



NHS

Camden and Islington
NHS Foundation Trust

**Become a Governor at
Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust
and help make a difference in your local
community**



Inspected and rated

Good



**CareQuality
Commission**

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MESSAGE FROM TRUST CHAIR AND LEAD GOVERNOR



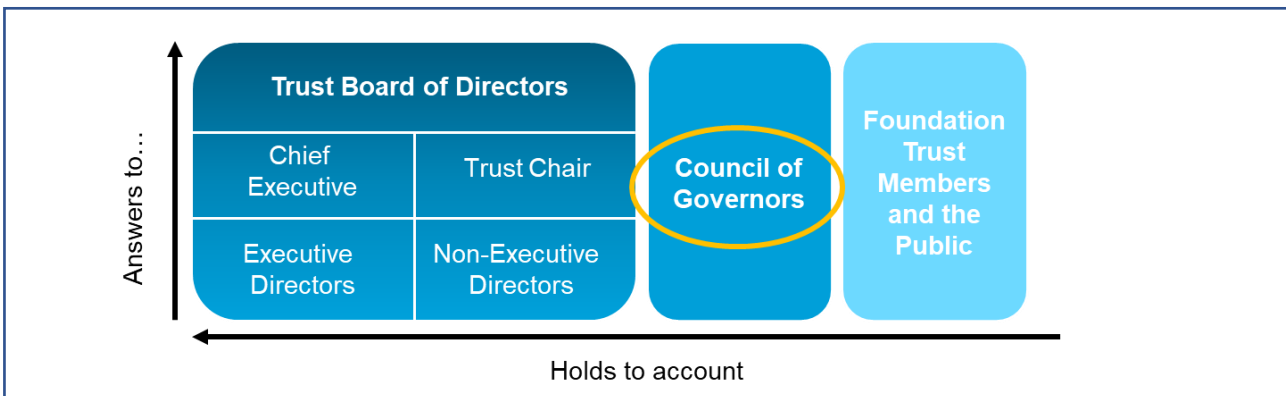
We'd like to start by thanking you for your interest in becoming a Governor at Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust (C&I)!



The fact that you are reading this shows you are interested in your local community and how our services can help meet its mental health needs. Hopefully you find this guide helpful and you decide to **nominate yourself during our**

election period to join our Council of Governors. It's a fantastic opportunity to represent the interests of our members and the local community and help shape how we deliver our services.

Our Governors are hugely important to us and carry out an important voluntary role. They serve as a key link between our Trust and the populations we serve and operate in. They play a valuable role in helping us to improve services, using their local knowledge and networks to do so and possibly sharing their own knowledge and experience. They inform our strategies and future plans and provide an essential perspective to the Board's decision-making, holding our Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Trust Board by offering support and constructive challenge as a 'critical friend'. Importantly, they act in the best interests of the Trust.



C&I is a strong performing, respected and ambitious organisation. We have strong links with our neighbouring NHS providers, the voluntary and community sector and local authorities which puts us in good stead as we continue towards delivering integrated care. Our ethos centres on continuous improvement and we strive to provide the best mental health services across our inpatient, community and outpatient areas. **We need passionate people like you to join us!**

In this guide, you will find out more about the Governor role and what you need to do to stand for election. **Get involved and make a difference in your community!**

Feel free to share this guide with anyone who is currently a member (or is eligible to become a member) of our Trust and who you think might be interested in becoming a Governor.

Thank you for your continued support and we really do hope you decide to stand in the next round of our Governor Elections!

Jackie Smith

Chair of the Trust
August 2021

Eric Crossfield

Lead Governor
August 2021

YOUR GUIDE TO THE ROLE OF A GOVERNOR

“What is a NHS foundation trust?”



NHS foundation trusts are part of the NHS but operate with a degree of autonomy. They are free from central government control and can manage their own affairs and make their own decisions, but they remain subject to legal requirements and have a duty to exercise their functions effectively, efficiently and economically. Foundation trusts are required to have members and Governors.

“What is a member and who can become one?”

Members are people who are interested in the Trust and the services it provides. They can come from all walks of life and can get involved as much or as little as they like, from receiving information and updates periodically to joining events, volunteering and participating in Governor Elections. Members must be aged 16 or over and belong to one of the three constituencies:



- Service users and carers: people who have used, or carers for someone who has used, C&I's services within the past five years.
- Public: people who live in Camden, Islington or any other borough in the rest of London.
- Staff: those employed by C&I under a substantive contract of employment or under a continuous contract of employment which lasts 12 months or more.

