
Membership Strategy

Working together to improve mental health

2020-2025

Table of Contents

Why we need a Strategy	3
Developing our Strategy	3
Our Vision	3
Objectives for 2020-2025	4
Our Members & the Landscape	7
Membership Involvement Levels	8
Accountability to our Members	10
Council of Governors	11
Strengthening the links between Members & Governors	11
Strengthening the link between Governors & the Board	12
Strategy Governance	12
Continuous Learning	12
Give Feedback	13

Why we need a strategy

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust provides NHS mental health and learning disability services across Sussex and a developing range of specialist services across the South East of England.

The Trust gained Foundation Trust status in 2008 and has a long history of active involvement with patients, the public and its staff in how it plans, develops and delivers services. The organisation has always fostered strong patient and public engagement both Trust-wide and through individual Care Delivery Services.

This strategy outlines the Trusts vision for membership over the period 2020-2025 and builds on the success of our previous strategy and work of the membership office. The Trust has recently reviewed its organisational strategy which focuses on People, Prevention and Partnerships so we wanted to work with our members to build a strategy that incorporates these objectives and responds to the local needs and national priorities, including the NHS Long Term Plan.

Through this strategy we will set out the methods that will be used to continue to develop an effective, responsive and representative membership that will assist in ensuring the Trust [“Improves the quality of life for the communities we serve”](#).

Through our membership, the Trust can be closer to the people who access our services and more accountable to them than ever before. We intend to see our members becoming an increasingly active and valued component, building on existing partnerships and supporting new ones.

Developing our strategy

Our members are vital to the development of our strategy and through a consultation we managed to capture their views and suggestions for improving and developing our membership over the next five years.

Our members told us they want us to focus on engaging members from voluntary and community organisations and improving the diversity of our membership to ensure the voices of everyone in our community.

Our vision

Working together to improve mental health

Objectives for 2020-2025

This section outlines the membership objectives that we have set ourselves to achieve our strategy; and our priorities for delivery over the next five years, in order to provide focus and clarity.

There are three objectives to the 2020-2025 membership strategy



These objectives form the framework by which we hold ourselves to account. They recognise and build on the systems and processes which the Trust has in place to grow, engage and involve its membership.

Objective 1: To improve engagement with members

Aim: For members to feel part of the Trust and be aware of opportunities and how to be involved in helping to improve the way services are provided.

As a Foundation Trust we are accountable to our local population and an active and engaged membership helps us work together with our communities. We understand that the value of membership is not in the numbers of people who have joined but in the quality of members who are engaged. We recognise it is more beneficial to build an engaged and active membership rather than a large but passive one, and this is reflective of how our current members feel.

We want to broaden our membership and include voluntary and third sector organisations through Associate memberships; this will enable us to build a greater awareness and support for mental health in the community. Through innovative engagement approaches we want all our members to feel involved and supported to add value to the Trust; this will also help us to

support our governors in representing the interests of members and the public.

We have identified seven priorities that will help us achieve improved engagement with members, these are:

To improve engagement with members	
Priorities	Build on our relationship with members to harness their experience and enable them to help improve services
	Improve and increase community engagement
	Develop and Implement Associate Memberships
	Develop events that are tailored to members
	Build on existing relationships with the People Participation Team and Head's On, the Trust Charity, to further support a single view of the Trust
	Recognise members achievements
	Encourage members through the tiers of membership to support them becoming governors

Objective 2: To build a membership that is representative of the communities we serve

Aim: To ensure our membership reflects the broad diversity of our local communities.

It is important to regularly analyse our membership to make sure we understand its composition and take steps to ensure, as far as possible, it is representative of the people we serve. From our analysis we understand there are some groups who are less well represented and we want to try new ways of engaging with them.

We will strategically align our recruitment and engagement programme to coincide with other key events throughout the year, for example Pride, Black History Month and Mental Health Awareness week. These opportunities will help us to raise awareness amongst seldom heard communities and address under-representation.

Mental health is a big issue for young people, roughly 3 children in every classroom have a diagnosed mental health problem and therefore we are going to develop relationships with local schools to help engage and better support young people and their parents.

Using the data we hold on our members we have identified five priorities to support us to deliver objective 2.

To build a membership that is representative of the communities we serve	
Priorities	Analyse our membership on a regular basis
	Develop relationships with schools to increase younger peoples representation
	Increase LGBTQ+ and BAME community representation
	Increase carers, in particular young carers representation
	Increase learning disability representation

Objective 3: To effectively communicate with members

Aim: For members to feel well informed and receive communications that are targeted towards their interests.

