

# Membership matters

## Foundation Trust Members Newsletter - May 2025

News and updates from Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (WHH).

### In this issue:

- Welcome from your lead governor
- Better Care Together
- Meet your governor
- The difference a meeting can make
- WHH Charity
- Events
- Work at WHH
- Get involved

### Welcome

Welcome to our summer newsletter! This edition focuses on the vital role governors play in supporting and challenging our Trust.

Governors attend a range of board and committee meetings to fulfil two key statutory responsibilities. Firstly, we hold the Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) to account by observing how they challenge and seek assurance from the executive teams. This helps ensure that systems and processes are in place, effective, and compliant with national standards.

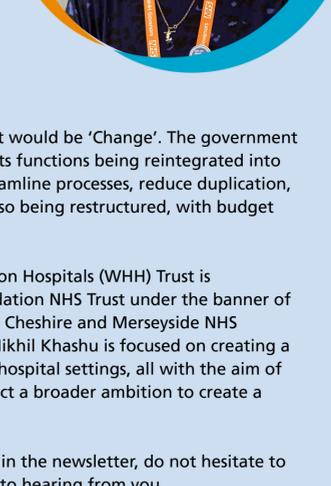
Secondly, we represent the interests of members and the public. By attending various meetings, we ensure that patient and community voices are central to discussions and decision-making.

If I had to sum up the current NHS landscape in one word, it would be 'Change'. The government has announced the abolition of NHS England (NHSE), with its functions being reintegrated into the Department of Health and Social Care. This aims to streamline processes, reduce duplication, and improve efficiency. Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) are also being restructured, with budget cuts leading to significant workforce reductions.

Locally, we're seeing big changes too. Warrington and Halton Hospitals (WHH) Trust is integrating with Bridgewater Community Healthcare Foundation NHS Trust under the banner of 'Better Care Together' and we will have a new name 'North Cheshire and Merseyside NHS Foundation Trust' in April 2027. Our joint Chief Executive, Nikhil Khashu is focused on creating a joined-up model of care that spans home, community, and hospital settings, all with the aim of improving outcomes for patients. These developments reflect a broader ambition to create a more sustainable, patient-focused NHS for the future.

If you have any suggestions that you would like us to cover in the newsletter, do not hesitate to get in touch on [whh.foundation@nhs.net](mailto:whh.foundation@nhs.net). We look forward to hearing from you.

**Sue Fitzpatrick**  
Lead Governor, Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



### Better Care Together

Our plans to integrate Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals (WHH) and Bridgewater Community Healthcare (BCH) are progressing well, and we continue to work towards becoming one single organisation in April 2027, subject to approvals.

Earlier this year we asked for your views on the future name of our partnership. The partnership name reflects our organisations working increasingly closer and symbolises our creation of something new as we look to become an integrated provider of community and hospital services. After careful consideration of feedback, it was agreed by our two Boards that our partnership name will be 'North Cheshire and Mersey Healthcare Partnership'.

The partnership name does not replace our two existing organisational identities, and will only be used in limited circumstances, for example in our joint communications channels and in meetings where we have joint governance arrangements in place.

Our plan is for this to evolve into our future organisational name in April 2027 when we aim to become 'North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust', subject to the relevant approvals required. Our site names, which our patients and communities are most familiar with, remain unchanged (e.g. Warrington Hospital, Halton Hospital, Halton Health Hub etc).

We are also pleased to share that Nikhil Khashu has been appointed as substantive Chief Executive for both WHH and BCH, following his interim appointment in November 2024. We know that our two organisations are stronger and better together, and these developments represent an important step as we continue our journey to become an integrated provider of high quality acute and community services.

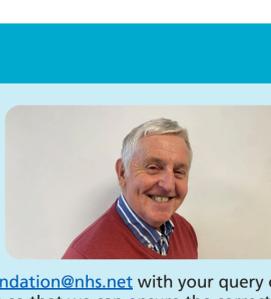
For more information on the Better Care Together programme please visit [Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Trust - Better Care Together](#)

### News from the Trust

News and updates from the Trust are available to view on the [latest news pages](#) on our website.

