

Play Your Part! Becoming an NHS Foundation Trust



Help us build a strong future for your local mental health trust

Let's talk about it!

Foundation Trust Engagement - October to December 2007

Together, making a difference for mental wellbeing

Different formats

If you need this document in a different format or a different language, please ask us.

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About AWP

Mental health problems are very common in our society. Around 1 in 4 people experience a mental health problem during the course of a year. Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP) is one of the largest mental health trusts in the country, serving a population of more than 1.6 million people in both urban and rural areas across 2,200 square miles.

We provide mental health services to adults and older people in Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire. We work with children, families and young people in Bath and North East Somerset and in North and West Wiltshire, and we provide specialist drug & alcohol services and secure mental health services (including prison mental health services) for people living across a wider area.

Increasingly we provide treatment and care in people's own homes and other community settings, reflecting the preferences of our service users. Our community services are supported by high quality inpatient services that provide short term assessment, treatment and care.

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Glossary

Advocacy Organisations - Organisations who support, speak up for, or act on behalf of, an individual or group of individuals.

Board of Governors - This will be made up of governors elected from a wider membership, and governors appointed from partner organisations. The Board of Governors will appoint the Chair and Chief Executive.

Capital Projects - One-off projects to improve our facilities, often the buildings in which we provide our services.

Carers - Anyone who gives their time to care for, or support, someone experiencing a mental health problem.

Commissioners - The organisations who pay us to provide specific services.

Engagement - Talking with a wide range of interested groups and individuals to gather their thoughts and ideas on a range of issues. Engagement usually comes before, and helps prepare for, a formal public consultation.

Formal Public Consultation - A period, usually 12 weeks, during which the public are asked to comment on proposals. The responses should influence the final decisions that are made about the proposals.

Foundation Trust Membership - Staff, service users, carers, the public and other individuals who choose to become a member of a Foundation Trust. They can take part in activities and vote to influence the direction of the organisation.

Local Authorities - County and borough councils.

Monitor - The independent regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts

NHS South West - Our local Strategic Health Authority

Overview and Scrutiny Committees - Local Authority committees who oversee and scrutinise changes to local health and social care services, and the way those changes are decided.

Partner Organisations - The organisations who pay us to provide services and the organisations who work with us to provide treatment and care, including Primary Care Trusts, Local Authority social services departments, other NHS trusts and independent and voluntary sector providers.

Primary Care Trusts - The local NHS organisations who pay us to provide services. We provide services for six primary care trusts.

Public Benefit Corporation - Public Benefit Corporations are legal entities; they are membership organisations set up to support the delivery of goods and services for the benefit of local communities.

Service Users - People who use the services provided by AWP - our patients.

Subsidiary Companies - Companies owned by a parent organisation.

Voluntary Sector - Not-for-profit organisations, often registered charities.

Introduction

Your ideas are very important. Together, we can make a difference for mental wellbeing in our local communities.

Our engagement process during October, November and December 2007 is part of our preparation for becoming an NHS Foundation Trust in late 2008.

We have written this engagement document with the advice of a readers panel made up of service users, carers and AWP staff. It is for everyone living in Wiltshire, Swindon, South Gloucestershire, Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and North Somerset who is interested in the mental wellbeing of their communities. It is also for everyone who works for AWP or who receives a service from AWP.

This document sets out a number of areas that we would value your ideas about. What you tell us now will help us to decide exactly what to ask people during our formal public consultation, which we plan to start in March 2008.

This document also outlines some of our reasons for applying for Foundation Trust status and describes some of the benefits of being a Foundation Trust.

Laura McMurtrie
Chief Executive
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP)

In preparing for engagement we have drawn on the experiences of people who have gone through the process of becoming a Foundation Trust and who are experiencing what it is like to be part of a Foundation Trust. Their stories and quotes are used throughout this document.*

“It’s liberating. It’s a different world. It’s about developing services to our own prescription.”

*Chris Burke, Chief Executive of Stockport NHS Foundation Trust**

Engagement... what is it about?

There are some rules about how to set up and run a Foundation Trust that are laid down by the Department of Health and by Monitor (the independent regulator of Foundation Trusts).

