

Membership matters

Foundation Trust Members Newsletter - August 2025

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

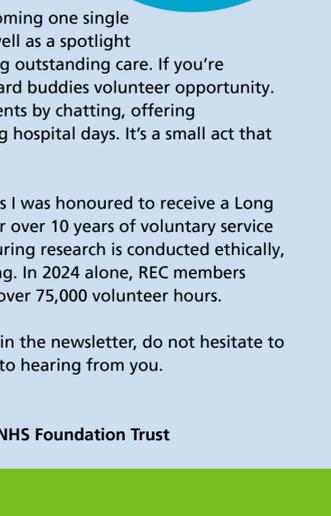
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Welcome

In this issue we bid a fond farewell to Anne Robinson, our dedicated governor of nine years. Anne has made a lasting impact through her work across numerous committees, always bringing insight, compassion, and a wealth of experience. Her commitment and contribution will be deeply missed by all who had the pleasure of working with her.

Anne has never been one to shy away from getting involved and was consistently the first to volunteer for testing new systems and services. Her input as an Expert by Experience (EbyE) has been invaluable, and we hope she will continue in this role moving forward. I've had the joy of working alongside Anne at many events, including Disability Awareness Day and Warrington Mela, and we often joked that we enjoyed it more than the people we were talking to!



We bring you exciting updates on our journey towards becoming one single organisation with Bridgewater Community Healthcare, as well as a spotlight on Halton Health Hub, which is leading the way in delivering outstanding care. If you're interested in getting involved, we highlight our amazing ward buddies volunteer opportunity. These roles offer a chance to make a real difference to patients by chatting, offering companionship, and helping break up the monotony of long hospital days. It's a small act that has a big impact.

In June, I experienced a proud moment for me personally, as I was honoured to receive a Long Service Award from the Health Research Authority (HRA) for over 10 years of voluntary service on a Research Ethics Committee (REC). RECs are vital to ensuring research is conducted ethically, safely, and with respect for participants' rights and wellbeing. In 2024 alone, REC members reviewed almost 4,000 new research applications and gave over 75,000 volunteer hours.

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 We look forward to hearing from you.

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

Become a governor

Be part of something new! Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals are joining forces with Bridgewater Community Healthcare to improve healthcare services for our communities. Join us on the journey to integrate community and hospital services.

Our governor elections will open in September 2025 and there is a great opportunity to get involved and be part of our council of governors.

In our upcoming elections we will have the following public governor vacancies:

- **Public:** Warrington and Halton - 4 vacancies
- **Public:** Rest of England - 1 vacancy

If you would like to find out more about being a governor, please [visit our website](#), which will be updated ahead of the opening for nominations. Please look out for our elections emails, which will provide you with plenty of information on the role and how to nominate yourself.

The timetable for our 2025 elections:

- **Thursday 11 September** – nominations open
- **Thursday 9 October** – nominations deadline
- **Tuesday 25 November** – close of election
- **Wednesday 26 November** – declaration of results

Governors will again be hosting a prospective governors information stand prior to our Annual Members Meeting (Wednesday 1 October 2025), please join us for a cup of tea and a chat from 3.30pm about what is involved in being an NHS foundation trust governor. Whether you decide to stand for election or not, please use your vote to make sure your elected council has the best possible support and representation from public members of the Trust.

Better Care Together

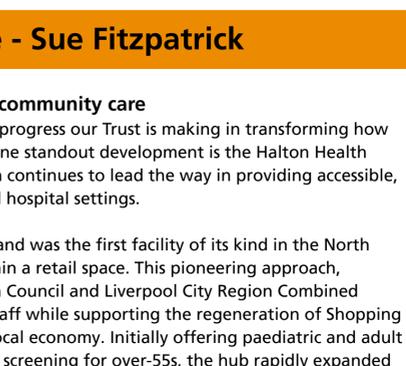
Developing continuity of care

Our integration to bring community and hospital services together is an exciting opportunity to transform our services and pathways for the benefit of our patients, staff and communities.

Across Warrington, we have been working hard to transform the continuity of care offered by our maternity and 0-19 services. By strengthening collaboration across our teams, we are able to offer a service that enhances care for children and families at each stage of the maternity journey.

We have now established strong links between Bridgewater Community Healthcare's Health Visiting Service and Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospital's Team River to deliver an enhanced pathway, offering targeted support to women with additional vulnerabilities. Teams are also working closely from locations such as the Living Well Hub in Warrington, where complementary services from both organisations are offered to parents. This includes maternity appointments, baby weighing and infant feeding support.

This integrated model supports teams to identify issues earlier, helping to reduce health inequalities, enable targeted support to be offered sooner, and deliver better outcomes for children and parents alike.



For more information on the Better Care Together programme, please [visit the dedicated webpage](#).

