

Council of Governors (in Public)

Item 13.3

Subject: NHS Governor Focus Conference 2024
Date of Meeting: Tuesday 17th September 2024
Prepared by: Ian Ferguson, Public Governor - Merseyside
Presented by: Ian Ferguson, Public Governor - Merseyside

Purpose of Report: To Note

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to give the Governors an update of the 5-hour NHS Providers (NHSP) Governors virtual conference attended by Ian Ferguson, Public Governor – Merseyside on 9th July 2024. Over 300 Governors from over 122 different trusts attended.

The agenda was split as follows.

- 1) Presentation on NHS Policy Update by Julian Hartley CEO NHS Providers.
- 2) Showcase One - A Pledge to Commitment – Embodying the essence of the statutory duties of the council of governors' – Northampton NHS FT
- 3) Governor support in a difficult climate
- 4) Showcase two- Making Membership Matter East London NHS FT
- 5) Breakout session discussion of the above
- 6) Effective participation and engagement with our members

Overall, I found the session very useful and especially around how to drive engagement and involvement with Governors and Members from the showcase sessions. The NHSP also offers a lot of sessions which look very interesting for some of the Governors to attend and share their findings back with the rest.

The presentation slides are [available here](#).

2. Presentations

2.1 NHS Policy Update – Julian Hartley CEO NHSP

The New Labour government made NHS performance improvement a key plank of its election manifesto and based on the new Secretary of State's publicly stated view that '*NHS is broken*' it will be interesting to see how NHS productivity is increased with anticipated at or below inflation funding increases. It is **recommended that all Governors read slides (link above)**.

2.2 Showcase One - A pledge to commitment

Governors in this Trust have made individual pledges based on their statutory duties which have

enabled them to really take ownership of the role. The initiative is innovative, effective and has created a positive dynamic within the Council of Governors.

The Governors were given a list of pledges they could commit to achieving during the year and they could add some of their own. Has helped to engage governors with the Trust and create more involvement and participation as a broader group and not just a core group of Governors, so shares the workload.

2.3 Governor Support in a Difficult Climate

How can we strike the right balance between effectively holding to account our Non Executive Directors for the performance of the board and providing support to the Trust at a really challenging time for the NHS.

Linked to the Showcase One is the recommendation that Governors make the most of all opportunities to observe NED performance at BOD meetings or in other opportunities that may present themselves such as attending their walkabouts.

Increasing knowledge of both the Trust and the broader operational context via conferences such as today and other events provided by NHSP.

2.4 Making Membership Matter – East London NHSFT

Governors in this Trust have stood back, really considered the purpose of membership and developed a new membership engagement plan. This has been co-produced with key stakeholders, links to the trust's wider priorities and has delivered many tangible activities in its first year.

They looked at the benefits of becoming a member and reducing the documentation required to do so.

2.5 Breakout Session

All attendees were split into virtual breakout rooms to discuss the topics that had been covered. Consensus was that the showcases provided real food for thought and opportunities to engage with all Governors and members. The breakout session summary document can be [downloaded here](#).

2.6 Effective participation and engagement with our members

The panel discussed how we can improve both members' participation and our general engagement with members, which has proven to be a struggle for most Trusts. The speakers provided both an NHS and external perspective. In summary the age demographic is biased to older age groups and the challenge is connect with a younger profile, and to use differing methods to communicate with them.