

Gloucestershire Hospitals



NHS Foundation Trust

**Membership
Strategy**

2014 — 2016

Table of contents

1. What does membership mean to us?	4
2. Our membership objectives for 2014-2016	5
3. Providing more opportunities for member engagement	6
4. Enhancing and diversifying our membership communication channels	8
5. Maintaining our existing membership base	10
6. Developing a more representative membership	11

1. What does membership mean to us?

As one of the first Foundation Trusts in the country, Gloucestershire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is committed to being a successful membership organisation and strengthening its links with the local community.

As a Foundation Trust, we are accountable to local people who can become members and governors. Members are represented by a Council of Governors comprising elected public and staff members together with representatives of partner organisations, local authorities and Commissioners in the local community.

A representative and engaged membership will help our Trust to continue to maximise its potential as a Foundation Trust and is an important objective for the Council of Governors.

This strategy builds on the success of membership management to date and outlines the Trust's vision for membership over the period 2014-2016.

It sets out the methods that will be used to identify and build an effective, responsive and representative membership body that will assist in ensuring that our Trust is fit for its future in the changing NHS environment.

This strategy was informed by the results of workshop (March 2014) attended by a number of Governors and Trust staff. It also draws on the FT Code of Governance and best practice identified nationally.

This strategy was approved by our Council of Governors in May 2014 and confirms our objectives for the next two years for:

- Improving member engagement
- Communicating better with members
- Maintaining our membership base
- Diversifying our membership

We have made great strides with recruitment in recent years. However, we have yet to reach our full potential in working with members.

As a result, the overall ambition for the next two years is to focus our energy and resources into increasing the active engagement with existing members, both public and staff, so that membership is more meaningful.

2. Our membership objectives for 2014-2016

2.1 Provide more opportunities for member engagement.

Our primary aim over the next two years is to build on the work to date and engage more deeply and broadly with a larger proportion of our membership, such that we can broaden their knowledge of the work of the Trust and learn from them more effectively.

2.2 Enhance and diversify our membership communication channels, with a particular emphasis on enabling two way dialogue.

Our particular focus in this area will be sharpening our digital offer, such that we take advantage of the opportunities that this presents for two way engagement and increased visibility of the work of Governors and members.

2.3 Maintain our existing membership base, focusing on retention and deeper engagement rather than growth.

Our objective for 2014-16 is to maintain the current size of our membership and improve the systems that support membership management.

2.4 Develop a more representative membership

While our overall ambition is not significantly to grow our membership base, we will undertake targeted activities to increase representation amongst members in some defined areas.

3. Providing more opportunities for member engagement

In 2014-2016 our objectives will focus on:

- Stratifying the level of member involvement – offering members the chance to engage in the way that they wish
- Increasing opportunities for member engagement – through providing more opportunities to take part in a range of ways
- Providing opportunities for staff to become more actively engaged as members
- Providing a more focused role for Governors within member engagement

3.1 Member stratification

We recognise that members have different wishes about the extent of their engagement. However, we know that we currently only engage with less than 1% of our members in a meaningful way.

One of our strategic objectives for 2014/15 is to include service users more actively in service review and redesign. We think that membership is a vital resource in finding out about the services we provide and we are actively seeking members with specific current and relevant experience to participate in service redesign and review.

We also plan to develop an explicit approach that has clear levels of engagement, which will help direct our internal management more effectively and efficiently. These two levels are “in touch” and “involved”.

“In-touch”

- Receive a regular newsletter on current Trust membership issues and developments
- Receive notification of public Council of Governor meetings and Trust public meetings including Annual General Meeting
- Vote in Governor elections and stand for election to the Council of Governors

“Involved” (in addition to above):

- Attend membership events, seminars and tours
- Participate in surveys/questionnaires/consultations about our services
- Participate in focus/discussion/advisory groups
- Become a volunteer

3.2 Increasing opportunities for member engagement

We want to make our programme of events more closely anchored to our strategic objectives and use them to highlight the work that the Trust is doing. We will also use a mixture of approaches and formats and offer an enhanced opportunity for members to network with each other. We will also consider whether this includes more locally based events in 2015/16.

The outline programme of events for 2014/15 is set out in Appendix 1.

3.3 Providing opportunities for staff to become more actively engaged as members

We will encourage our staff and volunteers to value their membership and to empower them to take on a more active role in involving themselves in membership activities.

We will actively treat all staff and volunteers as members unless they choose to opt out. They will receive the same communications and opportunities to be involved. From 2014 all staff inductions will include a briefing on membership.