There are many decisions, however, that we can make locally. We will be holding a full public consultation about these decisions in 2008, but before that happens we want to make sure we involve people as soon as we can - their ideas will help us make the best choices.

We would like to know your ideas about:

- 1. Our Foundation Trust membership**
- 2. How we should consult with people**
- 3. How we could go about recruiting members**
- 4. Speaking out for mental health**

Our questions about each of these things are set out on our feedback form. We have inserted a copy of the form into this document, or you can download it from our website. Please use the form to tell us what you think.

“We will be holding a full public consultation in 2008, but before that happens we want to make sure we involve people as soon as we can - their ideas will help us make the best choices.”



What are NHS Foundation Trusts?

NHS Foundation Trusts are membership organisations that work for the benefit of the people who use their services. The membership of a Foundation Trust consists of local people, service users, carers, staff and representatives of key partner organisations. This form of organisation is known as a “Public benefit Corporation” and the option of being a member is available to anybody who is part of the Trust’s membership constituencies.

Foundation Trusts have more freedom in the way decisions are made, and by having a democratically elected Board of Governors, the members can play a direct role in the way the Trust delivers services. In this way the Trust becomes much more accountable to its members and local communities, and can develop services for the benefit of local populations.

Whereas the Board of Directors is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Trust, they are accountable to the Board of Governors for the quality, value and sustainability of the services presented by the Trust. The Governors appoint the Trust’s Non-Executive Directors who in turn appoint the Chief Executive.

NHS Foundation Trusts are still part of the NHS. They work to NHS standards and follow the NHS philosophy of providing treatment free at the point of contact, based on need.

NHS Foundation Trusts have greater freedom and flexibility. This means they are not always driven by national directives. They can organise their finances so that they can invest in their own services and facilities. They can develop innovative solutions to local problems.

Foundation Trust status is a gateway to opportunities we do not have at the moment. By becoming a Foundation Trust we can - together with staff, service users, carers, partner organisations, the voluntary sector and our local communities - make a real difference to mental health and wellbeing.

“The governors do not ‘run’ the services. The Board of Directors does that, but the governors hold them to account.”

*NHS Foundation Trusts: The Story So Far**

What are the benefits of being an NHS Foundation Trust?

Putting our communities at the heart of our organisation

One of the big benefits of being a Foundation Trust is that the way the organisation is governed is significantly different. Instead of being directed by central government through the strategic health authority, our Board of Directors will have much greater freedom to run the organisation in a way that reflects the needs of our local communities.

Physiotherapist Jacky Dascombe put her name forward as a staff governor of Basingstoke and North Hampshire NHS Foundation Trust – not realising that her first task as a governor – along with two public governors and a non-executive director – would be to appoint the new Trust Chair. She said:

“We were very clear that as a new vibrant Foundation Trust in its infancy we wanted the right person at this crucial time, someone who was keen and enthusiastic... We were on a learning curve and so it was a little daunting, but also exciting.” *



What are the benefits of being an NHS Foundation Trust?

Members joining in

Coming from all walks of life, our members will represent a range of voices from our communities. They will help us understand what people need and – if they want to – be active in developing the organisation. Our members will help us develop the right services to meet the right needs in the right way, at the right time and in the right place.

The experiences and knowledge of our members could have a very big impact on the way we work, on our communities and for individuals. Carers, for example, are often the unsung heroes of mental health. As members, they would have a much stronger voice within the organisation. Being a carer can be isolating, but as active members they could meet others with similar experiences to share.

From the start of our public consultation in March 2008, which we are calling Join In, we will be recruiting members from all parts of our local communities. To make an early expression of interest to join in as a member, please use the membership expression of interest form inserted in this document or on our website at www.awp.nhs.uk/FoundationTrust



Oxleas Mental Health Foundation Trust gave their governors a specific challenge. The Trust, backed by its governors, worked with Job Centre Plus, the local police and the chamber of commerce – organisations that could help with jobs, housing and community involvement.