Members are a vital link between the Trust and our communities. We want to establish methods for two way communication and respond to the increased demand of the digital landscape to meet the expectations of those who interact with us.

We need to adapt our communications to meet expectations and introduce new techniques to enable members' opinions to be heard.

To effectively communicate with members	
Priorities	Continue building and maintaining an accurate database
	Identify opportunities for two-way communication between members and governors
	Continue providing appropriate information to members
	Communicate the benefits of membership
	Target communications with the desired audience

	Ensure Partnership Matters and the Membership e-Bulletin are member focused
	Expand our social media presence
	Explore the use of digital platforms to communicate with members

Our Members and the Landscape

The Trust covers a broad geographical catchment area; however our patient and carer population must be reflected in our membership base and we must draw on the experience of people who access the full range of services we provide.

Our members join the Trust to have their voices heard and to help us better understand the views of those who access our services so that we can improve the quality, responsiveness and development of services.

Members may only join the Trust in one category of membership. No skills or experience are required to be a member of our Foundation Trust but members should be interested in our services and compassionate towards the people who access them. We are committed to encouraging everyone who is eligible to become an active member of Sussex Partnership. We currently have four constituencies:

Service User	For people who have within 5 years preceding the date of application attended the Trust as a service user and live in West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and South East England and Greater London.
Carer	For people who have within 5 years preceding the date of application attended the Trust as the carer of a service user.
Public	For people interested in our services who live in West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and South East England and Greater London.
Staff	All Sussex Partnership permanent staff, those on a fixed term contract of at least 12 months and social care staff who work in the Trust are automatically offered membership. (Membership is not mandatory for staff)

Membership Involvement Levels

The Trust recognises that members will have differing levels of interest, time and availability for involvement. Members choose the degree to which they would like to be involved at the point at which they sign up as a member. This is set across three tiers;

Be Informed

- Receive regular newsletters (Partnership Matters)
- Receive regular communications
- Receive invitation to the Annual General Meeting of the Council of Governors and the Members Annual Meeting.

Be Involved (as above, plus)

- Participate in surveys, questionnaires, consultations
- Participate in focus/discussion/advisory groups
- Be involved in volunteering for the Trust
- Be involved in our “Expert by Experience” programme

Take a lead (as above, plus)

- Encourage new members and support the campaign to tackle stigma and discrimination associated to Mental Health Services
- Invitation to stand for election as a governor to represent the views of their constituency, raising views on behalf of their members
- Collect and feedback the views of their constituency on service quality and provision.
- Attend formal meetings of the Council of Governors

All members retain their statutory rights e.g. to vote or stand as a governor in Council of Governor elections and to vote on any changes to the constitution involving governor powers.

