



University Hospital
Southampton
NHS Foundation Trust



**THINKING OF BECOMING A
GOVERNOR?**

WELCOME

I'm delighted that you're thinking of becoming a governor of our Trust. It's a hugely rewarding role and crucial to the development of the hospitals and the services we deliver to patients. In this guide we provide information on what it means to be a governor and provide answers to questions we're often asked.

I hope that this information inspires you to stand for election and that I have the opportunity to welcome you as a governor of the Trust in the near future.



Jane Bailey
Interim chair of the Trust Board
and Council of Governors

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR TRUST

We are a centre of clinical academic excellence where new treatments are being discovered, new healthcare professionals are being trained and cutting edge developments are being put into practice. Although we share many features with other large university hospitals across the world, we believe that we stand out because of our ambition to improve and our heartfelt compassion for the patients we look after.

We provide services to over 1.9 million people living in Southampton and south Hampshire, and specialist services such as neurosciences, cancer care, cardiac services and children's intensive care to more than 3.7 million people in central southern England and the Channel Islands. We're a designated major trauma centre, one of only two places in the south of England to offer adults and children full onsite major trauma care provision.

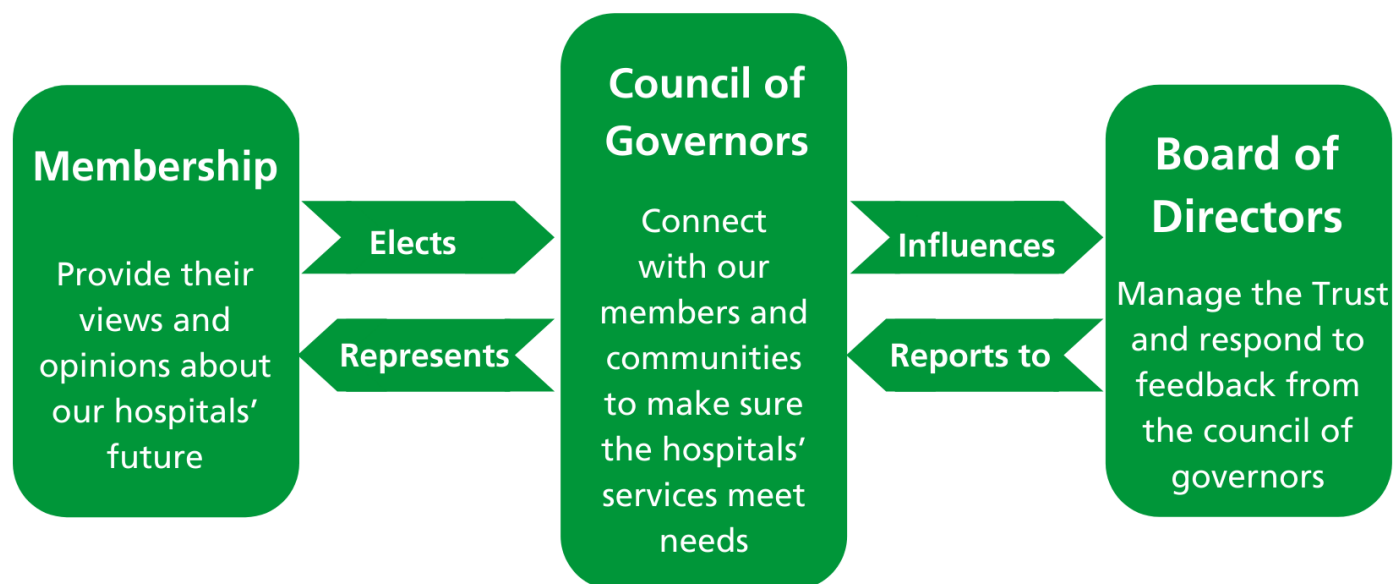
We operate across three sites:

- 1. Southampton General Hospital**
- 2. Princess Anne Hospital**
- 3. New Forest Birth Centre**

We also provide services at the Royal South Hants Hospital, Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth, Poole Hospital, Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Salisbury District Hospital, Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Winchester, Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital and St Mary's Hospital, Isle of Wight and in Chichester, Jersey and Guernsey.

