a member?

Members are patients, service users, staff and the general public from the local community. Members vote to elect representatives onto the Council of Governors. These elected representatives are called governors and they perform certain statutory duties set out in the Constitution and represent their constituents.

Why are some people appointed rather than elected?

The elected governors represent members in the public, patients and staff constituencies. The appointed governors represent stakeholder organisations.

Am I eligible to vote in the elections?

You are eligible to vote if you are registered as a member of the Trust in the constituency or class of the constituency for which the election is being held. If you are not yet a member, you must be on the register by 20 October 2014 in order to vote so it is best to make sure that you register online or send in your application a few days before this date.

I don't know if I am a member - how can I find out and how can I join?

You can give your name and contact details to the Board Governance Manager and ask her to let you know if you are on the register and in which constituency and class. If you are not yet registered you can join online www.chelwest.nhs.uk; by phone 0870 707 1567 (national rate); or by filling out a freepost application leaflet from the Information Zone.

How and when do I vote?

Voting papers will be distributed on 6 November 2014 to members in constituencies where an election is taking place. This may not be in every constituency. Voting is by post or online: full information on how to vote will be included with the ballot paper. Polls close on 27 November 2014.

Can I stand for election?

In order to stand for election you must be a registered member of the relevant constituency and class. If you are a member of one of the public constituencies and you have moved homes since registering, please confirm that you are still eligible.

Can I switch from public to patients' constituency and vice-versa?

If you are eligible for both public and patient constituencies you can switch. Please make a request to switch to the Board Governance Manager before 20 October 2014. If this request is not in writing, you will be asked for a few personal details to confirm your identity.

Does someone have to nominate me?

No, you nominate yourself.

How can I get a nomination form?

The notice will be issued to members by the returning officer on 3 October 2014. This notice will tell you how to contact the Returning Officer to get a Nomination Form. If you are not currently a member and have not received one, these forms can be downloaded from the Trust's website or can be obtained from the Board Governance Manager or the returning officer. Please make sure that you join as a member before you submit your nomination form.

What's the deadline for nominations?

All nomination forms must be delivered to the returning officer by 20 October 2014. Please make sure that you provide all of the details requested and sign the form so that your nomination is valid.

How will I know who I am running against?

The returning officer will publish a statement showing the candidates who are standing for election on 21 October 2014.

What personal information about myself do I have to share?

Your address, membership of political parties and financial interests in the Trust if any, and the election statement of no more than 250 words.

What happens if I change my mind – can I withdraw?

Yes, you can change your mind but notices of your withdrawal must be delivered to the returning officer by 23 October 2014.

Does the Trust give me any publicity to promote my campaign?

The Trust will give objective, balanced and fair coverage equivalent in size and content to all candidates in a range of communications materials already produced by the organisation.

What about funding to promote my campaign?

Apart from personal expenses, travelling expenses, stationery, postage, phone and internet (all to a limit of £100), this is strictly not permitted by the rules.

How do they decide who has won?

The votes are counted by the returning officer using a system of the single transferable vote.

What's a single transferable vote system (STV)?

STV uses preferential voting in multi-member constituencies. Each voter gets one vote, which can transfer from their first-preference to their second-preference and so on, as necessary. Candidates do not need a majority of votes to be elected, just a known 'quota', or share of the votes, determined by the size of the electorate and the number of positions to be filled. If your preferred candidate has no chance of being elected or has enough votes already, your vote is transferred to another candidate in accordance with your choice. STV thus ensures that very few votes are wasted, unlike other systems, especially First-Past-the-Post, where only a small number of votes actually contribute to the result.

When will I know if I have won?

Results will be announced on 28 November 2014.

If I win, what are my expected duties and what is the time commitment?

You discharge your duties by attending regularly scheduled meetings of the Council of

Governors, attending the Trust's Open Day, Annual Members Meeting, away days, and other events including training and induction.

Will I need any training to take on this role?

We run an induction programme and all newly elected representatives are required to attend.

Will I need to comply with a Code of Conduct?

Yes, you are requested to confirm your acceptance of the Council of Governors Code of Conduct.

Will I have to disclose information about my income, assets or finances?

You are required to declare any material interests as prescribed in the Constitution – these include directorships, interests in firms likely to be considered as trading partners or providing services to the NHS, positions of authority in charities and voluntary organisations in the field of health and social care; and connections with firms entering into financial arrangements with the Trust.

Will I have to meet any personal civil liability for my actions out of my personal resources?

If you have acted honestly and in good faith, you will not meet any personal civil liability incurred in the execution of your functions out of your personal resources – any costs arising in this way will be met by the Trust.