 **60%**
'Be Informed Members'

 **31%**
'Be Involved Members'

 **9%**
'Take a Lead Members'

 **34%**
male
members

 **65%**
female
members

 **1%**
of members identify
as transgender

2729

Public members

+

 **4123**
NHS staff
members

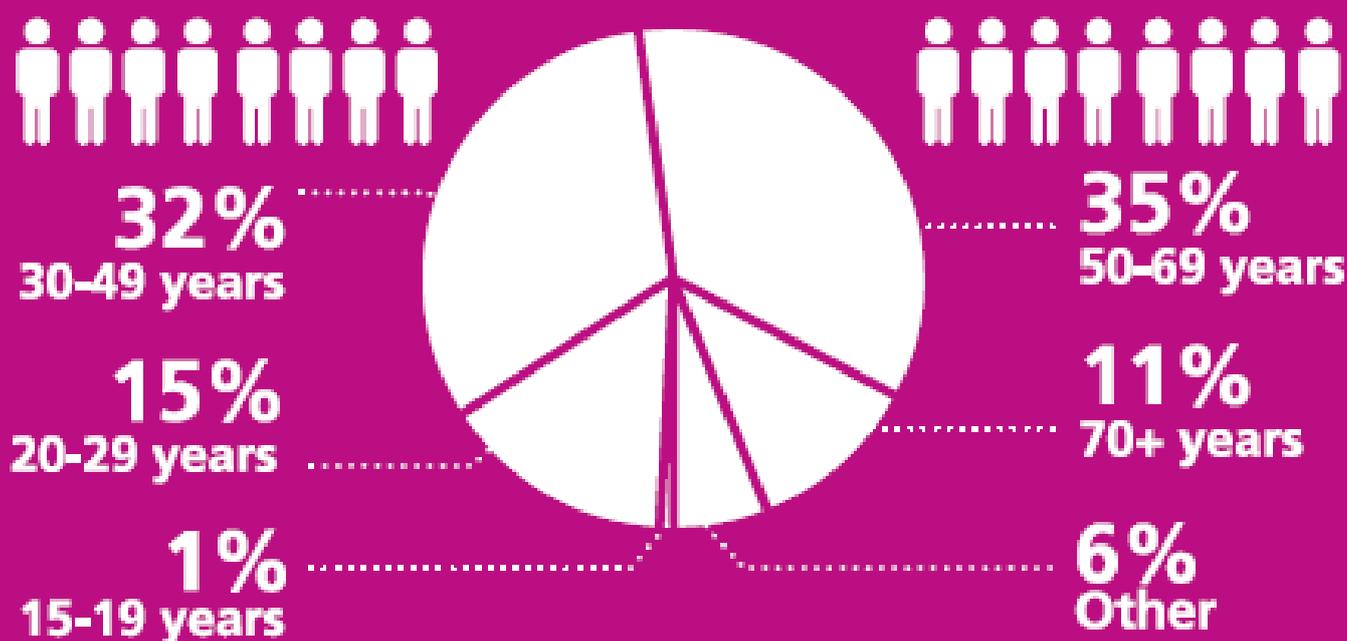
 **421**
carer
members

+


2018
service user
members

= 9291 total members
(As of June 5 2020)

Membership demographic



 **10%**
represents the
BAME community

40% 
members have
declared a physical
or mental impairment

 **The majority of**
(77%) members define
as **White British**

 **16%**
define as either
Agnostic or Atheist

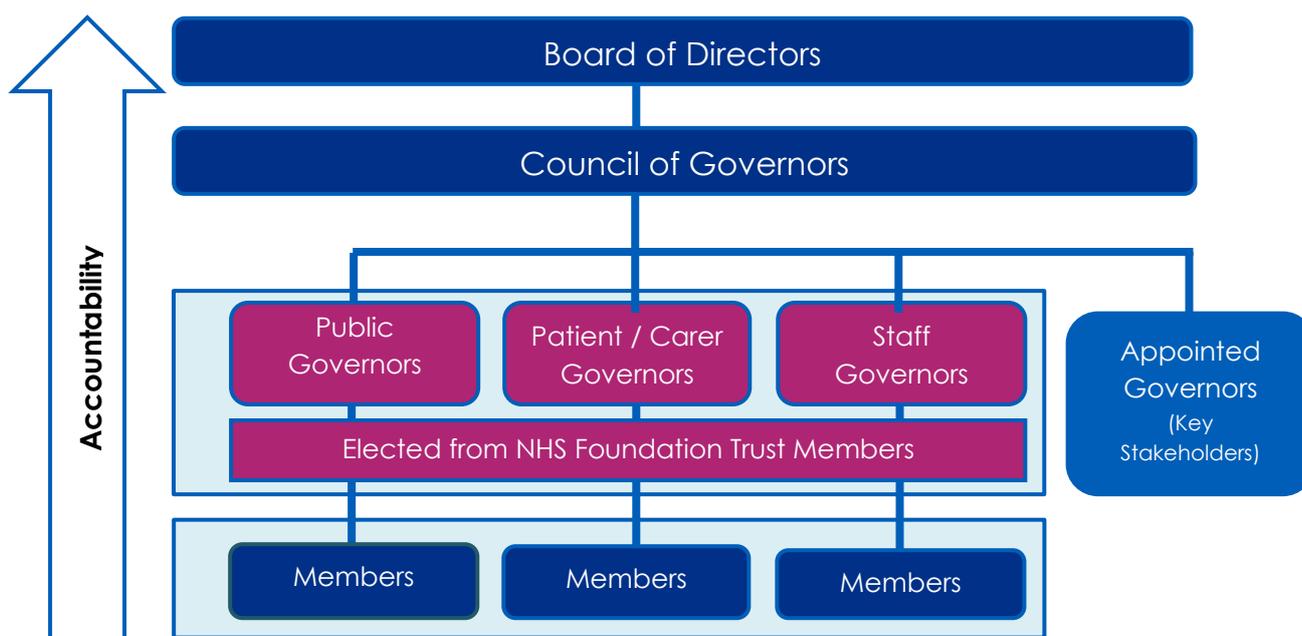
 **24%**
members define
as **Christian**