Membership is free and Trust members can vote and stand in Governor Elections that are held in their constituency. To find out more about eligibility requirements for becoming a Trust member, please refer to the Trust's Constitution by [clicking here](#).

“What is a Governor?”



Governors carry out an important voluntary role and have the same statutory roles and responsibilities towards their constituents regardless of what class or constituency they come from. They help the Trust to be more responsive and accountable to its service users and carers, the local community, staff and key stakeholder organisations. They use their knowledge, experience and networks to inform the Trust's priorities and strategic plans. They provide a very important lens and essential perspective to discussions and decisions, offering support and constructive challenge as appropriate.

C&I has 21 Governor seats which are elected to from and by respective constituent members. Additionally, there are five appointed Governor positions which represent key stakeholder organisations. Together these 26 Governor seats form the Council of Governors (Council).

“What is the role of the Council of Governors?”

The Council is the body of people that advises the Board of the views of the membership and local community, comments on the development of strategic plans and act in an ambassadorial role to make sure the Trust meets its obligations.



The Council isn't responsible for the day-to-day management of the Trust. This responsibility is that of the Board of Directors (see section below). The role of the Council is, however, important.

Instead, it is responsible for holding the Trust to account by representing the interests of members and the local community and holding the Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board of Directors (Board). As a group, Governors bring a wealth of expertise, knowledge, experience and perspectives which inform and enrich discussions on relevant matters and help

contribute to the continued development of the Trust. Find out more about the responsibilities of Governors below.

At C&I, we see our Governors as “critical friends” because we come together with different perspectives to achieve the best possible outcomes for service users, staff and the local community whilst acting in the best interests of the Trust. This careful balancing act requires a combination of support and challenge whilst considering priorities, the resources available at C&I's disposal and the climate in which the Trust is operating within. The Council also keeps an eye on how the Trust is performing against key targets and standards.

“What is the role of the Board of Directors?”



The Board provides overall leadership to the Trust and is collectively accountable for all aspects of performance and management of the Trust's activities, including clinical and service quality, financial performance and governance. C&I's Board is made up of Executive and Non-Executive

Directors (NEDs). Each Board member brings with them a range of skills, knowledge and experience within their respective fields. They also exercise power and control on behalf of the Trust in line with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation and collectively set the vision, strategic direction and values of the Trust.

“What are the duties of Governors?”

Governor duties are set out in the [Trust's Constitution](#) and include:

- Representing the interests of members and the public, especially when making or endorsing important decisions and considering the strategic direction of the Trust.
- Holding NEDs to account for how well Board is managing the performance of the Trust.
- Appointing (and if appropriate removing) the Trust Chair and other NEDs and setting their remuneration and terms and conditions of appointment.
- Approving (or not) the appointment of the Chief Executive and the Trust's external auditors and any significant transactions, mergers and acquisitions.
- Receiving the Trust's Annual Report and Accounts and the external auditor's report to the Council at a general meeting.



There are a number of other duties which can be found in the [NHS Foundation Trust Code of Governance](#) and some duties that we can decide locally at Trust level.

“What does the role of a Governor look like in practice?”

To give you an idea of what the Governor role will look like in practice, please find below a list of some of the key things Governors will be required or encouraged to do or have an opportunity to get involved in:

- Governors will be required to attend and contribute to the Council of Governors meetings (held quarterly) and be encouraged to attend one or two Governor Working Groups (held quarterly) and/or Governor Committees depending on interests and any previous experience, skills and knowledge they may have.



[Currently, all meetings are being held virtually. There is a view to move to hybrid meetings and, at some point in the future, it's hoped that some Governor meetings or workshops will take place face-to-face, subject to government guidance around COVID-19]

- Governors will be expected to read papers in advance of meetings so they can participate more effectively and read and respond to emails that relate to the Governor role.

