

Information Pack for prospective staff governors

This pack will provide you with information about being a staff governor at University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

If you have any special communication needs or would like this document in another format or language, please let us know by contacting the Membership team on 0117 342 3764 or FoundationTrust@UH Bristol.nhs.uk.

If you have any additional questions after reading the pack, please do get in touch and we will be happy to help.

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Respecting everyone
Embracing change
Recognising success
Working together
Our hospitals.



1. Introduction

On behalf of University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust I would like to thank you for expressing an interest in joining our Council of Governors.

Our governors make sure members' views, including staff members, are represented and considered, and play a key part in ensuring the Trust is effectively governed. As a governor, you will have the opportunity to help shape the future of our hospitals.

I hope this information pack is helpful and look forward to meeting you.

John Savage, Chairman



The Council of Governors welcomes your interest in the 2016 elections. We look forward to new governors joining us as we continue to represent the views of our members and the public.

Whilst my role as Staff Governor requires a commitment in time and effort, it is undoubtedly rewarding to make a positive contribution to our hospitals and the NHS.

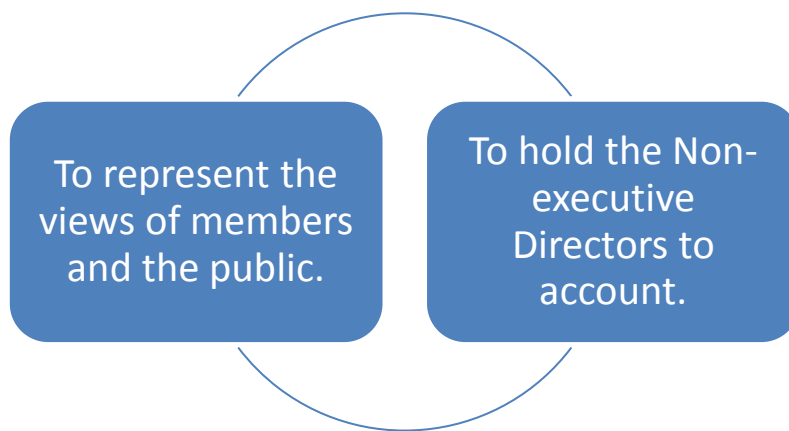
Benjamin Trumper, Lead Governor and Staff Governor for Nursing & Midwifery

2. The role of the Governor

As a governor you would play a very important role in making the Trust **publicly accountable** for the services we provide.

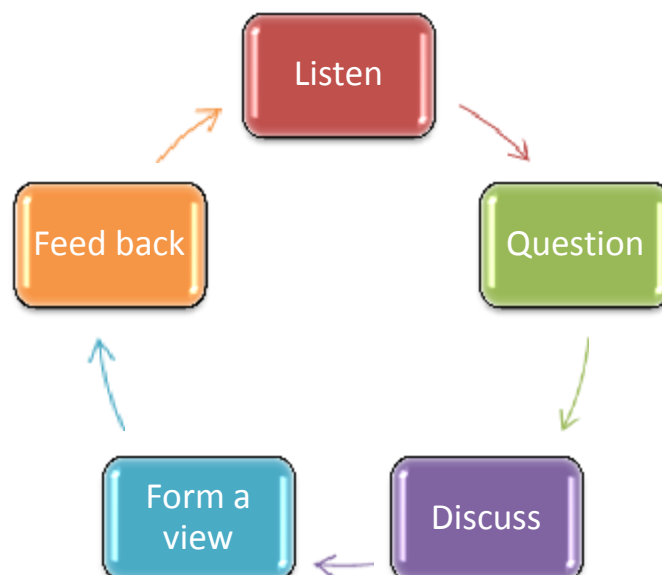
Staff governors, like all governors, have 2 main responsibilities:

- To represent the views of the Trust's members and the public, particularly in relation to the Trust's strategic direction
- To hold the Non-executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.



As a member of the Council of Governors, you would act as a link between Foundation Trust members and the Board of Directors. The Council help the Board to make sure that the views of local communities and people who use the Trust's services are taken into account when plans for services are being developed.

Holding to account is a process that can be visualised by the cycle below:



What other powers and duties do governors have?