#### Living Well Warrington – now live!

The new Living Well Warrington website is a one-stop shop connecting people, communities and services across Warrington. The health and wellbeing website is a collaboration between the local NHS, council and partner organisations across the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector. [Read more.](#)



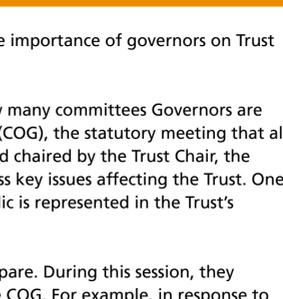
The website brings together information from a range of existing online resources, following the closure of MyLifeWarrington earlier this month.

[Visit the Living Well Warrington website.](#)

### Hello from your governor

#### Alan Davies

Alan is one of our new governors, who joined the Trust in December 2024, as governor for Warrington and Halton. We caught up with him to find out more about why he wanted to become a governor.



[Read more](#) from Alan.

If you want to contact your governors, please email [whh.foundation@nhs.net](mailto:whh.foundation@nhs.net) with your query or a request for them to contact you, include your location so that we can ensure the correct governor gets in touch with you.

You can also call us on 01925 662 139.

[Find out more about your local governors.](#)

### The difference a meeting can make

Sue Fitzpatrick, our lead governor gives us an insight into the importance of governors on Trust committees.

It wasn't until I sat down to write this that I realised just how many committees Governors are involved in. At the heart of it all is the Council of Governors (COG), the statutory meeting that all governors are required to attend. Held every two months and chaired by the Trust Chair, the COG brings together governors and board members to discuss key issues affecting the Trust. One of its most crucial functions is to ensure the voice of the public is represented in the Trust's strategic direction.

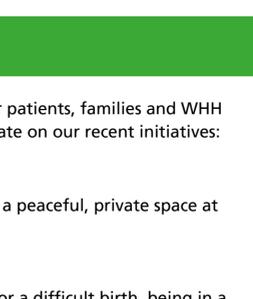
Before each COG meeting, governors meet separately to prepare. During this session, they discuss public queries and formulate questions to raise at the COG. For example, in response to public interest following a CEO article in the Warrington Guardian, a question was raised about the potential for a walk-in centre in Warrington. The Board confirmed that various options for an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) are being explored, estimating that 120 residents a day could benefit. WHH continues to prioritise the UTC and seeks funding, with governors committed to monitoring progress.

The Governor Engagement Group (GEG) is another key forum where governors share feedback gathered from conversations with patients and the public. They also hear verbal reports from Trust groups and committees and identify opportunities to engage with the wider community. In terms of oversight, governors observe several Board-level committees, including the Audit Committee, Financial Sustainability Committee (FSC), Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), and Strategic People Committee (SPC). These are chaired by Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) and allow for deeper scrutiny of Trust functions than the full Board can accommodate. While governors don't participate in these committees, they observe proceedings and report back to the COG to ensure proper conduct and effectiveness.

Governors also attend the Patient Experience & Inclusion and Community Services (PE&ICS) committee, where feedback from observation visits is reviewed. For instance, following complaints from patients about accessing the Patient, Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) team, PALS representatives were invited to the next GEG to explain their services and discuss improvements. Additional work is underway to improve visibility, opening hours, and staffing support, including potential use of volunteers. Other committees where governors contribute include the Nutrition and Hydration Steering Committee, which promotes best practice and ensures standards like the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) are met. The Transport Committee, prompted by patient feedback, has worked on improving shuttle bus information and scheduling.

Governors also bring the patient voice to diverse groups such as First Impressions, Digital, Dementia and Delirium, Armed Forces, the New Hospital Strategy Group, and Way Finders. Their role is to offer feedback from the public's perspective.