- Governors will need to participate in training and development events during induction but also on an ongoing basis in accordance with training and development needs.
- Governors should read the fortnightly Governor Newsletter which provides important updates and information.
- Governors will have the opportunity to attend Governor Open Meetings (held quarterly) with the Trust Chair, another NED and/or the Chief Executive and engage in occasional informal 'catch ups' with fellow Governors, for example ahead of Council meetings.
- Governors can do some networking with constituents and the wider membership and engage in social media activity to raise their profile as a Governor to better represent their constituent members and the public. They may also promote membership and governorship, and share non-confidential information about key discussions and decisions with members they represent.
- Governors will have the opportunity to accompany NEDs on service visits and attend public sessions of Trust Board meetings, which will help them learn more about the organisation and its services and assist them in discharging their duty of holding NEDs to account for the performance of the Trust Board.
- Governors can provide their perspectives on the Trust's strategic plans and priorities. This may be during co-production, consultations or periodic reviews

“How does the Board of Directors and Council of Governors work together?”

The Council and the Board work closely together. This working arrangement has recently been strengthened by aligning Governor Working Groups to Board Committees and introducing NED 'in focus' presentations at Council meetings.



The Trust Chair leads the Board and the Council and is a key link between the two. Council and Board members attend meetings together where they discuss important topics and receive strategic updates. The Council also feeds back on plans and priorities through various forums and endorses some important decisions through its meetings.

“What training and support is available?”



The role may sound a bit daunting but rest assured that Governors will receive all the necessary training and development support they need so they can undertake the Governor role more effectively. Governors will be offered and encouraged to attend relevant training and development opportunities which will be organised and paid for by the Trust.

As part of the induction, Governor's interests, skills and experience, and any training and development needs will be taken into account when considering which Governor Committees and/or Working Groups they would like to attend.

Meetings will also be arranged for Governors with key people including the Trust Chair, Lead Governor and Senior Independent Director. A 'buddying programme' is also in place where newer Governors are paired with a more experienced Governor to help them settle into the role and have a fellow Governor as a point of contact in addition to the Board Office.

“What are the different types of Governors?”

Elected Service User and Carer Governors

Elected Public Governors
(Camden, Islington and rest of London)

Elected Staff Governors

Appointed Governors
(local authorities, academy and voluntary sector)

There are four types of Governors that sit on the Council and they all share the same statutory duties towards their constituents. They each bring local knowledge and experience as well as their own perspectives. C&I's Council of Governors comprises:

- **Six Service User and Carer Governors:** people who have used, or carers for someone who has used, C&I's services within the past five years, and they are elected by and represent service user and carer members of the Trust. They bring a fundamental lens to discussions and decisions, particularly those relating to service delivery and provision.
- **Eleven Public Governors** who live in, and are elected by members of, one of C&I's local public constituencies – Camden, Islington and any other borough in the rest of London. Public Governors play a crucial role in providing a local perspective to strategic plans and priorities of the Trust.
- **Four Staff Governors** who are elected from and by the workforce. Most staff at C&I are members of the Trust and bring with them knowledge of widely held views and concerns, along with their professional knowledge and experience, to strategic discussions concerning staff and their wellbeing.
- **Five Appointed Governors** who are nominated by relevant pre-determined stakeholder partner organisations (local authorities, academic and voluntary sector). They each bring with them expertise from their respective areas which is extremely important, particularly given the direction of travel towards providing more integrated care with partners.

“What Governors can't do”

The Governor role is one of strategic planning and oversight, which relies on engaging with the NEDs, members of the Trust and the local community and understanding the Trust's vision and strategic priorities. This means that:



- Governors don't get involved in the day-to-day running of the Trust. This responsibility belongs to the Directors. Governors do, however, have influence on services by communicating to the Trust the views and needs of the local community.
- The Council can't overrule Board decisions because it's the Board that is responsible for the Trust. However, contributions of the Council are considered when the Board considers strategic changes.
- Governors don't inspect the Trust's services. It's the Care Quality Commission who is responsible for monitoring, inspecting and regulating our services. Governors may, however, be invited from time to time to go on accompanied service visits.
- Governors, in their Governor role, can't deal with service user complaints or advocate for individual service users, individual staff members or themselves or an associated person if they are receiving services from or employed by C&I. They can, however, direct people to the appropriate team, department or organisation.
- Governors don't act as representatives of the Trust to the media. They can, however, direct any queries to C&I's Communications department.
- Governors can't use their role to advance personal, political or other ideological messages.

“Who runs Governor Elections?”



The Trust normally commissions an independent electoral services provider to run its Governor Elections and uses the standard transferable vote system. C&I aims to ensure the following:

- Every eligible member has the opportunity to affect the result through their nomination and vote.
- All nominations and votes received within the timeframe are treated in a fair and consistent manner.
- No vote is wasted.

“Who can become a Governor?”