David Mellish, Chair of Oxleas Foundation Trust, said:

“We wanted them to focus on helping service users on the road to recovery, finding them work, removing stigma and essentially getting them to overcome that feeling that people with a mental health problem have – that nobody wants to know. It’s all about opening doors. We have a really animated council of governors and the potential is great.” *

What are the benefits of being an NHS Foundation Trust?

Members in action: case study

Daphne Sharp became involved as a governor for South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust after her brother was admitted as an Alzheimer's patient. "Before my brother went in I was petrified of psychiatric hospitals. I had to steel myself to go in to see him every day. And then, when I did visit as a lay person, I could see there were things that needed to be changed."

Daphne raised in excess of £60,000 cash and £20,000 material donations, and in one year created a sensory garden for patients with dementia and Alzheimer's disease, with plenty of paths and raised flower beds. The Honeyford Garden is named after her brother, who is now in a nursing home. "I did it by writing the story of my brother and sending it out to over 1,000 people. I started in January and by December I had raised the money. The Trust gave me permission to use the land and undertook to maintain the garden."

The experience spurred Daphne to become a governor of the Trust, and she is following up the sensory garden with a sensory room inside the ward, and also a reminiscence room, where pictures of past events can be shown on a large TV to provoke and stimulate memories. *

"Before my brother went in I was petrified of psychiatric hospitals. I had to steel myself to go in to see him every day. And then, when I did visit as a lay person, I could see there were things that needed to be changed."



What are the benefits of being an NHS Foundation Trust?

Freedom to focus on local need

The government will let us have more control about what national schemes we follow. We won't have to follow all of them. Instead, we will be able to develop services that people in our different communities tell us they need. Our Board of Governors – made up of governors elected from our wider membership as well as some governors appointed from partner organisations – will direct us in developing these local services.

The freedom of Foundation Trusts to innovate means they can develop services to meet the specific needs of the local community. For some people this can mean a revolution in the way they receive care.



Before they became a Foundation Trust, Gloucestershire Hospitals Trust provided chemotherapy on one central site. This meant early starts and very long days for cancer patients travelling in from isolated rural communities – and long journeys home after treatment when they were extremely tired and feeling very unwell.

As a Foundation Trust, Gloucestershire teamed up with local charity Hope for Tomorrow to fit out a mobile chemotherapy unit that takes treatment out to people in their own communities. It is making a huge difference. Trust Chair, Dame Janet Trotter, said:

“It proves good ideas can happen quickly in a Foundation Trust. This was a case where we wanted to push out the service so that a safe, quality assured infection free service could get to where the patients are.” *

What are the benefits of being an NHS Foundation Trust?

“One of our first projects as a Foundation Trust, which would have taken many years previously, is to develop new inpatient accommodation to provide modern facilities with higher levels of privacy and dignity. Before we became a Foundation Trust it would have taken a very long time to go through the business case process to apply for funding. We can now manage the finances and the planning process ourselves.”

Comment from a new mental health NHS Foundation Trust

More freedom to manage our money

As a Foundation Trust we will have much more financial freedom.

We will be able to earn money to put back into services that will benefit our communities. We can't do this at the moment.

We will be required to make a surplus each year and it will be ours to put back into our services – we won't have to give it up to help with debts in other parts of the NHS. We will be able to make investments, make our own decisions about borrowing money for capital projects, and form subsidiary companies to earn money to develop our services.

Together with our Board of Governors, we will make our own decisions about how we manage our money.



What are the benefits of being an NHS Foundation Trust?

More stable services

At the moment most of our contracts with commissioners are for one year only and are not legally binding. This means we can only plan for the short term and we live with daily uncertainties.

As a Foundation Trust we will be able to agree longer, legally binding contracts with our commissioners - for example for three years. This will make the long term planning of our services easier and we will have more certainty over a longer period. This will give more stability for our staff to simply get on with the business of treating and caring for people.

Together with our local communities, making a difference for mental wellbeing

As an active part of the local community, mental health NHS Foundation Trusts and their members are making a real difference. This is not only through more focused services, but also in the way mental wellbeing is thought about, and the way people who experience mental health problems are treated by their communities.



