

# The Council of Governors

**So, you're interested in becoming a Governor at Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust. Here's what you need to know...**

## **What is the Council of Governors?**

The Council of Governors is a group of up to 27 people elected to represent the interests and views of the public, patients, families, staff and our main partner organisations.

The Council of Governors plays a key role in public accountability.

## **Some of the most important responsibilities of the Council are:**

- Appointing non-executive members of the Board of Directors, including the Chairman.
- Monitoring the performance of the Board of Directors by holding its non-executive directors to account.
- Approving major decisions made by the Board and overseeing the decision-making process.
- Ensuring the interests of the public are taken into account.



## What does the Council of Governors do?

The Council meet together formally at least 4 times a year. Governors receive lots of information every week about what's going on at the Trust and are sent various reports to read in preparation for meetings.

## What do Governors get involved in?

- Meetings of smaller committees
- Joint meetings with the Board of Directors
- Training and development
- Working groups
- Special projects
- Hospital Walkabouts
- Events
- Interviews

## How much time does it take?

The formal meetings are usually held in the evening and last around 2 hours. There is an expectation that all governors will attend these meetings. Involvement in other activities is voluntary and depends on how much time people can offer.

## What support do Governors have?

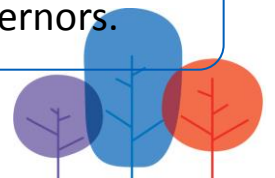
The Council of Governors is led by the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

The Senior Independent Director provides further leadership and advice. The Company Secretary and secretariat provide advice, guidance, training and administrative support. Executive directors and other senior staff members can provide specialist advice.



The Lead Governor acts as a direct point of contact between the Council of Governors and the Trust, the Board and the Trust's regulators.

NHS Improvement, the regulator of Foundation Trusts, provides a range of written guidance about the role of the Council of Governors.



There are 2 Governors Development sessions a year, plus training sessions. We can provide an email address and a tablet to help with receiving and reading information. We can also support additional needs such as translations and help with reading or mobility.

### **What sort of information do Governors receive?**

A lot of the information the Council of Governors receive is quite formal – we try to keep this to the minimum. Staff will also give presentations at the meetings and patient and staff stories are used to help keep the focus on what's important. A weekly email briefing ensures Governors are kept up to date with what's happening.

### **What could you offer to the Council of Governors?**

No special skills are needed - the great thing about the Council of Governors is the diverse range of experience, skills and expertise it brings. The important thing is to have a passion for representing the interests of people who use or work in the NHS and to be committed to our values:

**Ambitious      Brave      Compassionate**

### **What benefits could becoming a Governor bring to you?**



Meet new people and work with them as a team

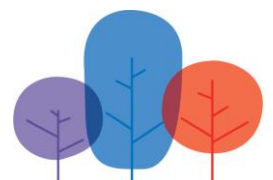
Improve your confidence

Make a difference

Experience a formal business meeting

Learn new skills

Take on a new challenge



## Here's what some of our Governors say:

*"I know what it is like to have a child that you love, so sick that they need hospital treatment and I can truly empathise with people that find themselves in that situation."*



*"I have a particular interest in workforce issues and infection control".*

*"I feel my understanding of governance and workforce issues supports me in my role as Governor."*

*"I am a medical student which has allowed me to appreciate the wider influences of healthcare."*



*"I am passionate about the hospital and I love meeting and talking to everyone in the hospital community."*

*"I wanted to use my experience as a parent of a patient to help other parents/carers have a voice in the care of their children."*

*"I decided to become a Governor to make sure the voice of nurses was heard."*

