

Membership Strategy 2015-2018

Council of Governors, Membership Committee and membership

1. Introduction

Why Membership?

People's lives can be transformed when they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to actively engage in their own health care planning. Active engagement with Oxleas NHS can improve health outcomes and the quality of life for individuals through the development of high quality local provision.

How Membership Works

Oxleas NHS staff and governors will work towards providing opportunities for inclusive discussion and information sharing. We will listen to feedback and suggestions from our members, service users and carers in order to develop appropriate, efficient and effective local health services.

This strategy has been developed to ensure that Oxleas NHS with our Council of Governors develop and maintain meaningful communications and engagement with our members, service users and carers, and the general public. The strategy will be overseen by our Membership Committee, reporting into our Council of Governors, and operationally driven by our Stakeholder Engagement team.

We achieved Foundation Trust status in 2006, and have steadily grown in both size and membership since then. The trust has evolved and diversified, with new services joining such as community health services. In turn, our membership has steadily grown and evolved, with the introduction of service user/carers interest groups represented on our Council of Governors, new Staff Governor constituencies, and the extension of the eligibility of our Public membership from our three local boroughs to the rest of England. However, we still have work to do to increase our membership in relation to the number of eligible people using our services and our local populations, and to ensure satisfactory levels of member engagement.

We want to continue to promote Oxleas and our membership to the general public.

We want to involve and engage our members in our work, and to use membership as an opportunity to educate people on key health issues.

We introduced Associate membership in 2011 to build stronger links with the third sector, local businesses, etc and to date, just over 100 have joined. Formal partnerships have been formed with some of these, others have participated in trust run events to promote their work, have participated in our Members' Focus Groups and will be promoted to staff through our intranet.

2. How our membership compares to our local populations and people using our services

Since our last strategy, the 2011 Census data has been published, enabling us to have a better understanding of our local communities and their diversity and our membership targets will be adapted to reflect these.

In addition, we now have access to the number of patients who have attended an appointment in the last 5 years (source: RiO), and as at 1 January 2015, can identify the following:

Age (years)	Eligible membership
14-16	10841
17-21	13134
22+	207619
Total	231594

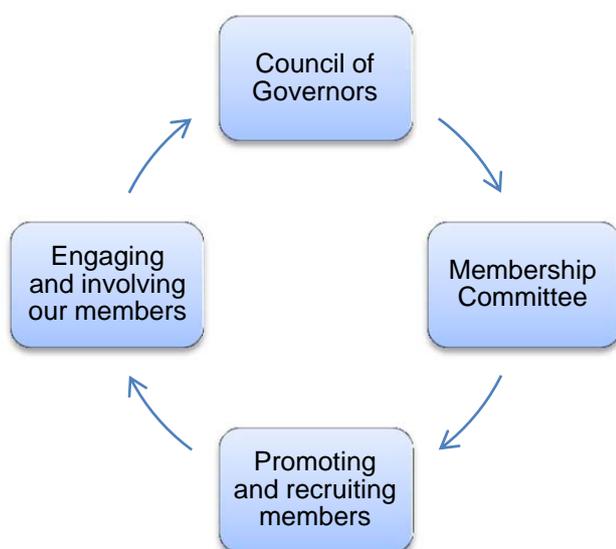
There is therefore a significant pool of potential members within our service users which are not being capitalised on.

Setting membership targets

Membership targets will be discussed and agreed through the Membership Committee, and will be reviewed annually by the Committee. See Appendix 1.

3. Strategic themes

There are four main themes to this strategy.



A. Supporting our Council of Governors

The key statutory duties of our Council of Governors include:

- holding the non-executive directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.
- representing the interests of the members of the trust as a whole, and the interests of the public.

Our Council of Governors consists of 43 governors from the following constituencies:

Governor category	Number of governors
Service user/carers	13 governors
Public	4 governors each for Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich,

	1 for Rest of England
Staff	8 governors, one for each constituency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working age mental health • Forensic mental health • Older adult mental health • Learning disability • Corporate and partner • Greenwich community services • Bexley community services • Child and adolescent mental health
Appointed	6 Partnership Governors representing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Mental Health Services • Children and Young People's Services • Learning Disability Services and • Older Adults Mental Health. 3 Local Authority Governors – one each for Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich Councils.

