

MICHELLE WIGGINS

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO VOLUNTEER TO BECOME AN NHS GOVERNOR?

I saw the opportunity to become a governor and I wanted to support positive changes, engage with the community and 'make a difference' within Mental Health and Learning Disability Services in Lincolnshire.

Following a complaint I had made to my trust, I was encouraged to apply to become a governor as it was suggested that if I join the council of governors I could help support both sides of the argument and actually help to actively listen to people's views and bring about change.

WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND MOST REWARDING ABOUT THE ROLE?

I enjoy all the parts of the role but the rewarding aspect is when I hear positive comments and feedback about the trust's services. Changes are made where they are needed and the focus is not just on the patient but on the family as well.

I always remember the feedback from one mother whose daughter received care from our Child and Family Service. The mother was going out of her way to thank us for the care that her daughter had received. The mother said to me: *"not only did the service provided save my daughter's life, it saved mine as well"*. In other words it's not just the medical model but the holistic approach that matters in care.

HOW DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE MADE AN IMPACT AS AN NHS GOVERNOR?

I have helped facilitate changes within LPFT which has changed the way it's worked due to the influence of the council of governors.

For example board papers have been considerably improved over the years due to the council of governors' request for easier reading including more visual aids. Simple changes of colour and adding acronym busters to the end of reports for better comprehension, empowers governors to understand important information.

An initiative that comes to mind has been determined by the council of governors is the creation of the Managed Care Network in response to day services being cut. Governors were concerned about the provision of services, and the Managed Care Network helped with additional provision of care to meet this need.

LPFT have supported us as governors in taking up roles as critical friends within our organisation and advocates that promote open and honest transparency.

Concerns are raised by governors and dealt with. It's not just a tick box exercise.