

Membership and engagement strategy 2025-2028

Members make a difference



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Notes

This document should be read in conjunction with the trust’s annual report and accounts - particularly the sections entitled Foundation Trust Membership and Council of Governors which includes information on the following:

- Definition of the membership constituencies
- Annual membership analysis
- Membership activity during the year
- Involving governors and members

Access the annual reports at:
royalpapworth.nhs.uk/our-hospital/information-we-publish/annual-reports

Names of the members of the Council of Governors can be found at:
royalpapworth.nhs.uk/our-governors

Prospective members can join by completing a short form on the public website:
royalpapworth.nhs.uk/membership

Further details of the hospital can be found at:
royalpapworth.nhs.uk

Foreword from the Chair

It is a great pleasure to welcome and endorse this new membership strategy for Royal Papworth Hospital.

Our members are a vital part of the community that is Royal Papworth. We need a strong, engaged, inclusive, representative, informed and thriving membership to be a part of the on-going work of the trust. We look to a genuine two-way dialogue with members.

Through direct engagement and through our Council of Governors, we look forward to members providing feedback, comment, challenge, and ideas that will help the trust to develop and improve our services further. In doing this our ambition is to ensure that the needs of the populations we serve continue to be met with the highest quality care possible.

We hope too that members will want to engage and hear from the trust about the trust's successes, our innovations, the latest treatments and indeed also the very real challenges we must all face together.

This newly developed strategy sets out really clear aims and ambitions for the membership of Royal Papworth. Delivery of these will ultimately be of benefit to all of us with a connection to the trust, be that as a patient, a family member or a member of staff.

I would like to acknowledge here the enormous work that has gone into developing this strategy by many governor colleagues and also recognise the input by trust staff. The result of your hard work is evident in the clarity and quality of the strategy.

I have every confidence that this strategy provides us all with a clear path to developing a really successful and effective membership. My grateful thanks to all of you.



Dr Jag Ahluwalia
Chair of Royal Papworth Hospital
and Chair of the Council
of Governors

Foreword from the lead governor

I am delighted to introduce this new membership strategy for Royal Papworth Hospital.

The members of Royal Papworth are deeply important to the trust. Membership offers patients, carers, relatives, public and staff the opportunity to share thoughts and experiences to help shape the future of the hospital.

2025 marks six years since Royal Papworth moved to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. Although the years since the move have been successful for the hospital, it is fair to say it has been overshadowed by the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery.

The trust has begun to develop its new 2026-2031 strategy, aiming to build on successes and improve the hospital for both patients and staff for the future.

This membership strategy has been designed to give new and existing members more opportunities to engage with the trust. The Council of Governors forms an important link between the hospital and its members, and the Council looks forward to working together with members to hear feedback and be a voice for members in the hospital.



Abigail Halstead
Lead Governor

Introduction

Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is the UK's largest specialist cardiothoracic hospital and the country's main heart and lung transplant centre.

While Royal Papworth is a regional centre for the diagnosis and treatment of cardiothoracic disease in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, it is also a national centre for a range of specialist services, including heart and lung transplantation, pulmonary endarterectomy (PEA) and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO). Additionally, the Trust has the largest respiratory support and sleep centre (RSSC) in the UK.



Founded in the village of Papworth, Cambridgeshire as a tuberculosis (TB) colony in 1918, Royal Papworth has established an international reputation for excellence in research and innovation. The hospital carried out the UK's first successful heart transplant in 1979 and world's first heart-lung and liver transplant in 1986. Royal Papworth was rated outstanding across all areas by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in 2020, a first for a NHS hospital Trust.

A foundation Trust operates independently of central government controls, giving Royal Papworth the ability to make its own decisions. This means it can respond directly to local and national needs, designing services to meet them and, if necessary, borrowing and raising money to fund them.

Trust vision

"to bring tomorrow's treatments to today's patients"

Trust mission

"to provide excellent, specialist care to patients suffering from heart and lung disease"

Royal Papworth's values

At the heart of any organisation are its values; belief systems or 'ways of doing things' that set standards in behaviours and the culture for all staff to follow.

When values are successfully integrated the result is a shared strength, from which great patient care and staff experience can happen.

Royal Papworth's values were developed by its staff for its staff.