Managing Council of Governors meetings

The formal Council of Governors meetings, which are held in public, will be supported by the Head of Stakeholder Engagement who will work closely with the trust's Chair and Lead Governor and Trust Secretary.

The Stakeholder Engagement team will ensure that all meetings are publicised; that Committee papers are prepared in accordance with the Council of Governors' Rules of Procedure, the meetings accurately recorded, and that Council of Governors' papers are in the public domain.

Electing Governors

We will work with the Electoral Reform Society to run our elections, and will set up systems to encourage a wide range of members to put themselves forward as candidates, and to encourage our members to 'choose' their Governors.

Holding Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board

We will ensure that mechanisms are in place to support Governors to fulfil their duty of holding our Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board. This will include ensuring they receive Board of Directors' papers in advance of meetings, that systems are in place to enable them to raise questions directly with our Non-Executive Directors prior to Board of Directors meetings; to receive assurance that our Non-Executive Directors are effectively understanding and challenging Executive Directors on matters where appropriate, and that Governors are able to effectively feed back into the Council of Governors and more widely, including to the members they represent.

Raising the profile of our Governors

We believe we can increase engagement between our Governors and the members of their constituencies. To achieve this, we propose:.

Developing a Governors' Annual Report

We will produce a Governors' Annual Report on behalf of the Council of Governors. This report will provide a Governor who's who and showcase how our Governors have been representing their members during the past year. This report will be sent to all members, and will be available on our website.

Developing Governor to member communications

We will create Governor specific communications (eg Bexley Public Governors to Bexley Public members; Service User/Carer Governors for a particular special interest group to Service User/Carer members of that special interest group; Staff Governor Older Adult's Mental Health to staff within that directorate). These communications will identify who's who and how to contact the Governors, the purpose and function of the Governor, plus any other information which may be relevant and opportunities for members to get involved.

We will support Public and Service User/Carer Governors to deliver their messages via the above routes using our online Membership system, and will work with Staff Governors to help them develop communications and cascade these to staff groups using internal systems.

With the increased emphasis on a well engaged workforce, we need to consider how our Staff Governors can better engage with their constituents. In addition to above, we will develop our intranet to profile our Staff Governors linked to relevant directorates and create further opportunities in direct discussion through the Staff Governors' meetings with the trust's Chair.

Making our Governors more 'visible'

We will provide opportunities at member events, such as the Annual Members' Meeting and Members' Focus Groups, for members to meet Governors.

We will provide opportunities and encouragement for our Governors to engage with the work of the local health economy, and with relevant voluntary organisations in our local boroughs.

As described below, we will be proactively engaging with services to promote membership and this would be an excellent opportunity for Governors to meet service users, carers and our staff.

The Stakeholder Engagement team will work with Governors, through the Membership Committee, to consider other opportunities, such as Governor 'Surgeries' or increased use of social media.

Staff Recognition Awards

Service User/Carer Governors will participate in a panel to consider and agree the winner and runners up of the 'Having a user focus' staff recognition award. These Governors will present this category award at the Annual Members' Meeting.

A Public, Service User/Carer and Staff Governor will participate in the main panel with Executive and Non-Executive Directors, to consider and agree the remaining staff recognition awards winners and runners up .

B. Supporting our Membership Committee

Our Membership Committee is Governor led, supported by a Non-Executive Director and our Stakeholder Engagement Team. The Council of Governors are responsible for agreeing this strategy. The Membership Committee oversees this strategy, considering and agreeing activities to help our membership grow, and ways to engage and involve our members. A Terms of Reference gives direction to the Committee.

To ensure this Committee functions effectively, work in this theme will focus on:

Maintaining a robust Membership Committee

Support will be provided by the Stakeholder Engagement team to the Chair of the Membership Committee.

The Terms of Reference will be revisited to ensure they are fit for purpose and to refocus this Committee.

New Membership Committee governors will be recruited, and the Lead Governor will attend future Committee meetings to give further direction and support.

Members of the Committee will be provided with information from other Foundation Trusts with regard to successful membership initiatives and offered opportunities for further training (eg through GovernWell).

The work of this Committee including membership data, will be reported into the Council of Governors by the Membership Committee Chair. It is also included in our annual report.

C. Promoting our membership

Increasing awareness of membership with staff

We want to increase understanding of membership by our staff, and how this should be promoted to the people using our services.