 **7%** members
have defined
as **Lesbian, Gay or
Bisexual (LGB)**

Accountability to our Members

The Health and Social Care Act (2012) states that the fundamental duty of a Foundation Trust Board is to promote the success of the organisation so as to maximise its benefits to members of the Trust and the wider public. To ensure we are doing this as a Trust we have clear lines of communication between the Board and Members. This enables the Board to have a continuous “line of sight” to the views and priorities of members and the public, and so that members and the public are assured that the Board is performing as an effective steward of public assets. Much of the accountability of the Board to its members is through the Council of Governors, which has two fundamental statutory duties

- To represent the interest of the membership and the wider public; and
- To hold the Trusts Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board.



It is vital to ensure that the links between members and governors, and governors and the Board are robust so that a gap does not emerge between member and public interests and Board decisions. Focusing on strengthening these key links is the Foundation Trust Governance model and therefore a priority area within this strategy.

Council of Governors

The Council of Governors is comprised of 34 Governors, consisting of 24 elected Governors (including service users, public, carers and staff) and 8 Governors who are appointed to the Council by key stakeholder organisations that share a close relationship with the Trust.

The Council is chaired by the Trust Chair, who ensures that the council is made aware of the relevant issues in sufficient depth to enable them to fulfil the needs of public accountability.

Service User Governors (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Brighton & Hove (2)- East Sussex (3)- West Sussex (4)- Outside of Sussex (1)
Public Governors (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Brighton & Hove (1)- East Sussex (2)- West Sussex (3)- Outside of Sussex (1)
Carer Governors (4)	Represent Carers in all geographical areas
Staff Governors (5)	Represent the views of staff across the Trust.
Appointed Governors (8)	The appointed Governors are nominated as representatives for their organisation. Examples are local councils, universities, local voluntary groups and charities

Strengthening the links between members and Governors

The Trust will promote governors ability to represent the interests of the membership and the wider public by:

- Investing in development days with a particular focus on membership engagement and accountability.
- Keeping members well informed about their Governor representative
- Bringing Governors together with members at public meetings and inviting members to attend the Council of Governors
- Encouraging Governors to participate in the Trusts well established site visits to speak with service users and carers about their experience.

- Involving governors in membership recruitment
- Publishing Council of Governors papers publically
- Enabling members to evaluate the effectiveness of Governors in representing their interests.

Strengthening the links between Governors and the Board

The Trust will promote the ability of Governors to hold Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board through:

- Investing in joint Board and Council days with a particular focus on accountability
- Facilitating communication between Governors and the Non-Executive Directors whom they hold to account through
 - o Observing Board Committees
 - o Attending Board of Directors meetings
 - o The attendance by designated Non-Executive Directors at Governor Committees and Working Groups
 - o Regular access to the Trust Chair

Strategy Governance

The Council of Governors delegates authority to the Membership Committee to make decisions on behalf of and be accountable to the Council of Governors for recruiting, engaging and communicating with the Trusts membership and representing the interests of patients, carers, families and the general public in the areas served by the Trust.

The Membership Committee will review progress against the objectives of this strategy quarterly reporting back on progress at the Council of governors through a written or verbal update from the committee Chair. An annual report of progress against this strategy will also be available at the Annual Members Meeting.

Continuous Learning

To ensure that both members and the Trust get the best out of membership, we will build mechanisms for learning and improvement into all membership initiatives. Members will be able to provide feedback at any stage

- ft@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk
- 0800 0153357

The Trust will also actively seek to learn lessons through:

- An annual membership survey
- An annual Governor survey
- Feedback from Governors through the annual Chair's appraisal process
- Feedback forms at events
- Membership database reports (e.g. meeting attendance, membership growth, membership demographics)

Give Feedback

To provide feedback on this strategy or to request further information, please contact the Trust's membership office at

Email: ft@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk or

Telephone - 0800 0153357



Follow us

 facebook.com/sussexpartnership

 @SPFTmembership  @withoutstigma

 [Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](https://SussexPartnershipNHSFoundationTrust.com)

 [sussex_partnership_nhs](https://sussex_partnership_nhs.com)

 www.headsoncharity.org

Follow our conversation at: #SPFTgovernors

Copyright © 2018 Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Produced by the Communications team

This document is available in alternative formats upon request, such as large print, electronically or another language. Please call 0800 015 3357