

Becoming a governor

A guide for prospective governors



Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to find out about being a Governor of Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This guide has been produced to provide you with further information about the role and the work of the Trust.

We hold Governor elections at least once per year to fill any vacancies we have. We publish details regarding our elections on our website and also send details to all our members. Don't worry if you're not already a member as this booklet contains information about how to become one.

Governors are really important to our Trust - they share their views to influence our future plans and priorities, decide who is on the Trust's Board of Directors by appointing the Chair and Non-executive Directors and hold our Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board. If you'd like to have your say to help improve and shape local mental health and learning disability services, then the role of a Governor might be a perfect choice for you.

If you've any questions which aren't answered in this booklet, please contact the Corporate Governance Team.

Email: governor.lypft@nhs.net.

Telephone: 07980960035

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Introduction to the Trust



Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is the main provider of specialist mental health and learning disability services in Leeds. We also provide specialist services across York, the Yorkshire and Humber region, and some highly specialised national services.

We were established as a foundation trust on 1 August 2007. NHS foundation trusts were created to devolve decision making from central government to local organisations and communities enabling them to be responsive to the needs and wishes of local people.

Being a foundation trust means that:

- We have some freedom to decide locally how to meet our obligations
- We are accountable to local people, who can become members and governors
- We are authorised and monitored by NHS England, who support us and hold us to account

Service users are at the heart of our organisation. We constantly strive to provide the best possible care and support, working closely with partner organisations to provide effective, accessible and modern mental health and learning disability services. We support people living with; ill mental health, learning disabilities, issues with addictions, eating disorders, or physical problems with psychological causes, and those needing the support of our gender identity service. You can find a list of the services we provide on the next page.

Our services



Adult Acute Services

- Acute Inpatient Services
- Blue Light (emergency services mental health support)
- Crisis Assessment Unit (CAU)
- Crisis Resolution Intensive Support Service (CRISS)
- Psychiatric Intensive Care Service (PICU)

Children and Young People's Services

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Inpatient Unit at Mill Lodge
- Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS) inpatient unit for West Yorkshire
- National Deaf Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (Deaf CAMHS)

Community and Wellbeing Services

- Working Age Adult Community Mental Health Service (WAA CMHS)
- Physical Health Services
- Family Therapy Service
- Medical Psychotherapy & 'Take Time'
- Single Point of Access

Forensic Services

- Low Secure Forensic Service – Leeds
- Low Secure Forensic Service – York

Eating Disorders, Rehabilitation and Gender Services

- Arts and Minds Network
- Community Rehabilitation Enhanced Support Team (CREST)
- CONNECT: The West Yorkshire Adult Eating Disorders Service
- Complex Rehabilitation Service
- Gender Identity Service
- Recovery College
- Rehab and Recovery Services
- Volunteer Service

Our services



Learning Disability Services

- Community Learning Disability Teams (CLDTs)
- Learning Disability Specialist Health Planned Care (Respite)
- Specialised Supported Living Service (SSLS)
- Learning Disability Intensive Support Team (IST)
- Health Facilitation (HFT) and Service User Involvement

Liaison and Perinatal Services

- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome / Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (CFS / ME) Service
- Leeds Psychosexual Medicine (PSM) Service
- Liaison Psychiatry
- National Inpatient Center for Psychological Medicine (NICPM)
- Perinatal Mental Health Service

Regional and Specialist Services

- Adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Service
- Alcohol and Drug services: Forward Leeds
- Autism Diagnostic Service (LADS)
- EMERGE Leeds: Complex Emotional Needs Service
- Northern Gambling Service
- Pathway Development Service - Yorkshire and Humberside
- Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (VMH CTS) - North of England
- Veterans' Mental Health High Intensity Service - North of England

Older Peoples Services

- Intensive Home Treatment Team for Older People
- Memory Assessment Service
- Older People's Community Mental Health Services
- Older People's Inpatient Services
- Younger People with Dementia Service

How we are led



To ensure our foundation trust is run and managed effectively, it has three levels of governance:

Board of Directors

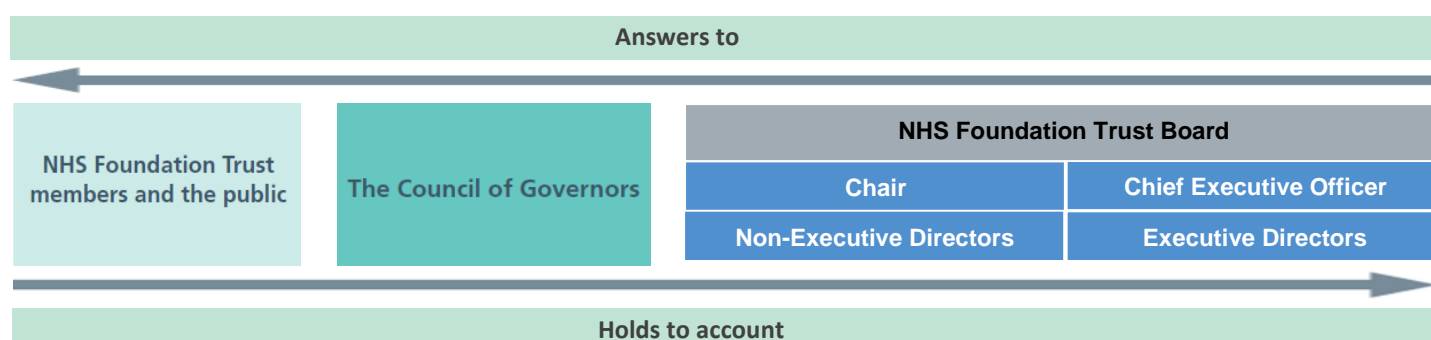
Our Board of Directors is responsible for the day-to-day management of our Trust and is accountable for the operational delivery of services, targets and performance. The Board is also responsible for the definition and implementation of our strategy and policies.

Council of Governors

Elected and appointed governors make up our Council of Governors. Together the Governors bring a wealth of expertise, experience, ideas and views which are essential in ensuring the continuous effective development of our Trust. The Council does not run our Trust and is not responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation. This is the responsibility of the Board; however, the Council performs an essential role in the governance and development of the Trust by holding the Non-Executive Directors to account, both individually and collectively, for the performance of the Board in managing the Trust. It is also Governors' responsibility to represent the interests of members and the public particularly in relation to the strategic direction of the Trust.

Membership

Being an NHS Foundation Trust means that as an organisation, we are accountable to local people, who can become members of the Trust. Members are eligible to stand for election as a governor and can vote to elect governors to represent them on the Council.



Council of Governors FAQs



Does the Council of Governors run the Trust?

The Council of Governors does not run the Trust and is not responsible for the day-to-day management of the Trust. This is the responsibility of the Board of Directors, but the Council of Governors performs an essential role in the governance and development of the Trust.

What is the difference between the Board of Directors and Council of Governors?

The Board of Directors is made up of six executive directors and seven non-executive directors. It is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Trust and is ultimately accountable for the operational delivery of services, targets and performance.

The Council of Governors is made up of 30 individuals that are either elected by members or appointed by our partner organisations. The role of the Council of Governors is 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 foundation trust members and the public.

How many people are on the Council of Governors?

The Council of Governors is made up of 32 governors namely:

- 8 Public governors (elected)
- 10 service user and carer governors (elected)
- 6 Staff governors (elected)
- 6 Appointed governors (appointed by our partner organisations)

I am a staff governor; will I get extra time off work for my Governor duties?

Staff Governors can take time out of normal duties in accordance with the Trust's Special Leave Procedure (HR-0039). Special leave to undertake governor duties must be discussed and agreed with an individual's line manager. It is for the line manager to decide if it is appropriate to authorise special leave for governor duties. There is no right for a staff member to become a governor and the needs of the service must always be considered.

I don't have a computer; how will I access meeting papers or receive any information?

If you do not have a computer, the Corporate Governance Team will send relevant meeting papers via post.

How long is the term of office of a Governor?

Governors are elected or appointed for a term of office of up to three years. Governors can stand for re-election (or an appointed governor can be re-appointed by their organisation), but only for a maximum of nine years. Terms of office do not need to be served consecutively; there can be a break in between them. If you stand down during a term of office and serve less than three years, this will still be classed as one whole term.