3.4 Providing a more focused role for Governors within member engagement

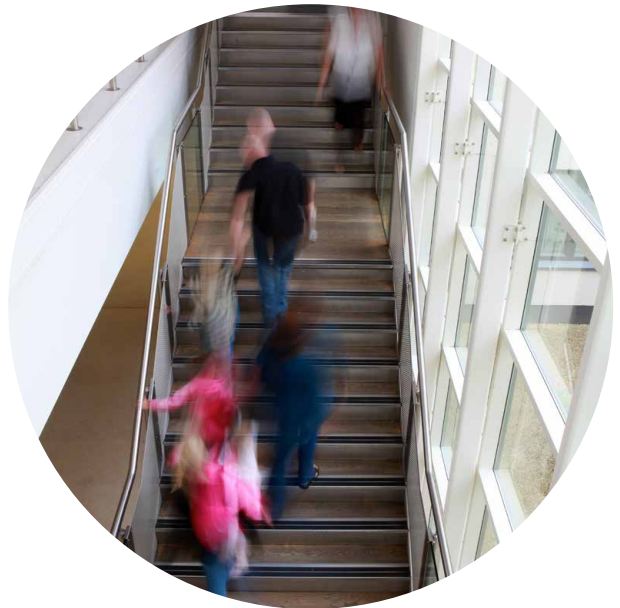
Governors are an essential element of membership recruitment, communication and engagement.

Their role is to provide practical support in the membership programme and over the coming years we will work with them to actively encourage dialogue with constituents and enhance their role in recruitment and engagement.

We will do this by working with Governors to agree a programme of activity which will include:

- Member Governor area on website
- Attendance at trust events where there is a membership recruitment / engagement opportunity

We will also explore other ideas raised by the Governors including drop in events and attendance at community events where trust issues/membership are raised.



4. Enhancing and diversifying our membership communication channels

In 2014-2016, our objectives will focus on:

- Developing our digital communications as the primary source of communication
- Refreshing our use of printed materials
- Raising awareness of membership
- Develop a "Know your Governor" graphic section of the website with biography and details of constituency/group represented
- Reviewing our current quarterly print publication "Membership Involve" with a view to moving it onto digital format

4.1 Developing our digital communications

- Refresh and upgrading the membership area of the website with a particular focus on two-way communication by incorporating an online calendar of events and booking form
- Enhanced content and visual presentation of the website including a dedicated membership area on internet and membership area on intranet for staff
- Develop and launch an online newsletter (e-bulletin) as the principle method of communicating with members and keeping them informed
- Proactively using social media to promote the work of members and govern increasing awareness and publicising events

4.2 Refresh our use of printed literature

- Reviewing and refreshing all corporate membership promotional materials including leaflets, posters and evaluation forms

4.3 Raise awareness of membership

- Showcasing the benefits of membership more prominently across all our communication channels
- Strategically bolting membership and membership recruitment onto other key corporate events (such as Extraordinary Everyday, the Trust's annual public open day as part of the Science Festival in June and NHS Equality and Diversity Awareness week in May) and to ensure membership leaflets are available across trust sites and in our mobile service eg Mobile Chemotherapy Unit
- Developing proactive opportunities to raise awareness of membership through the press and media



5. Maintaining our existing membership base, focusing on retention and deeper engagement rather than growth

In 2014-16, our objectives will focus on:

- Broadly retaining our existing membership volume (but noting the wish to diversify our base as set out in Section 6)
- Improving our systems for managing membership

5.1 Retain our existing membership volume

Our present membership is relatively large and comprises approximately 20,890 members made up of the following constituents:

Constituent	Number, January 2014
Public	11,890
Patient (out of county)	800
Staff (all groups)	8200
TOTAL	20,890

This volume of members is in line with national benchmarks and so our focus is not on growth but instead on improving engagement and, over time, diversifying our membership base.

5.2 Improve our systems for managing membership

We will do this through:

- The development of a new member database based on a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) model. This is an enabling step for our objectives for two way dialogue and enhanced member involvement
- We will offer members the chance to opt in to two levels of involvement as set out in Section 4.
- We will undertake a survey of members in 2015 to review progress.

6. Developing a more representative membership

Whilst we will continue to welcome new members from all areas, in 2014 – 16 our objectives will focus on improving membership representation from the following areas:

- Young people aged under 16 years – this may include reducing the age limit at which people can become (non-voting) members from 16 years currently to 11 years of age
- Working age adults between 25-49 years of age and BME groups

should help raise general awareness but we know that face to face recruitment is the best way to address the current imbalance. We will also explore using existing channels used by these potential members more actively.

6.1 Young people under 16 years

In comparison to the county demographics our membership remains under-represented in younger age groups.

Our current minimum membership age is 16 years. There is no nationally set minimum and many Trusts are now inviting members from aged 11 and up, in recognition that many of their services affect young people.

We will explore lowering our age limit and membership and what systems we will need in place to support this (including our use of communications channels).

6.2 Working age adults and minority ethnic groups

Despite targeted recruitment campaigns, we are under represented amongst working age adults and people from BME groups.

Increased visibility of membership as a whole



Our Membership Strategy forms part of a larger range of Trust documents for 2013/14.

To read any of these documents visit www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk

