

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Membership Strategy

Agreed by Council of Governors, 7 April 2017

Membership Strategy

Introduction

1. People can become members of NHS Foundation Trusts (FTs) and influence their development.
2. Public and staff members elect representatives to a Council of Governors which voices the views of the members they represent and holds the non-executive directors to account. Governors are also responsible for engaging with members about the future strategy of the organisation.
3. As a result, FTs are more accountable than NHS Trusts to the people they serve and to their staff.
4. Each FT must establish, develop and maintain an active membership. Sustaining a meaningful membership base involves a significant commitment of time and resource, with effective engagement with members involving people throughout the Trust.
5. The voluntary nature of membership should also be recognised. Members are offered no preferential treatment and have no special rights to access services or premises.

Purpose

6. This strategy outlines what the Council of Governors will do to ensure the Trust builds a representative membership and engages and involves members in the development of the Trust's plans and services.
7. The Membership, Patient Experience and Quality Committee will review this strategy annually on behalf of the Council of Governors.

Aims

8. The aims of our Membership Strategy are:
 - 8.1. to build a substantial, engaged and representative membership;
 - 8.2. to support our members being well-informed, motivated and engaged; and
 - 8.3. to ensure that members' views are sought in discussions on how our services develop.
9. Delivering these aims is intended to support Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) in meeting its objectives, not least through being a responsive organisation with a good understanding of the needs of its patients and the communities it serves.

Build a substantial, engaged and representative membership

10. OUH provides a wide variety of services to varied populations. It provides a district general hospital service to the people of Oxfordshire, south Northamptonshire and parts of south Warwickshire. It provides specialised services for Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Milton Keynes and into Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. Some services are provided on a national basis. Our public membership needs as far as possible to reflect this range of catchments.
11. Membership recruitment to OUH began in earnest in March 2012 and the trust had just under 8,500 members in March 2017.

12. We intend to take the following measures to support our membership strategy:
 - 12.1. Continue to build our public membership base to reflect the diversity of the people we serve.
 - 12.2. Maintain and continue to grow our public membership to between 6,500 and 7,500 public members from Oxfordshire and 2,000 from other areas, with an emphasis on contacting members via email rather than post wherever possible, recognising that some members will prefer contact via post.
 - 12.3. Encourage Governors to speak to their local contacts regarding membership of the Trust and recruit people in their local networks.
 - 12.4. Invite Governors to support recruitment and membership events that are being attended by the Trust.
 - 12.5. Institute a rolling programme of governor presence on Trust sites to support recruitment and engagement. This would assist both with recruitment and in raising the profile of Governors.
 - 12.6. Enable Governors to undertake periodic surveys to gauge members' views.
 - 12.7. Have a staff membership of at least 97% of eligible OUH staff (this is set out in the constitution).
 - 12.8. In addition, encourage Medical Sciences Division staff and staff employed by our PFI partners to join as members.
 - 12.9. Offer Governors on the Membership, Patient Experience and Quality Committee the opportunity to attend the NHS Providers course on Member and Public Engagement training.
 - 12.10. Invite our Governors to attend other public events where the Trust is recruiting for new members alongside Trust staff.

Support our members being well-informed, motivated and engaged

13. Public members are kept informed of the Trust's work via bi-monthly newsletters and invitations to open events and public talks.
14. There are important connections between our members and the Trust's strategic approach to public and patient involvement. Members are invited to and involved in patient groups and panels in services such as cancer and diabetes; in work with local communities, for example through the Community Partnership Network in North Oxfordshire and South Northamptonshire; and in activities such as the Quality Conversation and other mechanisms through which OUH seeks the views and input of patients, public and staff to help improve its services.
15. We intend to continue to:
 - 15.1. Provide information to members and take account of members' views on how best to do so.
 - 15.2. Provide events for members which will offer opportunities for Governors to hear the views of members. Events such as the AGM, Quality Conversation and service specific open days give Governors an opportunity to engage with our members as well as patients and the public who can be encouraged to become members.

- 15.3. Provide information to members on Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's consultation events happening throughout 2017 and encourage them to attend to give their views on the proposals put forward.
- 15.4. Encourage our Governors to participate in their local Patient Participation Group as well as any other health related groups to enable them to hear member's views.

Provide our members with opportunities to help shape how our services develop

- 16. Members of the Trust's public and staff constituencies will play an important role in influencing the development of our services and provide confidence for OUH and its regulator that our plans are the best possible to meet the needs and concerns of the communities that we serve.
- 17. The Trust's members can stand for election to the Council of Governors, which is the main way in which members can directly influence the Trust's strategy.
- 18. We will:
 - 18.1. Inform the Trust's membership of the Trust's strategy, current changes in health and social care services and the challenges facing us.
 - 18.2. Develop a thriving and influential Council of Governors which is responsive to the views and concerns of members and working effectively with the Board of Directors.

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