

THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS WORKING GROUP REPORT

***How Is Membership viewed by the Public?
How do we view Membership?***

Governors will recall how important local accountability has to be in the scope of work of any Foundation Trust. We represent our members, the local population and all our service users. At our heart as an FT, the Newcastle Hospitals purport to offer 'Healthcare at its very best – with a personal touch!' What better way to further this aim, than to represent, understand and respond to the needs of members, the public and service users, ensuring a broad awareness of the services provided by the Trust.

Having a strong membership base, seeking to obtain their support and loyalty and listening to their views is therefore vital for us to continue in this endeavour.

Membership should be an attractive proposition, this is certainly acknowledged, the question is whether or not we are progressing in this way.

Are we attracting members?

Are we listening to our members?

Can people be proud to be a part of the Newcastle Hospitals?

Do people know this?

A. MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

We do need to grow our membership further. To this end various group meetings have been arranged to also work as outreach sessions. Over the coming few months, several meetings shall be arranged to coincide with visits to popular local places, both outwith the Trust and also within. The first of these is scheduled for December when we shall be spending time in the Civic Centre in Newcastle to promote the Trust, membership and indeed engagement with members.

The in-house work will be 'Specific Directorate Targeting'. Visits to a particular directorate will focus on meeting our regular service users and indeed the staff. People who currently use our services but who are not members of the Trust are more likely, we believe, to be interested in joining the Trust and they are clearly well-placed to give us pertinent, valuable feedback.

Following the first of these which was held last month in the Renal Out Patient Clinic in the Freeman Hospital, we looked closely at the results of the visit and weighed up what could be done to make another such visit more productive and effective.

The second of these outreach visits is planned for January 2012; the location is yet to be finalised.

The new updated 'Know Your Governor' leaflets will be produced as soon as we have the full complement of this year's new governors. This should be in January 2012.

B. MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Following on from, and linking to, the membership growth work, is pressing forward in further engaging with our members.

We are continuing with the plans we already have, and would also be interested to hear any ideas for further development.

1. Second Members' Evening (13th October 2011)

Another successful evening, this event was run along the same lines as the first. Although the numbers were fewer, it allowed for a more friendly evening overall and possibly more personal interaction. Furthermore, having gained learning experience from the initial event in March, improvement modifications were made as appropriate. The theme was based around our brand new, cutting edge, Children's Services primarily based in the Great North Children's Hospital.

Professor Andrew Cant, the Clinical Director gave a fascinating talk charting the long history of recognition of the general consensus amongst paediatricians in the Northern Region of the need for a dedicated children's hospital. He acquainted us with some of the staff and advised us of the full complement of services now offered in the iconic new, purpose-built Great North Children's Hospital.

During the discussion time, several members showed great interest in the right for patient choice of hospital and were delighted to assure their choice would definitely be the GNCH.

2. December Members' Evening.

This is to centre around the Care of the Elderly. At the last membership event, one of our members asked about Care of the Elderly and when we would be focusing on this area of care. It was therefore very fortuitous that this next event had already been earmarked for this. The date for this event is **Thursday 8th December 2011, 5.45pm – 7.45pm.** Please do put this date in your diaries.

3. Email.

We are still endeavouring to obtain as many email addresses from our membership as possible, but this is proving very difficult. This means that although we would like to begin to communicate with members electronically, as yet we cannot realistically do so. However, we do still have access to the Trust webmail.

Plans are currently underway to develop the governor sections of the Trust Website and explore further ways for electronic communication with members.

Important Note: Please ensure that you do re-register on the Trust Webmail. We have promised that members can get in touch with governors this way. They must be able to do so.

Please regularly access and check your Trust email account.

C. ACTION REQUIRED

The actions required of Governors remain the same: commitment to the Trust by advocating membership at every opportunity and then encouraging engagement with us. The usual suggestions are again offered below.

- 'Round Robin' email to use, and continue using, from time to time. (Please do let me know if you would like a further copy of our possible 'guide/template email')
- Do you have new contacts to whom it could be sent now?
- Do you carry a few membership forms in your bags?
- Do you talk to friends and relatives about joining the Trust?
- Do you ask members for feedback or any other involvement?
- Can *you* think of anything else you can do to promote the Trust?

Sandy Harvey
Chair - MCR Governor Working Group
8th November 2011