Participation in the Expert by Experience (EbyE) programme has enabled governors to directly shape outcomes. Notable examples include input into the Bath Street breast clinic – ensuring natural light, accessible changing rooms, and appropriate lift sizes – and testing the accessibility of the new website. Through user testing and counting clicks needed to access essential information, governors have helped make the site more user-friendly and compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.



Governors play a vital role in representing the public, ensuring their views are heard, and making a tangible impact across the Trust.

### WHH Charity

At WHH Charity, we're proud of the difference we're making for patients, families and WHH colleagues, all thanks to our generous supporters. Here's an update on our recent initiatives:

#### Help us build the Willow Tree Hub

WHH Charity is raising £200,000 to create the Willow Tree Hub – a peaceful, private space at Warrington Hospital for families facing the loss of a baby.

#### Why the Willow Tree Hub is needed

Every pregnancy is different. For families dealing with baby loss or a difficult birth, being in a busy hospital can make an already heartbreaking time even harder.

Some parents hear life-changing news in rooms where they can also hear babies crying. Coming back for follow-up care can be distressing and bring back painful memories.

The Willow Tree Hub will offer families a calm, private place to grieve, reflect, and get the emotional support they need.

#### Extra care for families

The hub will also house a Rainbow Clinic – offering specialist support to parents who are pregnant again after a loss.

#### A space designed for peace and support

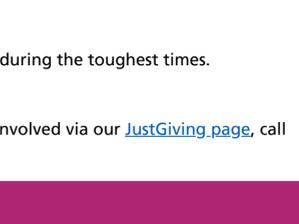
Located near the Maternity Department, the hub will feature:

- A private room for counselling and support
- A tranquil remembrance garden

The name Willow Tree stands for strength, love, and hope during the toughest times.

#### How you can help

Your support can make this space a reality. Donate or get involved via our [JustGiving page](#), call 01925 662666, or email [whh.charity@nhs.net](mailto:whh.charity@nhs.net).



### WHH in the community

#### Events

##### International Clinical Trials Day – 20 May 2025

Join the Research, Development and Innovation Team at our annual International Clinical Trials Day event and celebrate the accomplishments of clinical research professionals in public health / medicine and their efforts in clinical trials. Stands will be held from 10am to 2pm at Warrington Hospital, on Appleton corridor.

##### Warrington Armed Forces Day – 28 June 2025

Take part in a family fun day with military vehicle displays, Armed Forces Rugby League games and information stands, 10am to 6pm at Crossfield's Rugby Club, Warrington, WA5 1XU.



##### Disability Awareness Day (DAD) – 13 July 2025

Hosted by Warrington Disability Partnership, DAD is an annual free fun day and pan-disability event with hundreds of exhibitors and events. To support visitor accessibility the event includes free buses, wheelchair loan, park and ride facilities and mobility scooter hire available throughout the day. Join in from 10am to 4.30pm at Walton Hall and Gardens, Higher Walton, WA4 6SN.

For more information or to support Team WHH at these events, please contact [whh.engagement@nhs.net](mailto:whh.engagement@nhs.net)

#### Work at WHH

If you are interested in a role in healthcare and with us, check out our latest vacancies.

[Click here to view our current vacancies.](#)

#### Get involved

Support vital research work at WHH by signing up to take part in clinical research as part of the Pathway to Research programme.

[Find out more.](#)

Experts by Experience (EbyEs) are volunteers with lived experience, who help us to understand how it feels to either access services, or to care for someone who does.

Signing up takes just a minute or two. Just fill in the form at [here](#) and we'll be in touch.

For more information, please email [whh.engagement@nhs.net](mailto:whh.engagement@nhs.net)

#### Your governors

For more information on the role of governors at WHH, from some of our current governors, please watch our [YouTube video](#).

For more information on Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust visit [www.whh.nhs.uk](http://www.whh.nhs.uk)



Working Together



Excellence



Inclusive



Kind



Embracing Change