Governors have been given other powers and duties in law to help them with the role. These are:

- To appoint and, if appropriate, remove the Chair of the Trust
- To appoint and, if appropriate, remove the other Non-executive Directors of the Trust
- To decide the pay and allowances and the other terms and conditions of office of the Chair and the other Non-Executive Directors
- To approve the appointment of the Chief Executive
- To appoint and, if appropriate, remove the Trust's Auditor
- To receive the annual report and annual accounts and the Auditor's report on the accounts
- To give a response when consulted by the Board of Directors on the Trust's Annual Plan
- To agree, in conjunction with the Board of Directors, changes to the Trust's Constitution
- To approve any proposal to increase by 5% or more the proportion of the Trust's total annual income from activities other than the provision of health services in England
- To approve any applications for 'significant transactions' as defined in the Trust's constitution
- To approve any applications for mergers, acquisitions, separation or dissolution of the Trust
- To decide whether the Trust's private patient work would significantly interfere with its main purpose, i.e. the provision of goods and services for the health service in England or the performance of its other functions
- To inform the regulator, Monitor, if there were any 'material concerns' about the actions of the Board of Directors which could not be resolved locally

What can't governors do?

There are certain things that staff governors are not expected to do. As a staff governor they are:

- not to seek to act as a staff representative or union representative on employment issues, as there are other channels for dealing with such concerns
- not expected to get involved in operational issues in the Trust, outside of their own job remit
- not to deal with patient complaints directly (again outside of the remit of their own job), but signpost to the appropriate Trust department (although Governors may wish to highlight if several complaints raised to them suggest a recurring issue with Trust services)
- not to seek to be elected to represent a single issue or cause - governors should seek to represent the interests of the whole of the constituency they represent
- not asked to scrutinise the performance of the hospitals (the governor's job is to scrutinise the performance of the Board)

3. About University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust is a dynamic and thriving group of hospitals in the heart of Bristol, a vibrant and culturally diverse city. We have over 8,000 staff who deliver over 100 different clinical services from eight individual sites. With services from neonatal intensive care unit to older people's care, we offer care to the people of Bristol and the South West from the very beginning of life to its later stages. We are one of the largest acute NHS Trusts, with an annual income of £575m.

Our hospitals:

- Bristol Eye Hospital
- Bristol Haematology & Oncology Centre
- Bristol Heart Institute
- Bristol Royal Hospital for Children
- Bristol Royal Infirmary
- South Bristol Community Hospital
- St Michael's Hospital
- Bristol Dental Hospital

Our mission and vision:

Our **mission** as a Trust is to improve the health of the people we serve by delivering exceptional care, teaching and research, every day.

Our **vision** is for Bristol, and our hospitals, to be among the best and safest places in the country to receive care.

We want to be characterised by:

- High quality individual care, delivered with compassion
- A safe, friendly and modern environment
- Employing the best and helping all our staff fulfil their potential
- Pioneering and efficient practice, putting ourselves at the leading edge of research, innovation and transformation
- Our commitment to partnership and the provision of leadership to the networks we are part of, for the benefit of the region and people we serve.

You can find out lots more about the Trust and our hospitals at our website, www.uhbristol.nhs.uk



4. About Foundation Trusts

NHS foundation trusts are part of the NHS and provide healthcare according to core NHS principles: free care, based on need and not ability to pay. They have a degree of independence from the Department of Health which means they can take certain managerial and financial decisions themselves and have more control over their own finances. Nevertheless, they are subject to statutory requirements and have a duty to exercise their functions effectively, efficiently and economically.

Members and governors:

At the heart of the NHS foundation trust model is local accountability. A Foundation Trust must have a membership, and patients and local people who want to get more involved in their local health service can sign up to become members. At University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, staff are also automatically Foundation Trust Members too unless they choose to opt out.