THE ROLE OF A GOVERNOR

Most of our governors are elected from our Trust members to represent the interests of our staff and the people we serve. As a governor you'll be a crucial link between our members and local communities and the Trust's board of directors. You'll engage with our members to share information about the Trust's performance and future plans, listen to their feedback and represent their views and interests to the board of directors.



The duties of the council of governors

- Represent the interests and views of members and the public.
- Hold the non-executive directors to account for the performance of the board of directors.
- Appoint and remove the chair and non-executive directors.
Decide the remuneration and the other terms and conditions of office for the non-
- executive directors and the chair.
- Appoint and remove the Trust's external auditor.
- Approve the appointment of the chief executive.
- Receive the annual report and accounts and the external auditor's report on these.
- Approve any annual increase of more than 5% in the Trust's non-NHS income.
- Approve significant transactions, mergers or acquisitions planned by the Trust.
- Approve any amendments to the Trust's constitution alongside the board of directors.
- Contribute to the development of the Trust's forward plan.
- Communicate and engage with members and the wider public, sharing information about the hospitals and future plans.
- Encourage people to become members of the Trust and learn more about our hospitals.

Governors aren't responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation and do not get directly involved in the way services are run. Governors don't deal with patient complaints or act as champions for individual patient issues.

COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

Our council of governors is made up of elected and appointed governors. Public and staff members each elect governors to represent them within their own constituency. Our appointed governors represent the organisations we work most closely with to ensure we're listening to a wide range of views.

Public governors (13)

Southampton City (coterminous with the Southampton City Council area)	5 governors
New Forest, Eastleigh and Test Valley (coterminous with the local authority areas of New Forest District Council, Eastleigh Borough Council and Test Valley Borough Council)	5 governors*
Rest of England and Wales	2 governors**
Isle of Wight (coterminous with the Isle of Wight Council area)	1 governor

Staff elected governors (4)

Medical practitioners and dental staff	1 governor
Nursing and midwifery staff	1 governor
Health professional and health scientist staff	1 governor
Non-clinical and support staff	1 governor

Appointed governors (5)

NHS Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group	1 governor
Hampshire County Council	1 governor
Southampton City Council	1 governor
Solent University	1 governor
University of Southampton	1 governor

We also have two non-voting student governor representatives.

* There are currently four governors representing the New Forest, Eastleigh and Test Valley area of the public constituency. It is proposed to increase this to five governors with effect from October 2022.

** There are currently three governors representing the Rest of England and Wales area of the public constituency. It is proposed to reduce this to two governors with effect from October 2022.

THE STAFF GOVERNOR ROLE

Staff governors bring a unique perspective and understanding of the issues faced by the Trust. This means that they can make a really valuable contribution to the council of governors, representing their members' interests and holding the non-executive directors to account for the performance of the board of directors.

In the role staff governors will gain a broader understanding of how the Trust operates and is performing. The council of governors meets regularly with directors and senior managers, working together to support our world-class staff delivering world-class care and achieve our strategic plan.

As long as you are a member of the Trust you are eligible to stand for election as a staff governor. Most staff are automatically members of the foundation trust provided that they are:

- on a permanent contract; or
- on a fixed term contract for at least twelve months.

There are four staff governors, elected by different staff groups, who work closely together to:

- listen to the concerns of staff or issues that may be affecting patient care and understand what is going well or what could be improved.
- share information with staff about the Trust's strategy and performance, feeding back the views expressed about these.
- with the support of the council of governors' business manager or events and membership officer respond to feedback on issues or concerns received from staff.
- monitor, on behalf of the staff, how well the Trust is doing.
- signpost staff to other sources of help and guidance, for example, how to raise a concern, how to access occupational health services, staff side representatives, the employee assistance programme and human resources for help with individual employment issues.