Are Governors paid?

Governors are not paid for carrying out their role. However, the Trust will reimburse travel expenses and other costs that might be incurred. This is set out in the Procedure for the Reimbursement of Governors which can be found in your welcome pack.

Will I need any training to take on this role?

The Trust holds a governor induction session for all newly elected and appointed governors. The Trust also schedules ongoing development and training sessions for all governors throughout the course of each year. Additional governor training needs (individual and as a Council of Governors) are also identified on a yearly basis following 1-1 meetings between governors and the Chair of the Trust.

Why are some governors appointed rather than elected?

In order to ensure local accountability, there are both elected and appointed governors on our Council of Governors. Elected Governors represent members in our public, service user, carer and staff constituencies. Appointed Governors represent the partner organisations that we work with and ensure they are informed of our plans. The majority of our governors (24 out of 30) are elected by our members.

Will I need to comply with a Code of Conduct?

All new Governors are sent a 'Governors' Code of Conduct' which you will be asked to review and sign to agree compliance with whilst carrying out the role of Governor.

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

You are required to declare on an annual basis, and as and when your circumstances change, any personal or business interests which may influence or be perceived to influence your judgement. Declarations include any 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.

What if I don't understand something that is said in a meeting?

There are a number of mechanisms in place to support governors to understand the information provided in meetings. This includes training, the information in your welcome pack including a glossary of terms, coloured cards that can be held up at meetings if you have a question, and cover sheets for all papers which provide a one-page summary of the paper.

I'm nervous about asking questions at the meetings, what should I do?

A pre-meeting of the governors is held before every Council meeting. This is a smaller meeting, where governors can discuss their thoughts on the information provided. In this pre-meet you can raise the question you wanted to ask, and you may find that another governor wanted to ask the same question.

What sort of time commitment do I need to give as a governor?

The basic time commitment that we expect from our governors is to:

- attend the governor induction;
- attend four formal Council of Governors' meetings (half a day each);
- attend the Annual Members' Meeting in July;
- attend the Board-to-Board workshop in September;
- spend time preparing for any meetings that they attend.

All governors are given opportunities to participate in the following activities to help strengthen their knowledge of the Trust and to assist them in undertaking their role. These activities are optional:

- observing our board of directors' meetings
- observing our board sub-committee meetings
- joining learning visits to the Trust's clinical and non-clinical services
- attending national governor webinars and networking events
- joining the governors' sub-group
- attending governor training led by NHS Providers
- attending annual 1-1s with the Chair of the Trust
- applying to become Lead Governor

What if I want to step down as a Governor?

If you would no longer like to be a Governor, then please contact the Corporate Governance Team. You will find their details in Appendix B. You also need to notify the Chair of the Trust in writing.

What happens if I move out of the area I am representing?

Unfortunately, if you move out of a constituency area, you will no longer be eligible to represent that constituency. If you move house, please let the Corporate Governance Team know. They will be able to advise whether you are able to continue in your current seat, or whether you are eligible to represent another constituency.

Elections FAQs



Why is the Trust having an election?

The Trust holds governor elections each year to fill any vacant seats on our Council of Governors.

Who can stand for election?

In order to run for election you must first be a member of the Trust. You may submit a membership form at the same time as your governor application. An online membership form is available here: <https://secure.membra.co.uk/Join/Leeds>.

If you would prefer to complete a hardcopy membership form, please call 07977327628 or email ftmembership.lypft@nhs.net.

To stand for election to the Council of Governors you must be at least 16 years old.

How will I know the election process has started?

At the start of the governor election process, an independent, external election company will issue a 'notice of election' via post to the relevant member constituencies (where governor seats are open for election). The notice will include instructions on how to stand and an election timetable which specifies the key deadlines. We also post details on our website [here](#).

Does someone have to nominate me to stand for election as a Governor?

No, you can nominate yourself.

Who runs the election?

The election is run by an independent, external election company.

Who can I contact with queries about the election process?

