

COULD YOU GIVE A VOICE TO OUR MEMBERS?

As a Foundation Trust, we are accountable to our local community. The Board sets the Trust's direction and develops our plans, but it must consider the views of our patients, public, staff and stakeholders in doing so. Moreover, the Board must make itself accountable to stakeholders for implementing plans in a way which maximises the benefit to the public which we serve. We do this by recruiting members, from the public and from our staff, and by providing them with opportunities to share their views with us. Most importantly, members can elect Governors to represent their views.

If you have an interest in our services, the enthusiasm and desire to engage with members and the ability to work in partnership with colleagues on the Council of Governors and with the Board, we would love to hear from you.

It's really important to note that Governors represent members' views and hold the Board to account for performance against key plans. They do not run the Trust or make operational decisions, nor are they accountable for them. Moreover, whilst someone's personal experiences may have influenced their desire to become a Governor, it is important that they can be objective and represent members' views across a much wider agenda.

We have set out below stories from two Governors which illustrate the way in which our Governors can make a positive difference on behalf of our members.

Kathryn Featherstone, Public Governor Chester-le-Street



"I Chair the Governors' Strategy and Planning Committee. A key duty of the Committee is to develop an understanding of planning processes and drivers, so we can help the full Council of Governors to feed in views on behalf of members, into the development of the Trust's forward plans and strategies. At a more local level I can provide feedback on opportunities to improve services for patients. The Trust does take on board such suggestions where appropriate; for example, where I highlighted issues with prescribing of medications prior to discharge from a community hospital.

Ken Davison, Public Governor Wear Valley and Teesdale



"I represent the Council of Governors on the Trust Board's Charitable Funds Committee, which makes valuable decisions about the use of charitable donations made to the Trust.

I have been involved in judging and presenting the Trust's Annual Staff Awards and have taken part in Patient Led Assessments of the Clinical Environment. It's great to celebrate the achievements of Trust staff and to contribute to improvements in facilities for patients in these ways".