You should speak to your line manager before nominating yourself as a governor so that they understand the time commitment involved and you can agree how they can support you in this important role representing your colleagues. The council of governors' business manager will be able to answer any questions either you or your manager may have about the role. Their contact details are set out on the final page of this booklet.

BENEFITS OF BEING A GOVERNOR

- Make a difference to the care and services provided to patients at our hospitals.
- Learn more about the health service and our hospitals.
- Use your existing skills, knowledge and experience to make a positive contribution and develop new skills.
- Support our hospitals, perhaps giving something back if the NHS has had an impact on your life or the lives of those close to you.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

You'll be invited to an induction session when you start your role as a governor, where you'll have the opportunity to meet other governors and find out more about the Trust. You'll be given a governor's handbook and training, and staff are available to provide support to you and help you develop in the role.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q How do I become a governor?

A You will need to be a member of our Trust before you can stand for election as a governor (visit www.uhs.nhs.uk/members to sign up). If there is a governor vacancy in the area in which you live, you can put yourself forward for election.

Q Am I eligible to become an elected governor?

A As long as you're at least 16 years of age, a Trust member and can meet the requirements set out in our constitution, you can become a governor. You don't need any specific previous experience or qualifications.

Papers for meetings and communications with governors outside meetings are all provided electronically and meetings may also be held virtually using Microsoft Teams. Those applying to be a governor should have access to a personal computer, laptop or tablet and be comfortable using this technology, particularly email and Microsoft Teams.

Q How do the elections work?

A There will be a formal election process and all members of the Trust will be sent ballot papers if the election is contested. Our elections are monitored and run by an independent third party organisation.

Q How long is the term of office?

A The term of office for all governors is normally three years and you can serve a maximum of six years as a governor (two terms of three years), subject to re-election. If your personal circumstances change and you have to step down during that time, you should discuss this with the chair.

Q How do I fulfil the remit of holding the non-executive directors to account for the performance of the board of directors?

A In order to do this it's helpful to see the board of directors and non-executive directors in action. There is an expectation that governors will engage with directors by attending board of directors' and committee meetings.

You can also take part in other visits and events, which provide an opportunity for one-on-one engagement with directors.

Q How do I gather the views of patients, members and the community and feed back to them on actions?

A There are a variety of ways to do this:

- Members can contact their governor through a central governor email address.
- Meet members at hosted member events, the annual open day, community events and the annual members' meeting.
- Using the e-newsletter that's sent to all members with an email address.
- Putting information on the members' pages of the Trust's website.

The Trust continues to develop the ways in which it engages with members and governors play a key role in this.

Q What are the council of governors' working groups?

A There are three working groups that focus on key issues - patient and staff experience, membership and engagement and strategy and finance.

The council of governors has also established the governors' nomination committee. It makes recommendations to the council of governors on the appointment and reappointment of the chair and non-executive directors and the remuneration and evaluation of performance of the chair and non-executive directors.

Q How much time will I spend on governor duties?

A You will be expected to participate in a number of meetings:

- There are four council of governors' meetings each year plus an annual strategy day.
- Working group meetings are normally held four times a year.
- In addition, you'll be expected to attend board of directors' and committee meetings, hospital and public events.

Q How do I keep up to date with what is going on at the Trust?

A The communications team and corporate affairs team will keep you updated by sending you important information by email. The Trust website is also a useful resource for news, meeting papers and contacts.

Q Will I be paid and can I claim expenses?

A Governors are volunteers and don't get paid but are entitled to claim expenses incurred when participating in governor events such as council of governors' meetings. Expenses are paid at rates agreed by the council of governors and board of directors and include travel by car or public transport and carer costs. Any claim for expenses will need to be accompanied by a receipt or invoice.

Find out more

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. If you'd like to find out more about becoming a governor, please get in touch.

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