

A Guide to Becoming a CWP Governor



*“Working in partnership to improve
health and well-being by providing
high quality, person-centred care”*

Helping people to be
the best they can be

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Foreword from the Chief Executive and Chair

Firstly we would like to thank you for your interest in becoming a governor for Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP).



This document provides a broad overview of the role in addition to the remit of our Council of Governors and how it adds value to CWP. Whilst not exhaustive, this booklet will outline to you the key responsibilities of our Council of Governors and help develop your interest further.

As a Trust, we continue to deliver high quality services and care to our population, as well as developing and delivering innovative and effective services, across the area.

The Trust continues to maintain effective working relationships with commissioners and other providers; working together to achieve identified national directives. As a Trust, working closely with our governors and members is also extremely important to us.

The role our governors take is an important one, providing a direct link between the Trust and local communities, staff and key partner organisations.

As a governor you will represent the interests of your constituency or organisation and, as part of the Council of Governors, receive information from the Trust to enable you to hold the Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board. You will have the opportunity to work with the Board of Directors to help shape the Trust's plans for the future and therefore directly impact the services CWP provides.

We hope that this booklet is helpful and encourages you to nominate yourself to become a governor. We wish you all the best with your application, and look forward to working with you soon.

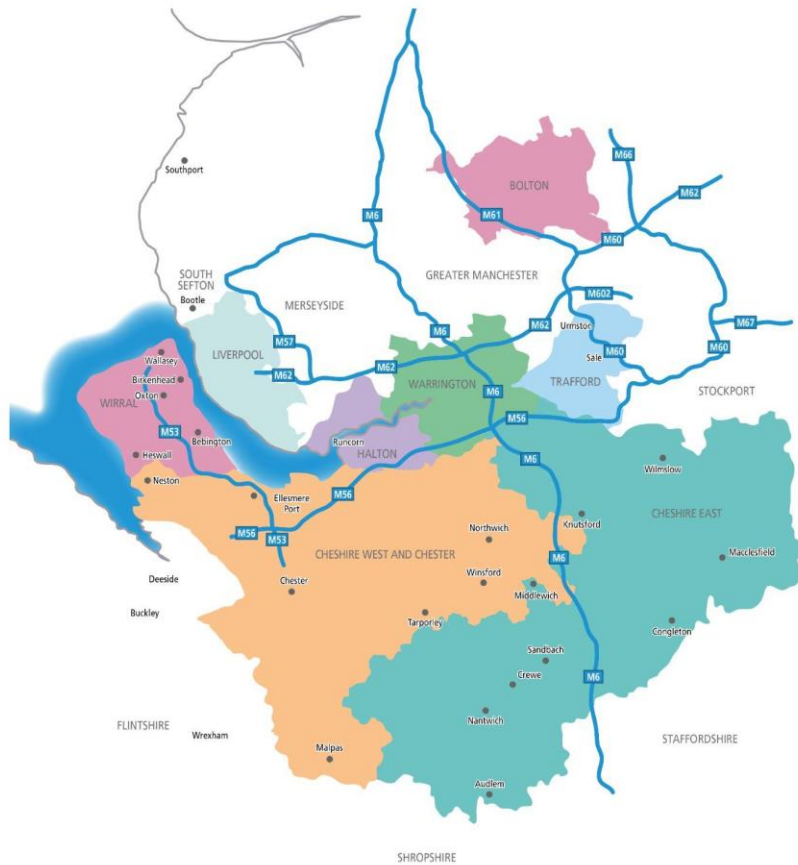
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "T.J. Welch".

Tim Welch – Chief Executive

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Isla Wilson".

Isla Wilson - Chair

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP)



Regionally, CWP provides CAMHS Tier 4 services for Cheshire and Merseyside and eating disorder services across the North West and leads two Provider Collaboratives:

- Level Up, Young people and families, Cheshire and Merseyside, Provider Collaborative
- EmpowerED, Adult Eating Disorders, North West, Provider Collaborative.

CWP is also part of Prospect Partnership, the provider collaborative for Adult Secure Services in the North West.

In **West Cheshire** CWP provides services in: Adult Mental Health, Learning Disability, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Community Physical Health Services, including the 0-19 Starting Well Service, Community Nursing, three GP surgeries and a GP Out of Hours service.

In **Wirral**, CWP provides services in: Adult Mental Health, Learning Disability, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, All Age Disability and the Continuing Healthcare and Complex Healthcare Service.

In **East Cheshire**, CWP provides services in: Adult Mental Health, Learning Disability and Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

In **Warrington** CWP provides an Eating Disorder Service.

In **Trafford** CWP provides Learning Disability Services and an Eating Disorder Service.

In **Halton** CWP provides an Eating Disorder Service.

In **Bolton** CWP provides an Eating Disorder Service.

In **Shropshire**, we provide Community Adult Autism assessment and treatment.

In **Liverpool**, we provide Community Adult ADHD assessment and treatment and Cheshire & Merseyside Adolescent Eating Disorder Services (CHEDS).