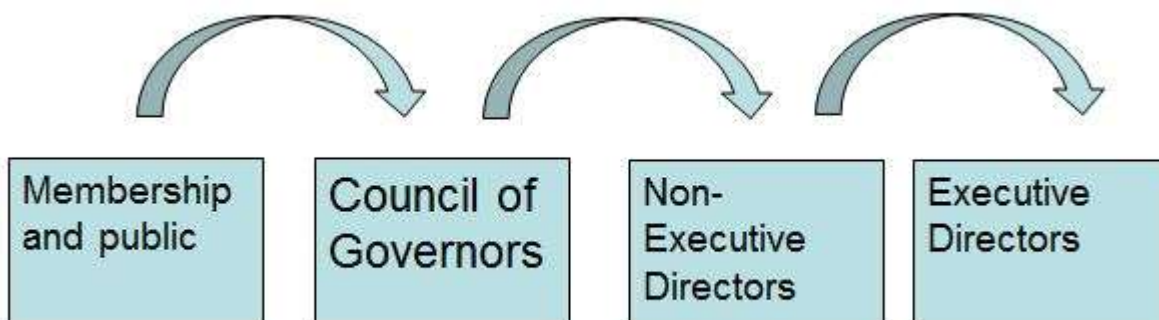
This means that as a Foundation Trust we are accountable to the local community, patients we care for and the staff we employ. By becoming members and governors, local people, patients, their carers, and our staff can have a say in how services will be designed and delivered.

The relationship with the Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors are responsible for the running and management of the Trust. The Board is made up of Executive Directors, including the Chief Executive, who are full time senior staff, plus an independent lay Chairman and Non-Executive Directors who hold part-time positions.

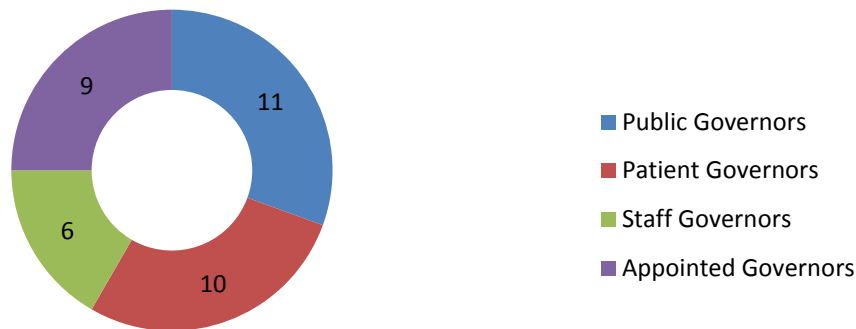
Foundation Trusts are accountable to their members through their Council of Governors. The Council of Governors hold the Non-executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.

Our accountability model - each is accountable to the one before:



5. The Council of Governors

How is our Council of Governors made up?



We have a Council of Governors made up of **36 governors** who make sure that the view of patients, carers, community, staff and partners are heard when decisions are made:

- 11 elected **public** governors representing 4 constituencies (*Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, and Rest of England & Wales*)
- 10 elected **patient** governors representing 3 patients and carer constituencies (*Patients-local, Carers of Patients 16 years and over, and Carers of Patients under 16 years*)
- 6 elected **staff** governors representing 4 different staff groups (*Medical & Dental, Nursing & Midwifery, Other Clinical Healthcare Professional and Non-clinical Healthcare Professional*)
- We also have 9 appointed governors from our stakeholders and partner organisations (*Bristol City Council, University of Bristol, University of the West of England, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Trust, South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, Voluntary/Community Sector, University Hospitals Bristol Joint Union Committee, and University Hospitals Bristol Youth Council*)

Fifteen of the public, patient and staff governor seats are up for election in 2016. ***Find out whether your constituency is up for election and which constituency you could stand in on page 12.***



“My role is to represent the carers’ perspective and to ensure they are taken into consideration when decisions are made in the hospital”

Lorna Watson, Patient Governor representing Carers of Patients aged under 16 years

6. Eligibility to be a Governor

All types of people can become hospital governors and no special experience or qualifications are required, although you must be 16 years of age or over and be an existing member of the Trust.

There are certain exceptions – you could be disqualified from being a governor for a number of reasons including bankruptcy or recent criminal convictions, for example. Our Constitution lists the exclusions in more detail and you can view the Trust’s Constitution on the key publications page of our website <http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/about-us/key-publications/> or ask the Membership Team to send you a copy.

What qualities should a staff governor have?

