

# Governors Working For You

As Governors at Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, we provide a link between local people and the trust's Board of Directors.

Our Board of Governors meets in public at least four times a year to highlight any issues or concerns to the trust, while also holding the non-executive directors to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.

This brief bulletin aims to update you on some of our recent work on your behalf, and is issued following each quarterly meeting

The Thursday, 2 July meeting, held in Norwich, heard how over the past few months the Governors have played a key role in a number of areas. Highlights include:

## Staff feedback on Lorenzo

Our Staff Governors have raised concerns about the implementation and resourcing of Lorenzo, the trust's new electronic patient record system. At a time of great pressure, a number of staff have expressed their concern about the training and the time it takes to input information.

This is a major change programme for the trust and the aim is to ensure completeness of patient, service user and family carer information, which is necessary to ensure patient safety.

A huge amount of time and energy has gone into the project, but as with any new way of working there are problems and issues to sort. The Executive team is taking seriously all the issues raised and answers to the questions are being examined by Governors.



## Improving engagement with service users and carers

There is a service user and carer engagement strategy in place, but Governors are unhappy about the delays in translating the words into action. Governors are looking to the Chief Executive to ensure that from now on, this strategy will be implemented promptly. The Service User and Carer Trust Partnership, which includes a number of Governors, will be closely monitoring progress.

## Recruitment matters

The timely recruitment and selection of staff is a critical factor in the success of patient care. Government funding cuts and the decisions of the clinical commissioning groups are out of the trust's control. However, effective recruitment and retaining good staff is an essential ingredient in the plan for the trust to move out of special measures.

Governors have raised several questions about the recruitment and ongoing training of staff, and continue to hold the Board of Directors to account. Progress will continue to be monitored by Governors every month through the Improvement Plan Co-ordination Group.

## Carlton Court and Central Norfolk bed places

Governors are not arguing against the CCG, HealthEast's decision to reduce the number of beds at Carlton Court in Lowestoft. However, Governors are concerned that the Board of Directors has not considered the impact on the number of patients from central Norfolk in out of area beds, and the subsequent threat to quality of care and the trust's finances.

In addition, there are also some concerns by Governors that, since the public consultation, there has been a change in demand at Carlton Court. Almost all the beds are now used by local people, rather than patients from central Norfolk. The trust's executive directors explained this is the result of a spike in demand, rather than a trend.

The Chair agreed to the Governors' request to ensure that the Board of Directors reviews its decision on Carlton Court bed closures and establishes whether or not it is still in the best interests of patients and the trust.

## What's in a name?

Governors are aware that sometimes the public may be confused that the trust has two Boards - one for Directors and one for Governors.

Therefore, Governors will determine in the near future, whether the Board of Governors should be renamed Council of Governors to better reflect the Governors' holding to account and public representational roles.

## Our next Governor's meeting

Rose Room, Endeavour House, Ipswich, Thursday, 1 October, starting at 1.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

For more information or to contact the Governors, please email: [governors@nsft.nhs.uk](mailto:governors@nsft.nhs.uk)  
You can also visit our webpages at: [nsft.nhs.uk/governors](http://nsft.nhs.uk/governors)