For inquiries about the management of the election process, please contact Civica Election Services by emailing fnominationenquiries@cesvotes.com or calling 020 8889 9203.

I think the notice of election went to my old address, what should I do?

Please inform the Corporate Governance Team by emailing governor.lypft@nhs.net. We will update your details and direct you to an online nominations form.

I am a member and interested in standing for election as a Governor, what is the process?

Public, service user and carer members will receive a notice of the election in the post. Staff will be advised of the election electronically.

If you wish to put yourself forward for election you will need to complete an online nomination form (or you can request a hardcopy form) and ensure this is submitted by the deadline specified on the notice of election. You will need to provide a short personal statement on your background and why you wish to become a governor, including a recent photograph. This is all explained on the form.

If there are fewer candidates than vacant seats in a constituency they will automatically become a governor and so there will be no need for a vote in that constituency. If there are more candidates than seats in a constituency, every member of that constituency will be sent a voting form so they can vote for which candidate they want to represent them on the Council of Governors.

Once voting has ended, we will contact all the successful and unsuccessful candidates. The successful candidates will then be invited to an induction event.

Who can I contact with queries about the role of a governor?

For inquiries about the role of a governor, please contact governor.lypft@nhs.net.

What is the difference between a Member and a Governor?

Our membership is made up of over 15,000 service users, carers, staff and members of the public. Members can stand for election to become governors and can vote in the governor elections. Governors provide a link between the Board of Directors and our members by attending meetings with the Board of Directors and sharing the views and opinions of members and the public.

What is the deadline for Nominations?

At the start of the governor election process, the election company will issue a notice of election which includes an election timetable (specifying the key dates including the nomination deadline). All election documents are published on our website [here](#).

Do I need any qualifications to be a Governor?

You do not need to have any formal qualifications or previous experience to be a Governor, all you need is to have a passion for improving mental health and learning disability services within the NHS. We will provide all of the help, training and support that you need to carry out the role of a Governor.

I don't know if I'm a member, how can I find out?

If you provide your name and contact details to the Foundation Trust Membership Office (contact details below) they will be able to let you know if you are registered as a member and, if you are, which membership constituency you are in.

Am I eligible to vote in a governor election?

You are eligible to vote if you are registered as a member of our foundation trust in the member constituency for which the election is being held.

What information do I need to provide as part of the nomination process?

Candidates are asked to provide:

- Name, title, home address, date of birth and contact details
- Any membership of political parties
- Any financial or other interest in the Trust
- A photograph
- A personal statement of no more than 250 words.

I am not a very good writer; can the Trust help me to put together my statement or edit it?

The Trust is not permitted to provide help with or edit candidates' statements as we have to be fair to all the candidates. However, if you are having difficulties, the election company will usually be able to provide examples of previous candidate statements and provide guidance, learning aids and assistance.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind and withdraw from the governor election process but you must let the election company know before the 'date for final candidate withdrawal' which is specified in the election timetable.

How will I know who I am running against?

The election company will issue a "notice of poll" which outlines the candidates that are standing for election. This is published on our website during the election process.

Who decides whether I become a governor or not?

Once the deadline for nominations has passed, if there are less applications than seats available, you will automatically become a governor. If there are more applications than seats available, we will ask members in your constituency to vote. Votes are counted by the Returning Officer of the external, independent election company.

How do members decide who to elect?

If there are more applications than seats available, we ask members to vote for their preferred candidate(s). Candidates' election statements are sent to the members within that constituency on a voting card. If a current governor has stood for re-election, their attendance record at meetings is also added to their personal statement.

Can I vote for myself?

Yes, you are able to submit one vote which can be for yourself.

When will I know if I have been successfully elected as a Governor?

Written confirmation of the results is sent to every candidate via the election company. We send a welcome letter to new governors when we have received the results. We also publish the results on our website [here](#).

If I am elected as a Governor, how do I discharge my duties?

As a Governor, you discharge your duties by attending regular meetings of the Council of Governors, our Annual Members' Meeting, and our annual 'Board to Board' session. There will also be opportunities to join governor sub-groups, visit services, attend other Trust meetings and participate in governor training and development sessions.