Compassion

Recognising and responding to the needs of patients and colleagues.



Excellence

Making a difference with each small improvement and by being open to new ways of working.



Collaboration

Achieving more together.

What is membership?

As a foundation trust, Royal Papworth is accountable to its patients, members and community. The Council of Governors represents the members and public, whilst holding the non-executive directors to account for the performance of the board. The Council has 25 elected governors and three appointed governors.

Members elect governors from their constituency to represent them in the hospital at Council of Governor meetings. To stand in an election a person must be a member of the trust. Members must be aged 16 and over.

The trust’s public constituencies are:



To understand the communities the trust serves, the below shows that in the financial year 2024/2025, Royal Papworth received 26,039 referrals. There were:

- 12,220 from Cambridgeshire
- 3,922 from Norfolk
- 3,316 from Suffolk
- 6,581 from the rest of England and Wales

The Trust’s staff constituencies, which reflect different professional groupings are:



Royal Papworth has staff governors who represent the different staff groups within the hospital. Upon commencement of employment, staff are automatically members of the trust and therefore may stand in elections.

Membership strategy

Objectives

The membership and engagement strategy has been developed on behalf of the Council of Governors with the below overall objectives:

- To attract new foundation trust members and the public to enhance the reputation of Royal Papworth by showcasing the work of the hospital and its staff.
- To increase membership numbers.
- To attract members who may wish to stand as a governor in the future.
- To encourage staff members to engage with their staff governor.
- To improve upon the diversity of the membership, to ensure the membership is representative of the communities the trust serves.
- To continuously demonstrate that we are inclusive to all.
- To keep members informed of developments in the trust.
- To offer members and the public an opportunity to engage with staff and governors to shape the future of Royal Papworth and the work it does.
- To support the improvement of population health by building awareness of key health topics and advocating for the importance of both members and the general public knowing how to take care of their own health.
- To provide governors with an effective mechanism for representing and engaging with their electorates (members) and the public.
- To collaborate with trust partners and Cambridge Biomedical Campus neighbours through membership events.
- Enable members to provide comments, thoughts and feedback to governors.



Key drivers for membership and public engagement activity

To deliver excellent specialist care to the communities it serves, Royal Papworth recognises that it must engage with members. Successful membership engagement will be two-way; it will allow Royal Papworth to listen to member's feedback and share information on innovations and successful treatments as well as general updates. Through this engagement with local and national members the hospital will boost its strong reputation further. It is a desire of the trust for members to feel a part of the Royal Papworth family and to be able to contribute to its future.

In addition, there is also a statutory requirement for governors and the trust to engage with members, patients and the public.

The 'Addendum to Your statutory duties - reference guide for NHS foundation trust governors – System working and collaboration: role of foundation trust councils of governors' was published in October 2022. It provides guidance for how Councils of Governors should operate in support of the NHS' 'co-design and collaboration' agenda after the establishment of Integrated Care Systems (ICS).

Councils of Governors are required to support their organisations in their collaborative efforts, and to form a rounded view of the interests of the 'public at large'. The 'public at large' includes the population which live within the boundaries of the ICS of which the relevant NHS foundation trust is a part, and not just the members of the trust.

The Code of Governance for NHS Provider Trusts, published in October 2022, also requires Councils of Governors 'to take account of the interests of the public at large'.



Benefits of being a member

The benefits of being a member have been grouped into three categories and are in continual development.

Members can be involved as much or as little as they like. There is no minimum commitment.

Have your say

- Share views on a range of issues effecting the services at Royal Papworth.
- Vote for representatives on the Council of Governors.
- Talk to Council of Governor representatives.
- Stand as a Governor.
- Get involved with initiatives and feedback sessions.

Regular updates

- Receive regular information from Royal Papworth Hospital including:
 - News.
 - Opportunities to get involved.
 - Staff and patient stories.

Exclusive events

- Annual Members Meeting.
- Talks from a variety of speakers on different topics.



Delivering the strategy

Key priorities

To achieve the strategy's objectives, three key priority areas have been identified together with actions to be implemented.