Enthusiasm, commitment, an interest in health and the ability to work as part of a team are important qualities. Governors have to be able to challenge the Board to ensure they are doing their job properly, so it could be useful to have some skills in reading reports and working with people. We will support all governors with their development in the role, but would hope that anyone interested in becoming a governor would have some or all of the following qualities:

- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Sound, independent judgement, diplomacy and common sense
- An understanding and interest in health issues and a commitment to NHS values and principles of NHS Foundation Trusts
- Sufficient time and commitment to fulfil the role (*see more on page 9*)
- The ability to grasp relevant issues and understand relationships between interested parties
- The ability to develop an understanding of the different legal duties, liabilities and responsibilities of governors and Non-Executive Directors and knowledge of corporate governance i.e. the procedures an organisation has to follow to make decisions (*you can find out more about this by coming to our Information Events or by reading about the role of the governor in the Monitor: ‘Your statutory duties’ document - see Useful Links – page 15*)

Why become a staff governor?

Our staff governors tell us that they find their role hugely rewarding and enjoy the opportunity to help to bring about positive change at the Trust. Whilst the role is demanding it is also interesting, and governors have a unique perspective of the hospitals and the NHS. Working alongside fellow governors is also a great way to meet new people and to feel part of a team, and can bring about greater personal confidence. On a professional level, becoming a staff governor will support your development and help you to build on existing skills and abilities in a new setting.

7. Time commitment and meetings

Many of our current Governors will tell you how much they enjoy the role but that the time commitment should not be underestimated. An estimated time commitment is **7-10 hours per month** to attend meetings and other events, to read materials such as papers for meetings and to join in with membership engagement activities.

What meetings will I need to attend?

There are four formal Council of Governor meetings a year that are statutory (required) to attend. There are also informal meetings, which include opportunities to meet with the Non-executive Directors and the Chairman, and also meetings of three Governor Groups which focus on Quality, Strategy and Constitution/Membership. There is an expectation that individual governors attend a good mix of meetings in order to ensure they are well informed and have the opportunity to raise queries and concerns on behalf of members. A full schedule of the meetings for 2016/17 is available on request and will give you a sense of timings and frequency of meetings.

In accordance with The Trust's Constitution, the Trust holds an Annual Members Meeting which takes place in September and all governors are expected to attend. In addition, governors are encouraged to attend the four development seminars per year. These Governor Development Seminars provide briefings on current topics and developments as well as training on skills and relevant to your role as governor. There is also a Nominations and Appointments Committee of 12 governors which deals with the appointment, appraisals and other terms of service of the Chairman and Non-executive Directors.

Time offered to support you in your staff governor role

To fulfil your duties as a staff governor, you are entitled to time away from your job to attend meetings and training/ development activities in relation to the role. This is guided as an average of six hours per month, pro rata for part time employees. It is expected that engagement activities with members and your constituents are undertaken within your normal day-to-day working practice.

We ask line managers to support you by being as flexible as possible, subject of course to the needs of the service, and you will be notified of meeting dates well in advance to help you plan your time.



"As a Staff Governor, I feel it's important that the Trust looks after its staff and listens to them. If staff feel valued and are trained and supported to do their job to the best of their ability, this has a positive impact on patients."

Florene Jordan, Staff Governor, Nursing & Midwifery

A guide to the regular time commitment required:

- Council of Governors meetings (2 hours x 4 per year)
- Governor Development Seminars (6 hours x 4 per year)
- Governor Groups on Quality, Strategy and Constitution/Membership (2 hours x 4-6 per year for each group– governors will be encouraged to attend some of these meetings)
- Annual Members’ Meeting (2 hours x 1 per year)
- Health Matters Events (2 hours x 4 per year, governors invited to attend and support when they can)
- Membership engagement activities (by arrangement)
- Governors Informal Meeting/Meeting with the Chairman and Non-executive Directors (2 hours x 8 per year, an optional but very useful forum)
- Nominations and Appointments Committee (1 hour x 4 per year – committee members only)

There are a number of other meetings and events throughout the year that governors can take part in, if they are available and would like to, including:

- Board of Directors meetings (2 hours x 10 per year) – it’s recommended that all governors should attend at least one Board meeting in each year, to see the Board ‘in action’
- Walkrounds and assessments in hospital areas to observe first-hand how the hospitals are running – these are a great chance to see the hospital and spend time with the Chief Executive and Chairman
- External networking events, such as South West Governor Exchange Network meetings in Taunton, meetings of NHS Providers in London; or meetings of other health-related organisations in Bristol
- Ad-hoc Trust presentations, celebrations, focus groups, and other events – all of which are optional.