Goodbye from your governor

Anne Robinson

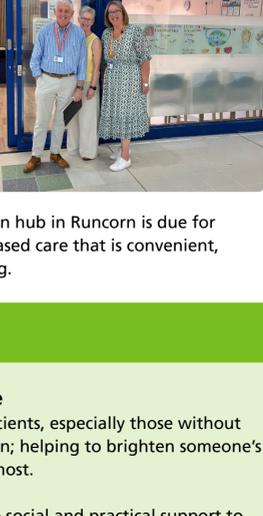
After nine years of dedicated service as a public governor at the hospitals, Anne reflects on her journey, from what first inspired her to get involved, to the proudest moments, biggest challenges, and even a few humorous mix-ups along the way.

[Read more](#) from Anne.

If you want to contact your governors, please email whh.foundation@nhs.net with your query or with 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 662139.

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



A governor's perspective - Sue Fitzpatrick

Halton Health Hub leading the way in community care

I've been fortunate to observe the incredible progress our Trust is making in transforming how healthcare is delivered to our communities. One standout development is the Halton Health Hub, located in Runcorn Shopping City, which continues to lead the way in providing accessible, patient-friendly services outside of traditional hospital settings.

The hub opened its doors in November 2022 and was the first facility of its kind in the North West, offering NHS outpatient care from within a retail space. This pioneering approach, delivered in partnership with Halton Borough Council and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, improves access for patients and staff while supporting the regeneration of Shopping City, which is a win for both health and the local economy. Initially offering paediatric and adult optometry / orthoptics, dietetics, and hearing screening for over-55s, the hub rapidly expanded to include musculoskeletal therapies, services from Halton's public health team and a wellbeing service run by a local community interest company.

The second phase of development at the hub began in 2023 as part of a £16 million investment. This led to the opening of the Warrington and Halton Diagnostics Centre (WHDC) in February 2024. It is the first of its kind in Cheshire and Merseyside, and one of only a few government-funded community diagnostic centres to be located in a shopping centre nationally. It provides diagnostic services such as scans, ultrasound, blood tests, and audiology.

During a recent governor observation visit, I was particularly struck by the operational Artificial Intelligence (AI) dermatology service. The DERM system, a teledermatology innovation, helps triage suspected skin cancer cases. It reduces delays, supports early diagnosis, and frees up clinical time for complex cases. We have also introduced a new paediatric asthma service, which is the first of its kind in our area.

As of April 2025, more than 16,000 patients have been treated at the hub. This demonstrates our commitment to bringing specialist care into the heart of the community.



Thanks to continued investment, the next phase of the WHDC opened in June 2025 at the Captain Sir Thomas Moore Building to provide CT and MRI facilities. Similarly, our Warrington town centre Living Well Hub has welcomed more than 25,000 visitors since opening in March 2024, and a health and education hub in Runcorn is due for completion in 2025. As a Trust, we are embracing community-based care that is convenient, compassionate, close to home and even comes with free parking.

WHH volunteering

Become a ward buddy – make a meaningful difference

Hospital stays can be long, isolating, and daunting for many patients, especially those without regular visitors. That's where our ward buddy volunteers come in; helping to brighten someone's day with a smile, a chat or simply being there when it matters most.

We're looking for compassionate, reliable volunteers to provide social and practical support to patients during their stay. As a ward buddy, you'll play a vital role in improving the patient experience from helping to encourage therapy activities such as puzzles or cognitive games, to offering companionship and helping patients feel more connected and supported.

Whether it's reading poetry to someone waiting for a consultation, helping to serve meals and refreshments, or simply offering a listening ear, your presence will make a difference. You'll also help by relaying messages to busy nursing staff, supporting falls prevention through engagement, and helping patients understand the ward environment and their care journey.

Key volunteer duties include:

- visiting and chatting with patients who may be feeling lonely
- supporting patients with simple activities or puzzles
- helping patients at mealtimes and with refreshments
- escorting visitors and patients where appropriate
- assisting with light tasks such as making beds or tidying storage areas
- supporting patients while they wait for discharge or transport
- befriending and providing company to patients in side rooms or with cognitive impairments
- helping ensure patients' comfort and wellbeing throughout the day

This is a rewarding role for anyone who enjoys helping others, meeting new people, and making a real impact within our hospital community.

Could you be the reason someone smiles today? If you're interested in becoming a ward buddy, more information, [visit our volunteers website](#) and search 'buddy'.

Laura, a current ward buddy, tells us about the difference she makes in the role: "Volunteering on the ward has been such a special experience. I've built amazing connections, like with one lady who I thought would never go home and when I returned after a week off to find she had was truly heart warming. Sitting with a palliative care patient through her journey was also deeply meaningful. When on the ward I help with meals, beds, and chatting with patients. I'm passionate about giving back after spending time in hospital myself as a child. My bubbly nature and empathy make a difference, and I now feel honoured to be starting a paid role on the ward I volunteered on. I'm so proud to represent the NHS!"

WHH in the community

Events

Warrington Mela – 31 August 2025
Join us at the annual partnership event supporting cultural diversity and community inclusion within Warrington.

Queen's Gardens, Palmyra Square, Warrington, WA1 1JN from 11am to 4pm.

For more information on these events visit the WHH website or contact whh.engagement@nhs.net

News and WHH

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

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

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



Working Together



Excellence



Inclusive



Kind



Embracing Change