

Governors' Bulletin

October 2016

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

We are unpaid volunteers with an interest in mental health who are elected from within the Trust's membership. We are responsible for representing the interests of members and the public and holding the non-executive directors to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.

Our Council of Governors meets in public at least every quarter. We highlight any issues or concerns to the Trust, while also contributing to its strategic priorities.

This brief bulletin aims to update you on some of the recent work we have carried out on your behalf, and will be issued following each quarterly meeting.

The Thursday 6 October meeting, held in Ipswich, heard how over the past few months the Governors have played a key role in a number of areas. Highlights include:

- **Service user discharge letters** – Governors have previously raised concerns about the lack of a Trust-wide format for the discharge letters which are given to service users. We also expressed the view that examples of letters we had seen were impersonal and not what we would expect a vulnerable person to receive. We are pleased to say that the Executive Directors agreed that this is not satisfactory. A new format is to be co-produced with service users, and designed to be personalised and appropriate to the service user's discharge.
- **Suicide prevention** – we are seeking assurances that staff are properly trained to spot symptoms of suicide early on. We are also tracking work on the Trust's own suicide prevention strategy and seeking assurances that the recommendations in the independent Verita report on unexpected deaths are being actioned. We are pleased that the Suffolk User Forum is represented on the monitoring group which will oversee the implementation of the strategy. Governors have also expressed the need for all the different national, local and voluntary suicide strategies to focus on key collaborative actions to help prevent suicides, whether they are in the community or in hospital settings.

- **Waiting lists** – Governors have raised questions about the interpretation of waiting list data presented in reports. In particular, we are concerned about people waiting longer than the national guidelines and why that is the case.
- **Staff Governors** – all Governors are the eyes and ears of the Trust, but Staff Governors even more so as they are close to where service is delivered. To help them in their role it has been agreed that in future elections, Staff Governors will be elected on a Suffolk or Norfolk constituency basis, ie two for each county.
- **Lorenzo** (the electronic patient record system) – almost all Trust staff are members of the Trust. Staff Governors would like to hear from all users of Lorenzo about what is good and not so good about the new electronic patient information system. Hearing from users will help Staff Governors to represent the views of staff.

Our next Governors’ meeting will be a special “Dementia in Perspective” half-day event, taking place on 10 November at Jerwood Dance House, Foundry Lane, Ipswich, IP4 1DW between 12.30pm and 4.30pm. Everyone is welcome to attend and you can book your place by clicking here: <http://www.nsft.nhs.uk/Event/Pages/CoG10Nov2016event.aspx>

For more information or to contact the Governors, please email: governors@nsft.nhs.uk
 You can also log on to our webpages at: www.nsft.nhs.uk/governors

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Lead Governor
 Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

Andrew Good

Suffolk Public Governor
 Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

NSFT PALS provides confidential advice, information and support, helping you to answer any questions you have about our services or about any health matters.



If you would like this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or a different language, please contact PALS and we will do our best to help.

Email: PALS@nsft.nhs.uk
 or call PALS Freephone: 0800 279 7257

Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust values and celebrates the diversity of all the communities we serve. We are fully committed to ensuring that all people have equality of opportunity to access our service, irrespective of their age, gender, ethnicity, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership or social and economic status.



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