The governor viewpoint is valued at the Trust, and governors also invited to sit on other Trust groups or committees from time to time to ensure good engagement across the organisation. Such activities are always optional, and typically open to the whole Council.



“Just like someone may approach their local councillor about a local matter people can speak to us about any concerns they have relating to the hospitals. It gives us a temperature check on how the Trust is doing and it helps us identify issues that need to be addressed.”

Angelo Micciche, Patient Governor

8. Induction, training and support

What support will I receive when I become a staff governor?

New governors will be given a welcome pack. This will include a range of resources such as a copy of their role description, a Code of Conduct for Governors which you will need to sign, a copy of the Trust's constitution and other helpful information and links.

All new governors are asked to attend an induction seminar, which this year will be held on **Monday 13 June 2016, from 10am to 4pm at Trust Headquarters**. At this seminar you'll get to spend time meeting your fellow governors and meet the Membership Team. To help bring your new role to life, the seminar will cover

- Your role and responsibilities
- An overview of the NHS locally and nationally
- The role of the Trust Board of Directors
- Our vision and values
- More information on governor meetings and next steps

You will also be assigned a 'buddy' from among the more experienced governors to help you settle into the role.

How do I represent the views of my members?

One of the governors' main responsibilities is to help us communicate with our members and make sure the views of the members are fed back to the Trust Board. **We will support you to find a way of doing this that will suit your skills, your preferences and the time that you have available.** This could involve, for example, running a membership recruitment stall at a community event, or in a public area of one of our hospitals, or perhaps speaking at staff meetings to raise our profile, talking to members at our Health Matters Events, or supporting online or social media activities.

What support will I receive on an ongoing basis?

Day-to-day support is provided by the Membership Team. We will send you papers for your meetings (by email and in hard copy too if preferred), advise you of forthcoming events and other opportunities that you may be interested in, and also update you with Trust news, and any wider issues affecting NHS governors. You are welcome to contact us at any time: we're on hand to help.

Ongoing training and development will be provided through the regular Governor Development Seminars, and at other governor meetings.

We want to encourage a diverse membership to the Council of Governors and will provide support to those with special needs to carry out their role. For example, ensuring that visually impaired Governors can access information and material and ensuring meetings are wheelchair accessible and have appropriate facilities.

9. Elections

There are 15 governor positions for election in 2016, including four staff governor seats. If your role falls within one of the following constituent areas then you can stand as a staff governor:

- **Nursing and Midwifery – 2 seats up for election for 3 year terms of office**
- **Non-clinical Healthcare Professional – 1 seat up for election for a 1 year term of office only**
- **Other Clinical Healthcare Professional – 1 seat up for election for a 3 year term of office**

Which constituency can I stand for?

To stand for a staff governor role you need to belong to the staff group you wish to represent. If you are unsure about the classification of your staff group then do get in touch and we can use Trust staff records to advise you accordingly. Some examples of the types of roles or departments that sit under each constituent are detailed below:

Nursing and midwifery – this extends to all nursing and midwifery staff, including those who are newly qualified and also healthcare assistants.

Non-clinical Healthcare Professional – this covers all administrative staff at any level, and support staff such as those in IM&T and staff who work within facilities and estates teams

Other Clinical Healthcare Professional – this broad group covers the wide range of Allied Health Professionals employed in the Trust, ranging from those in pharmacy teams to staff in physiotherapy, speech & language therapists, dietetic teams, etc.

Staff governors are elected by the staff members in their constituent, so it is the members who ultimately choose their representatives. Staff will be able to vote on-line, and those without routine access to email will be notified of how they can vote by mail.