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP) was formed in 2002 and achieved Foundation Trust status in June 2007. The Trust has over 14,500 members and employs more than 3,800 staff across 60 sites, serving a population of over 1 million people and highly specialist services for 2 million.

We provide integrated care in the community and within inpatient settings based on best practice and outcomes, working closely with the people who access our services and their carers to provide person-centred care for all.

Our services are developed and led by clinical staff. We strive for clinical excellence by ensuring there is a framework to deliver quality improvements, making sure that safe and effective care

results in positive outcomes.

The Trust's strategy, *Imagining the Future*, is underpinned by eight objectives developed to deliver our overall vision.

- Improving health, care and wellbeing
- Working with communities
- Working in partnership
- Delivering, planning and commissioning services
- Making best value
- Reducing inequalities
- Enabling our people
- Improving and innovating



Some facts and figures about CWP

- First established in 2002 as a result of five local NHS bodies merging
- Became a Foundation Trust in 2007
- Was the first mental health trust in the North of England to become a Foundation Trust
- Regulated by CQC and NHSI.
- Led by a Board of Directors
- Guided by a Council of Governors
- Work in partnership with local authorities and voluntary organisations
- We have around 14,500 Trust members
- We employ more than 3,800 staff across 60 sites
- We serve a population of over two million people

Foundation Trust status – some key facts

Foundation Trusts are special types of NHS Trusts that have more freedoms from central government. For example, we are able to keep our financial surplus and reinvest it to improve services for local people.

To gain these freedoms, CWP was required to pass a rigorous set of quality checks by the regulator of Foundation Trusts, NHS Improvement (NHSI), formally monitor.

A central feature and key requirement of a Foundation Trust is to offer membership to the Trust and to have an elected 'Council of Governors'.

Membership

Our members include people from the local communities that we serve, our staff and service users. Anyone aged 11 years old and over who has an interest in the work of CWP, can become a member of the Trust. Members can get involved in helping us to elect our governors and receive information and attend events to help shape and develop services in the Trust.

Our members help us to:

- ensure that there is local involvement in different aspects of service development;
- challenge the stigma associated with mental health related issues;
- have a bigger 'voice' to support further investment in the services we provide.

If you become a member of CWP you are helping to support a wide variety of local services, including Specialist Mental Health services, Children, Young People and Families services, Neuro-Developmental Disorder and Acquired Brain Injury services, and Neighborhood– based services, across Cheshire and Wirral.

You will have the opportunity to get involved in the decisions we make and to influence the way in which we plan and develop our services. Members can work with us to inform us of their needs and of the services our local communities would like us to deliver.

Council of Governors

The Council of Governors collectively links a Trust to its patients, services users, staff and stakeholders. Governors are collectively responsible for representing the interests of all these groups as well as the general public, to the Trust’s Board of Directors.

Governors are elected by Foundation Trust members (as above) or are appointed by one of our partnership organisations. Members elect Governors from their respective constituency (service user/carer, public or staff) during the election process. Partnership governors are appointed by local organisations with whom CWP closely works. The Council of Governors is led by our Chair of the Board of Directors.

Our Governors

Our governors bring with them a diverse range of knowledge, skills and experience, which are highly valued by the Trust.

Staff governors work for the Trust and are, therefore, close to operational issues. Partnership governors are employees of our partner agencies and hence, are well versed in the strategic direction of the NHS overall.

Service user/carer governors have first-hand experience of our services, either through care and treatment they have received personally, or through care and treatment provided to a family member or friend.

Public governors represent the voice and opinion of our general public in relation to the services we provide, the views of the local community, environmental issues etc.

Why become a Governor?

If you are interested in:

- improving health services in your area;
- improving the public’s understanding and awareness of CWP’s services;
- supporting the work of CWP;
- giving something back to your local communities
- a challenging role that can make a difference...



Then becoming a governor for CWP may be for you!

Roles and Responsibilities of Governors

One of the main roles of a governor is to represent the voice of the people in their constituency. However, governors also have a number of statutory duties. These are to:

- hold Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) - individually and collectively - to account for the performance of the Board;
- represent the interests of the members of the Trust as a whole and the interests of the public;
- appoint and, if necessary remove, the Chair and Non-Executive Directors;
- review the remuneration and allowances of the Chair and Non-Executive Directors;
- approve the appointment of the Chief Executive - (the Council of Governors does not appoint the Chief Executive);
- receive the Trust's Annual Report and Accounts and the Auditor's Report;
- appoint or remove the Trust's auditors;
- approve significant transactions (mergers/acquisitions);
- approve any amendments to the Trust's constitution.



Governors' views are also invited in respect of the Trust's business plans for the coming years. Therefore, governors play a vital role in influencing and shaping the future plans of the Trust.

Additional Responsibilities

Governors are expected to be committed to the goals, aspirations and philosophy of the Trust. They are also expected to make a reasonable time commitment to the Trust.

