

Virtual Governor Workshops 2021

After a successful series of online workshops in July 2020, the Governor Support team hosted a further three sessions, on 18 January, 19 January, and 1 February 2021. Over the period, we welcomed a total of 271 governors from 86 Foundation Trusts, with 97% of attendees recommending the event to other governors.

Each session included an update from the GovernWell lead, who provided highlights of the current governor support work, dates for future training sessions, and an update on Governor Advisory Committee (GAC) election. All open courses are now on our website [here](#) up until July 2021. This was followed by a policy update focussing on the current issues for trusts, topical issues for governors during the COVID-19 period and offered an opportunity for governors to ask questions to our policy team.

Building on our successful Governor Focus Conference in early November 2020, we opened the opportunity for trusts to showcase the exciting work their Council of Governors (CoG) are doing. We were delighted to include four trusts' examples over the three sessions, from Cumbria, Northumbria, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, and Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The [showcases](#) shared good practice examples such as a project on board biographies, sharing a successful Public and Patient Involvement strategy, the development of a Council of Governors team charter, and exploring how to engage more young members.

The final section of the workshop was to discuss and reflect on issues with fellow governors in smaller groups. Feedback shows that governors welcomed the opportunity to meet other governors from across the country.

Some noteworthy comments from across the three sessions:

"I've attended a LOT of online training and meetings in the past year, and this was a highlight for me. It was so well put together and delivered, and completely overturned my expectations of NHS Providers, and I felt quite inspired by the end of it. Very well done" – Suzanne Harris, Public governor, Royal University Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, attended 19 January.

"It was one of the most useful sessions I have attended as a new governor. The breakout rooms are very helpful as it allows more personal input as well" – Jane Dent, Public governor, Derbyshire Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, attended 1 February.

"You obviously don't get the same shared experience online to the same extent as being a live event, but they were very good and every single Governor contributed worthwhile experiences in my breakout" – Brian Lumsden, Public governor, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, attended 18 January.

Are you doing something interesting within your trust that you'd like to share? We're always on the lookout for showcase examples and would be more than happy to have an informal conversation, please click [here](#) to contact us. Our Governor Focus Conference is due to take place virtually week commencing Monday 5 July 2021, with more details being released in due course. We also hope to run a further series of virtual governor workshops in the autumn, and we'll be sure to let you know once these has been confirmed.