If you would like to proceed and stand for election, then please let us know and we will send you a nomination form. You will need to fill it in, providing a photo to accompany a statement as to why you wish to be a governor and what skills you will bring to the role. This statement will help the members choose who to vote for. **Nominations will be open from 7 March 2016 to 6 April 2016, please note any nominations received after noon on the 6 April can't be accepted.**

If there is more than one candidate for a seat then an election will be held and all members in your constituency are invited to vote, by post or email. The ballot will take place from 28 April 2016 to 24 May 2016. If there is only one candidate for a seat, then that person will automatically be appointed.

The election process will be co-ordinated by the Membership Team in conjunction with our Returning Officer, Electoral Reform Services (ERS). This is an independent body experienced in running democratic elections.

10. Term of office for Governors

Terms of office for elected staff governors are three years, or a one-year term in the case of the Non-Clinical Healthcare Professional role. Governors are then eligible to stand for re-election, to a maximum of three terms of office i.e. nine years maximum. The term is set as three years as we feel this provides adequate time to settle into the role and have time to become an effective governor of the Trust.

If during a term of office a governor becomes unable to maintain their commitment to the role, then we would ask that they discuss this with us in order to agree the suitability of continuing in post. Whilst we hope all governors are able to complete their term, we understand that in exceptional circumstances this may not be possible.

11. Code of Conduct for Governors

We ask all Governors to sign their agreement to the Code of Conduct before they take up their role. This highlights what is reasonably expected of individuals occupying the position of governor, asking them to:

- Support the vision, aims and values of the Trust
- Act in the best interests of patients and the Trust as a whole
- Adhere to all applicable Trust policies and procedures
- Be honest and act with integrity and objectivity without any expectation of personal benefit
- Respect and treat with dignity and fairness the public, patients, relatives, carers, NHS staff, partners in other agencies
- Respect and value all governors and directors as colleagues
- Contribute effectively to the work of the Council to fulfil its role
- Understand that the decision of the Council must take full account of the needs and views of patients, carers, local people and staff
- Seek to ensure that individually and collectively they uphold the Trust's commitment to equality and diversity
- Respect appropriate confidentiality of information received in their role as governor
- Uphold the seven principles of public life determined by the Nolan Committee (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership).

12. Expenses

Governors are not paid a salary. However, they can claim expenses such as travel costs for meetings off site whilst carrying out their duties, in line with the Trust's Expenses Policy for Governors.

13. Next steps if you wish to stand for election as a Governor

Make sure you meet the eligibility criteria, call us if you have any queries about this on 0117 342 3764.



Come along to one of our pre-election events to hear about the role in more detail and meet some of our governors and members of the Trust Board.



Request a Nomination Form. You can do this through the Membership Team by calling us on 0117 342 3764 or emailing us at foundation.trust@uhbristol.nhs.uk



Complete the nomination form together with a photo and statement and return it to Electoral Reform Services **before noon on 6 April 2016**. You can complete and return the form electronically or by post.



If the seat is contested, voting will take place 28 April - 24 May. You will then be notified whether or not you have been elected to the Council of Governors.

At any time check our webpage for the most up-to-date election news:
www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/ftelection

14. Useful links

University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust Website: <http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/>

Governor Role at University Hospitals Bristol: You can browse our governor webpages: <http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/about-us/membership/governors/> They include a governor information page with links to key information such as the Trust's constitution, and our governors' code of conduct and expenses policy.

Foundation Trusts and the Governor Role: You can find out more about Foundation Trusts and the governor role generally from Monitor – the regulator for healthcare: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/monitor>

Your Statutory Duties (Monitor's guide for Foundation Trust governors) can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-foundation-trust-governors-your-legal-obligations>

So you are thinking about becoming a governor? (Governwell publication about the role) can be found: <https://www.nhsproviders.org/programmes/governwell>

15. Contact information

Please contact the Membership Team at any time with any further queries you might have. You can call the office on 0117 342 3764, email us at FoundationTrust@UH Bristol.nhs.uk or write to us at: Membership Team, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, Trust Headquarters, Marlborough Street, Bristol, BS1 3NU. We look forward to hearing from you!



"We are privileged to have the NHS as many countries don't have a healthcare system that is free at the point of contact. I see my role as playing a part in ensuring the NHS provides excellent care for everyone."

Brenda Rowe, Public Governor