Key priority 1

Membership recruitment

Aim: to increase numbers and to ensure that they are representative of the communities the trust serves

Actions to achieve this:

- Cleanse the membership database and contact all current members to obtain:
 - Email addresses - to support aim of moving all communication to digital where possible.
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion information - to ensure the membership is diverse and reflective of the communities the trust serves.
- Develop a regular digital newsletter to keep members informed about the work of Royal Papworth, opportunities for member engagement and events.
- Improve the membership portal on the website and create an automated response to membership sign-up.
- Investigate and utilise more forms of existing communications to engage with the public and staff, which might include:
 - Appointment letters.
 - Patient information leaflets.
 - Digital signage within the hospital.
 - Trust's social media - LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram.
- Investigate and implement new forms of communications to engage with the public and staff.
- Develop and strengthen relationships within and outside of the trust to facilitate the 'avenues' through which members can be recruited. For example:
 - Research and development team.
 - Medical charities.
 - County and borough councils.
 - GP practices.
 - Medical and nursing leaders.
 - Royal Papworth Hospital Charity.
 - Campus neighbours and Trust partners.
- Develop a supplementary contact plan, which would focus on the frequency of newsletters to the members, which events to target and attend, and the materials event attendees will distribute.
- Create regular membership recruitment days, supported by governors.



Key priority 2

Enhance engagement

Aim: to improve engagement and retention of members

Actions to achieve this:

- Publicise meetings and events of the governors, board or the trust for awareness
- Organise events with themes which will attract audiences based on feedback from the public and members or from other avenues
- Utilise existing audio visual equipment which will ensure public attendees of events and meetings have a good experience.

The communication and involvement activities listed in the key priorities should be supported by governors and the communications and membership engagement co-ordinator.

Key priority 3

Support for engagement

Aim: to improve and provide suitable training and tools to support engagement

Actions to achieve this:

- Use the trust's digital mailing platform to hold the membership database and communicate with relevant stakeholders.
- Develop, through engagement with internal and external stakeholders, a communities events calendar which governors can utilise and know what events to attend. Staff can also attend to support or provide material for the attending governor(s) to distribute or speak to.
- Create a dedicated email address or named contact for governors which trust members and members of the public can either email or write a letter to.
- Support public governors to hold events in their constituencies. Staff governors should also be supported to raise their profile using internal communications tools and media including articles on the staff intranet, staff newsletter and stands in the atrium.
- To allow for better engagement with members, Royal Papworth will provide governors with the relevant training, support and resources so they can be credible trust ambassadors.



Membership engagement

Governance, resources and evaluation

The responsibility for the engagement and management of membership lies with the Council of Governors, supported by the communications and membership engagement co-ordinator.

The trust will ensure that the implementation of the aims and objectives of the membership strategy are appropriately supported in line with our responsibilities as set out in the Constitution.

The Governors must implement the membership strategy in their constituencies as is their statutory duty and Royal Papworth must support Governors in this.

The Governor's Assurance Committee has responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the strategy and its implementation, supported by the associate director of corporate governance.

An annual progress report will be submitted to the Council of Governors.

A 'key stats' report on key membership numbers will be created each month by the communications and membership engagement co-ordinator to monitor progress.

These stats will include totals and /or percentages of:

- Members
- Email addresses held
- Members by constituency
- Members by county
- Equality, diversity and inclusion data
- Members lost - including withdrawal and members who sadly pass away

Starting point

It is important to monitor the membership closely to gain insight on what has worked well and where improvement is needed.

In March 2025, the total membership number stood at 4,175. This is prior to the database cleanse mentioned on page 9. Therefore whilst this figure will be monitored and reported on, targets should not be set until the cleanse is complete.

This strategy will be updated within the next year to reflect cleanse completion and new data sets to place targets against. In the meantime, the qualitative success measures are as follows:

- To see a growth of **new** members
- To see an increase in existing members providing email addresses
- To see an increase in existing members updating their equality, diversity and inclusion information
- To increase engagement through a variety of avenues
- To increase governor interactions with public and staff

Conclusion

Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust values the importance of its members in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, the rest of England and Wales, and staff groups. Its aim is to engage membership, offer reasons for and benefits of being a member, to create a Royal Papworth community and to share the remarkable work of everything that the hospital does.

Through events and regular communications, the trust aims to keep its membership engaged and informed, and listen to the ideas and thoughts of its members to shape the future of Royal Papworth.