Governors can come from all walks of life and don't need special skills, knowledge or qualifications. That said, prospective Governor candidates need to be passionate about the NHS and mental health and want to represent their local community. It's also important that Governors have the necessary time to commit to the role. We anticipate that Governors will need to allow for an average of 1-2 days per month.



Governors should have some understanding of how organisations work and be able to work well with others as part of a wider team and contribute to strategic conversations. There will also be a need to support and challenge the Board and seek assurances, so it may be useful to have some skills that can help with this.

It's important that Governors work in a way that reflects C&I's cultural pillars which are: “We value each other; We are empowered; We keep things simple; We are connected”.

If you are thinking about standing for election, you will need to:

- Commit to working with us to continuously improve the quality of services that we provide to enable better outcomes for our service users and carers, staff and our local community.
- Attend the quarterly Council meetings and ideally one or two Governor Committees and/or Working Groups.
- Read reports and presentations to be able to make informed recommendations and decisions and ask questions in a clear, constructive and respectful manner.
- Actively listen and value the view, opinions and contributions of others.
- Put the needs of members, the local community and C&I above personal interests and understand that the Governor role is broad and evolving.
- Be willing to engage with constituents and the wider membership.
- Participate in induction and other training and development.
- Uphold the ‘Seven Principles of Public Life’, which are: selflessness; integrity objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership.
- Act with integrity at all times and adhere to the Trust's Code of Conduct for Governors and other relevant Trust policies.

“Who can't become a Governor?”



There are specific requirements that preclude some individuals from becoming a Governor. These will be identified in the Declaration of Eligibility section of the nomination form and can be found in the [Trust's Constitution](#) in Annex 6.

“What is the term of office for a Governor?”

Governors are elected or appointed for a three-year term and can seek re-election or re-appointment at the end of their term up to a maximum of nine years or if they forfeit their eligibility.



“Are Governors paid and can they claim expenses?”



The Governor role is a voluntary one that is unpaid. Governors can claim reasonable expenses an allowance of up to £30 per annum for ad-hoc costs (e.g. to support a Governor buddying arrangement, cover admin costs such as telephone usage, home printing and postage costs). This allowance is established to assist Governors with any day-to-day costs they may incur in undertaking their role and does not require any receipts. It can only be claimed once annually for each full year of tenure. Governors can also claim travel expenses in line with the Governor Expenses and Payment Policy. Staff Governors are also entitled to time off to attend to their Governor duties.

“How does the election work?”

All eligible members will receive notice of the election taking place in their constituency inviting them to nominate themselves with instructions on how to do so. This will be sent by the independent electoral services provider to members via email if one has been provided or by post.



Eligible members wishing to nominate themselves will be asked to submit a nomination statement accompanied by a photo and asked to declare their eligibility and any interests. The Trust and the independent electoral services provider must remain objective throughout the process and can therefore not help candidates with preparing their nomination statement. Nomination statements and photos will be published as received after the close of nominations.

If more nominations are received than the number of seats that are being elected to, the election will move into the voting phase where members will be invited to view the nomination statements and vote for candidates within their constituency. In the event nominations received are equal to or less than the number of seats being elected to, eligible nominees will be automatically elected.



HOW TO STAND IN THE NEXT GOVERNOR ELECTIONS

“I want to stand as a Governor. What do I need to do and when?”



The next planned round of Governor Elections will be held in 2022 where we will be electing to the following:

- Two (2) seats for the Service User and Carer constituency.
- One (1) seat for the Camden Public constituency.
- One (1) seat for the Islington Public constituency.
- One (1) seat for the Rest of London Public constituency.
- Two (2) seats for the Staff constituency.

Although the timeline for the 2022 Governor Elections is yet to be confirmed, we expect the nominations phase to open by mid-June. At that point you will have the opportunity to complete and submit your nomination.

If you haven't already done so, make sure you register as a member of the Trust to stand and vote in the Governor Elections (you can do this quickly and easily by [clicking here](#) to access our online membership form which is available via our website). This will also ensure you are notified when the elections get underway. If you are already a member of C&I, please remember to notify trust.secretary@candi.nhs.uk if your contact details have changed.

“What should I do if I have any questions?”



If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact our Corporate Affairs Office:

- Email: trust.secretary@candi.nhs.uk.
- Telephone: 020 3317 7017 or 020 3317 7112.

Connect with us on social media so you can keep up to date with what's going on at C&I



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