KAREN BRAYSHER

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO VOLUNTEER TO BECOME AN NHS GOVERNOR?

My inspiration to be a governor, was dissatisfaction at having to change my psychiatrist through 'red tape' to a new clinician of whom I could not understand and had not formed a working relationship with. After MIND successfully campaigned on my behalf the original arrangement was restored. I also noticed in my work as a community hairdresser I was coming into contact with people soldiering on alone in the community with mental health, learning difficulties and substance misuse problems. I felt a 'calling' to help.

I feel governorship that includes service users, who bring lived experience, help to make absolutely sure, high standards are met and delivered, which is key to success.

WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND MOST REWARDING ABOUT THE ROLE?

Seeing services improve and becoming more transparent. It has been great to be a voice of the service user for Brighton and Hove since 2009.

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

- Waiting list breaches have disappeared in my constituency after successful campaigning.
- Service Users applicable now receive their care plans and copy GP letters.
- Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust now have a dedicated charity arm called 'Heads On' helping to fund important recovery items for service users/staff not covered by the NHS. Funding of research. I campaigned for the recruitment of a 'charity fundraiser and team' in the 5 years attending the charity committee.
- Service users now can enjoy the Trusts membership publication 'Membership Matters' which features articles of lived experience. As Chair of the Membership Committee I also led a governor campaign to visit services and write articles.
- Having brought to the attention of the NHS a need for further research into 'Post-menopausal post abortion trauma' a research position paper has now been finalised.
- A much needed 'Role Model'. I researched and found an inspirational local pioneer psychiatrist Dr Helen Boyle, which now puts Brighton and Hove on the map of mental health history. This knowledge also serves as an inspiration to young clinicians, after the successful nomination for a commemorative blue plaque and information panel on and in Aldrington House in Hove.