South Essex Partnership Mental Health Foundation Trust, through their membership recruitment, focused on breaking down mental health stigma. Dr Patrick Geoghegan, Chief Executive at South Essex Partnership, says that the governors and members are now leading the way on this.

“What is interesting is to see users and carers sitting down with the business community and educating them about mental health. We have always been a Cinderella service, but with the help of involved governors we are making a real difference.” *

Engagement... what are we doing?

What have done so far?

On 18 June we held an introductory event for staff, service users and carers and from June to September we held discussions with members of primary care trust boards, members of overview and scrutiny committees, local GPs, staff, service users and carer groups. This was to start understanding what Foundation Trust status is about.

Let's talk about it! October to December 2007

During October, November and December 2007 we want to talk with many more people from across all of our communities.

Your feedback makes a difference

Many of our staff, service users and carers have said that small group discussions are often more useful and productive than large, formal events. We have listened to this and we will be visiting as many group and team meetings as we can during October, November and December.

Who are we talking with?

We want to talk with as diverse a range of people as possible, across the whole of our diverse rural and urban geography. This includes staff, service users, carers, primary care trusts, our local authority partners, NHS South West (the strategic health authority), other providers of health and social care services, voluntary sector organisations, educational and academic organisations, young people's organisations, black and minority ethnic organisations, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual organisations, learning disabilities organisations, religious and faith organisations and anyone else, of any age, with an interest in mental wellbeing, including people who find it difficult to have a voice.

What next?

During January and February 2008 we will review all your ideas. What you say now will help us decide exactly what we will ask people about during our public consultation, which we are planning to start in March 2008 (subject to confirmation of our application process timescale from the Department of Health and NHS South West).

During our public consultation we will again talk with a diverse range of people from across all of our communities, including the wider public.

We will start recruiting our Foundation Trust members at the same time. They will be known as 'shadow members' until we are authorised as a Foundation Trust, but there will be opportunities to play an active role as soon as people want.

Engagement... what *you* can do

Group discussions

If you would like us to visit your group for a Foundation Trust discussion, please contact our Foundation Trust Administrator on **01249 468000** or at **foundationtrustinfo@awp.nhs.uk**

We are monitoring the range and geographical spread of the groups and teams that we are meeting with, and we are seeking out groups that have not yet been represented in our discussions.

Open-invitation events

We are holding a series of open-invitation events taking place in November. These will be in eight different places around the Trust. We will publish details of the events on our website at **www.awp.nhs.uk/FoundationTrust** and we will invite all the organisations on our extensive contact list asking them, in turn, to pass the invitation on to their own contacts.

If you would like details of the meetings please contact our Foundation Trust Administrator on **01249 468000** or at **foundationtrustinfo@awp.nhs.uk**

Talking about it at your convenience

Everyone's suggestions are important. If you cannot attend our events and you are not a member of a group or organisation with a meeting we can come to, please let us know and we will arrange for you to join in with a group discussion that is convenient to you.

Website

Our web pages at **www.awp.nhs.uk/FoundationTrust** include this document and questions and answers about Foundation Trust status, as well as a form for you to send us your ideas and questions, and an expression of membership form.

In writing

You can write your ideas on the feedback form inserted as a loose sheet in this document (you can also print the form from our website) and post it or fax it back to us. The address and fax number are given on the form. Or you can e-mail us at **foundationtrustinfo@awp.nhs.uk**

If you need any more information to help you do this, please visit our website at **www.awp.nhs.uk/FoundationTrust** or contact our Foundation Trust Administrator on **01249 468000** or at **foundationtrustinfo@awp.nhs.uk**

Supporting people to take part

We are working with advocacy services to make sure that support is available for people who need help to join in with our discussions.

For details:

Tel: Foundation Trust Administrator on 01249 468000

Fax: 01249 468001

Email: foundationtrustinfo@awp.nhs.uk

Web: www.awp.nhs.uk/FoundationTrust

All the stories and quotes in this document marked * are taken from 'NHS FoundationTrusts: The Story So Far', published by the Foundation Trust Network

Together, making a difference for mental wellbeing