As a governor, your time will be spent undertaking the various responsibilities that a governor holds, including attending the full Council of Governors, which meets five times a year. There are also sub-committees and working groups with which governors can become involved. The number of meetings attended as a governor will vary depending on how involved you choose to become. Alongside this, governors will be expected to attend some training events. These sessions support governors in keeping up to date with changes in the NHS generally, learn more about the governor role, and provide an opportunity to share experiences with and obtain support from, fellow governors.

Governors are also expected to promote the work of the Trust within their respective constituencies. This may involve governors arranging and/or attending local events and, at times, speaking at these events.

Governors are asked to contribute to the recruitment of new members to the Trust to ensure that the widest possible range of views are represented and heard, as well as encourage those members to become governors in the future.

Governors play an important role in ensuring that the Trust operates in a manner consistent with its purpose and complies with the obligations placed on it, as a

Foundation Trust.

CWP values the role our governors play and will make all reasonable efforts to support governors to be effective in their duties.

For How Long can I be a Governor? (Terms of Office)

Governors are elected for a 3-year term and cannot hold office for longer than three full terms in total. A governor will not be eligible for re-appointment if they have already held office for more than seven consecutive years.

Governors can resign at any time but will be encouraged to see out the full term of their appointment, where possible.

Governors are volunteers to the Trust (unpaid). However, governors should not incur any personal expense in discharging their duties and will be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses, in accordance with Trust policy.

Code of Conduct for Governors

As representatives of the Trust, governors are expected to conduct themselves in a way that is fitting for a public role. All governors are expected to sign a declaration stating that they agree to adhere to the Trust's code of conduct for governors, which includes the following:

- commit to and actively support the NHS Foundation Trust's vision and values;
- maintain confidentiality with regard to information gained;
- uphold the seven principles of public life as outlined by the Nolan Committee;
- if a member of any trade union, political party or other organisation, recognise that as a governor, you will not be representing those organisations (or the views of those organisations), but will be representing the constituency (public or staff) that elected you, or the organisation that nominated you;
- undergo a disclosure and barring service check;
- respect and treat with dignity and fairness the public, patients, relatives, carers, NHS staff and partners in other agencies;
- seek to ensure that your governor colleagues are valued and that judgments about them are consistent, fair and unbiased and are properly founded;
- be a committed team member by working with your governor colleagues, the Board of Directors, Trust, NHS and wider community;
- seek to ensure that the membership of the constituency you represent is properly informed and able to influence services;
- seek to ensure that no one is discriminated against because of their religion, belief, race, colour, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, social or economic status or national origin;
- at all times comply with the Constitution, Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions of Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

Am I Eligible to be a Governor?

No specific qualifications are required to be a governor. However, commitment to the role and a desire to make a difference are key.

All CWP Foundation Trust members over the age of 16 years are able to nominate themselves for election to the Council of Governors. However, you may not become an elected governor if any of the following apply:

- you have been declared bankrupt;
- you have been sentenced to prison for three or more months within the preceding 5 years;
- you are under 16 years old on the nomination date;
- you are a spouse, partner, parent or child of a member of the Board of Directors of the Trust;
- you are a member of a local authority's scrutiny committee covering health matters;
- you are a governor or director of another NHS Foundation Trust or NHS Trust;
- you have been dismissed from paid employment with a health service body in the previous two years (not including redundancy);
- you are required to register under the Sex Offender Act 1997 or are considered unsuitable (by the Board of Directors) further to the outcome of a disclosure and barring services check;
- you have previously been removed from the position of governor for reasons stated in the Trust Constitution.

How do Elections Work?

Elections are held annually and the results are announced at the Annual Members' Meeting (usually held during September/October). Should positions be unfilled during the annual election, or positions become vacant part way through a term, a bi-election may be held as appropriate.

If you wish to nominate yourself to become a governor, you will be asked to provide information about yourself and your reasons for standing for election.

An external agency is used to run the governor elections, to ensure that the process remains totally impartial. All nominations and ballot papers are handled by the external agency, which also sends out all relevant information to members to enable them to vote.

Normally the entire process will take approximately 9-10 weeks, from the notice of the election to the publication of the results.

Interested? What do I do now?

Are you a Member of the Trust?

You are unable to vote if you are not a member of the Trust. You also need to be a member of the Trust prior to the election date in order to stand for election to become a governor.

All you have to do to become a member of CWP is visit our website, where you can complete an online membership form: <http://www.cwp.nhs.uk/membership/>

Alternatively you can call 01244 397 397 or Email cwp.membership@nhs.net for more information.

How to become a Governor?

If you wish to check if you are eligible to become a governor, or would like further information, please email Suzanne Christopher, Head of Corporate Affairs (suzanne.christopher@nhs.net) or Laura Elliott, Corporate Affairs Manager (laura.elliott9@nhs.net); alternatively, please telephone 01244 397 397.

Once the governor election process commences, promotional material will be circulated to members which will advise you how to request a nomination form and the process for submission. Should you require any support in completing your nomination form, please contact the Corporate Affairs Team on 01244 397 397.

If you would like to know more about the governor role or have any questions in relation to becoming a Trust governor, please do not hesitate to consult our website (www.cwp.nhs.uk) or contact our Corporate Affairs Team on 01244 397 397.

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