Our Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development will incorporate information about staff becoming members on joining the trust, as part of the trust's induction programme. Staff need to recognise that they are members, and how they can contribute to our annual planning process through attending the annual Members' Focus Groups.

We will undertake focussed campaigns within services using internal communication channels and face to face engagement, to promote membership. Governors will be actively encouraged to support this activity. Face to face engagement is resource intensive and the time commitment needs to be taken into account, as part of planning.

Increasing awareness of membership within our services to service users, carers and visitors

We will undertake focused campaigns within services using internal communication channels and face to face engagement, to promote membership. Governors will be actively encouraged to support this activity. Face to face engagement is resource intensive and the time commitment needs to be taken into account, as part of planning.

Promotional membership materials will be developed and strategically placed within service user/carer and public facing areas of the trust to raise the profile and encourage joining.

We will work with our Carers' Lead to identify opportunities to increase our Carer members.

We will investigate opportunities to promote membership to target groups, for example, new mums; college and university students.

Increasing our younger member representation

We will look at opportunities for our Governors to participate in careers fairs and other events within educational settings, to increase awareness of the trust and promote membership. This will contribute to building our younger member representation.

Promoting our membership within public events and settings

We will continue to use opportunities for public engagement to raise the profile of Oxleas and what we do, as well as promoting membership.

We will look for opportunities to promote the trust and its membership within children's centres, libraries, leisure centres, etc.

Increasing awareness of our associate members

We now have over 100 associate members who are interested in the trust and in building closer relationships. We will build an A-Z resource on our intranet of all associate members, to enable our staff to find resources to support our service users and carers within the community including referral routes.

We will work with our associate members to increase their understanding of Oxleas and involve them in our work.

We will continue to identify opportunities within our associate members for voluntary work opportunities for our service users.

We will continue to work with our associate members, to look for opportunities to promote membership, and also to create opportunities for them to participate in trust events to raise their profile.

We will particularly focus on educational establishments, both our associate members, and more widely, to create opportunities to talk about Oxleas and promote membership.

D. Engaging and involving our members

For this three year strategy, we wish to develop a robust programme of engagement for our members, and will achieve this through:

Improved communications to our members

This includes the Governor's Annual Report and Governor to member communications described in Section A.

Member health events

These will be brief education sessions on specific health/condition related topics such as 'Managing anxiety and depression', offered in venues across the three boroughs. We will be reliant on our clinicians' commitment to develop and deliver these. Each event will be evaluated, and member views tested on future events. Using feedback from the 2015 events, we will review and evaluate the purpose and format of the meetings and consider whether additional Focus Groups should be held within each financial year.

Member's Focus Groups

We will continue to deliver three borough-based Members' Focus Groups each year - all comments received are collated and reported to the Council of Governors for consideration, to inform our Annual Plan. Feedback from each event is evaluated.

From feedback from the 2015 events, we will consider whether additional Focus Groups should be held within each financial year and review and evaluate the format of the annual Focus Groups.

Annual Members' Meeting and Staff Recognition Awards

We will continue to invite members to this annual member event. Where a constitutional change exists, members will be asked to cast their vote at this event. Feedback from this event is evaluated.

Involving members in our patient experience programme

We will promote opportunities for member involvement in our patient experience programme. Some governors are trained and participate in the trust's Oxleas' Patient Experience Questionnaire (OPEQ) and will look to open this opportunity up to our wider membership.

Consultations

When appropriate, we will ensure our members, or specific member interest groups are consulted on issues which may affect them.

We will continue to involve our associate members in changes to services through specific Stakeholder Reference Groups.

4. Implementation of this strategy

To achieve this strategy, we will be reliant on the support and involvement of our Governors, Board members, trust Executives, Service Directors and their teams. Progress will be monitored and reviewed by our Membership Committee, reporting into the Council of Governors.

5. Evaluation and measuring effectiveness

Detailed Membership reports are considered by the Membership Committee and reported into the Council of Governors. All feedback received from member events is evaluated and reported.

A steady increase in member growth and retention will demonstrate the success of this strategy.

An increase in member to Governor communications, facilitated through new Governor to member communications, will show the effectiveness of this communication tool and increased Governor interaction with their members.

Jo Mant
Head of Stakeholder Engagement
25 February 2015 (revised 5.6.15 v6)

Membership targets 2015-2018

The membership targets will be defined by the Membership Committee in July 2015.