

Sherwood Forest Hospitals Foundation Trust (SFHFT) Governors have continued to have a busy few months since the last Council of Governors (CoG). Monthly 15 Steps and Meet Your Governor (MYG) activities have remained well attended by governors.

We held our Governor Conference on 16th April 2024. This event started with food tasting thanks to Medirest. As a governor we often receive comments about the food served in hospital to patients at SFHFT. It was, therefore, really helpful and insightful to experience food from a typical menu. It was enlightening to hear about how the Medirest team consistently accommodate a whole range of complex food challenges to support patients on a daily basis (from dietary requirements to ensuring that food plays a valuable role in nourishing patients to assist their recovery).

The Governor conference provided us with an opportunity to thank governors for all that they are doing. Being a governor is an entirely voluntary role which is made up of many facets from pre reading before meetings to travel time to doing 15 Steps. I feel we are really blessed within SFHFT to have a governing body who care deeply and have a wide range of different skills and knowledge which they share.

As Lead Governor I proposed three key focuses for us as a team during this next year. This approach is taken to ensure that our time, care and commitment has as much positive and focused impact as possible in supporting SFHFT. These focuses are:

- Actively support the delivery of the five-year strategy in every sense
- Focus upon getting the members we currently have actively engaged
- An agreed focus to our Meet Your Governor work

It feels really important as a team of governors to actively support the five-year strategy whenever and wherever we can. There are some fabulous elements to it and it is important that we add value in assisting it to be delivered.

Our membership data tells us that whilst we have a lot of members, only a proportion of these are active. My proposal is that we focus upon quality rather than quantity and really move forward with having active members who join in at events, share their voice and help SFHFT in achieving its ambitious five-year strategy.

The concept of 'Meet Your Governor' [MYG] is great. However, it often feels like a lot of time, energy and effort is given that it is ultra-hard to see the impact of. I have been doing MYG for 2.5 years now and car parking (regardless of site) comes up every time. Our MYG packs have a standard factual response for us to give for this. However, there are bigger points we need to hear about to support the SFHFT exec team and NEDS in achieving consistently outstanding care for all.

The revised approach to MYG will see a key theme chosen by governors (such as discharge) asked about by all governors during MYG in a set time frame. If all governors have set questions to ask on each topic and the same system to input answers in to, then in theory it will enable us to collect and collate really strong qualitative information from SFHFT patients, carers, members and staff that can be shared with the Exec team / NEDs to triangulate with and work with. I am hopeful that this will ensure that MYG has a very strong visible impact that we can see evidence of in CoG and other governor minutes in a 'you said, we did' style approach.

As governors we had a follow up session on mortality which was exceptionally well attended by governors. This session was asked for based upon governor questions raised after a previous session on mortality. The presentations during this session included SFHFT staff along with external consultants which helped to ensure external objectivity and scrutiny. I

greatly value being able to have an open, honest and transparent approach within the governing body and with how we interact with the Exec team and NEDs. It is important that we are all supported and facilitated to be able to ask any questions we wish and that we all remain curious and inquisitive in our volunteer roles. Through collaborative working we can ensure that we tackle the different things, gain deeper knowledge of SFHFT in the process and monitor outcomes closely.

Governor Nikki Slack led another wonderful 'Step into the NHS' event which really does present such wonderful SFHFT (and NHS!) opportunities to the communities that we serve. Thank you for your work on this Nikki.

And finally, the governing body and myself would like to congratulate our Chair of the Board, Claire Ward, on becoming the first East Midlands Mayor for the Combined Authority. This prestigious new role will serve East Midlands in a new and innovative way. It is, therefore, reassuring that Claire has first hand experience as to how SFHFT operates as an anchor organisation in mid Notts along with the challenges that we currently face in our locality. Claire, thank you for all that you have done for SFHFT, we value you and your impact.