



Sussex Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Membership Strategy

Working together to improve mental health
2018-2020

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Introduction

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust provides NHS mental health, learning disability and prison healthcare 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.

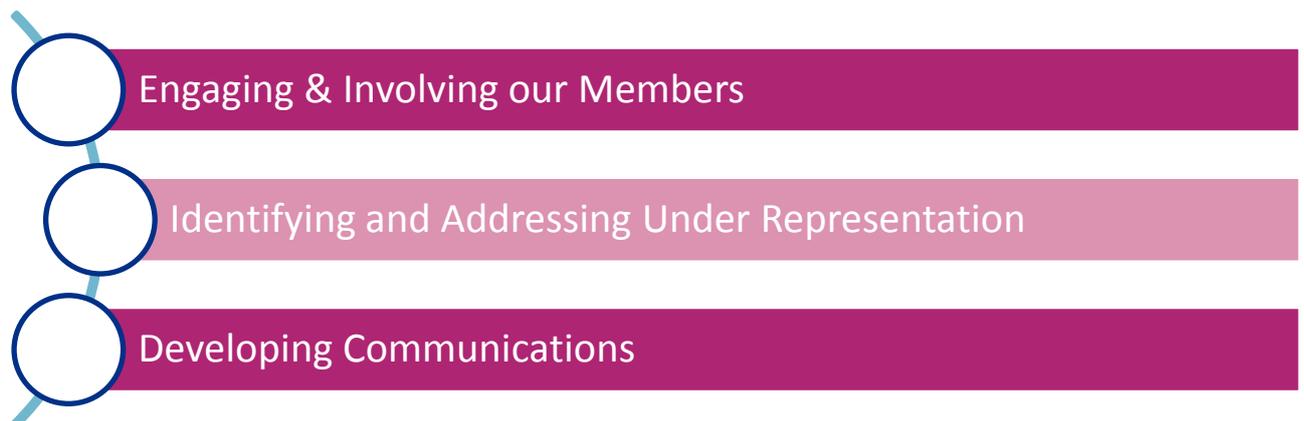
This strategy outlines the Trusts vision for membership over the period 2018-2020 and builds on the success of the membership office to date. It sets out the methods that will be used to continue to develop an effective, responsive and representative membership that will assist in ensuring the Trust delivers “[Outstanding Care and Treatment you can be confident in](#)”.

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 of our 2020 vision, building on existing partnerships and supporting new ones.

Objectives for 2018-2020

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

There are three objectives to the 2018-2020 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: Engaging and involving our Members

Aim: For members to have more opportunities to become involved in working with the Trust and its partners to improve the way services are provided.

Stakeholder engagement is of paramount importance to the Trust, enabling us to fulfil our role as a locally accountable organisation. Our own Clinical Strategy seeks to improve accountability and strengthen the collective voice of patients.

Our Care Delivery Services wish to engage with and consider the views of our members and stakeholders in the development of major service provision, planning, improvements and change. Through our membership, Care Delivery Services can develop opportunities for members to be involved in helping us to monitor and develop the services we provide.

Our engagement approaches must be innovative and we must tailor opportunities accordingly. The experience, knowledge and skills of our members will be garnered in the continued use of surveys, workshops, focus groups and the invitation to attend all public meetings. We will ensure that we engage our members with regular, reliable and clear communication on any activities concerning the Trust.

We have identified five priorities to support objective 1 to sustain active engagement and involvement of our members.

Engaging & Involving our Members	
Priorities	To continue to harness the experience, knowledge and skills of our membership community and actively engage them in the development of the Trust and its activities.
	To support a single view of the Trust from partners organisations and members by working closely with the People Participation Team and the Trusts Charity, "Heads On".
	To encourage a partnership approach between the Trust, its membership, and other likeminded organisations, working together to address mental health stigma.
	Develop new and innovative ways to involve our members that enable them to play an increasingly active and important role in the evaluation and improvement of services.
	To develop and support members to progress through the tiers of membership, supporting potential new governors.

Objective 2: Identifying and addressing under representation

Aim: For members in these areas to have a greater voice an awareness of the Trust.

Addressing membership underrepresentation relies on establishing a connection and a relationship between the Trust and the potential member, and this connection is rooted in communicating the Trusts vision clearly.

Meeting under represented communities face to face, at events run by the Heads On and through partners allows for personal contact , the ability to answer questions and present the message in an appropriate way, through an individual who is an ambassador for the Trust.

We will strategically align our recruitment 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.

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

Identifying & Addressing Under Representation	
Priorities	To maintain an accurate membership database
	To increase the membership of young people by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieving 5% increase of members aged 16-18 - Focused recruitment drives for youth membership
	To increase the membership of people who identify as Trans*
	To increase the membership of carers, specifically those caring for people accessing mental health services.

Objective 3: Developing Communication

Aim: For members to feel well informed and be able to provide a vital link between the Trust and the community.

Members are the vital link between the Trust and its community. We want a thriving membership community; one that is both informed and involved.

It is important to maintain a continual two-way dialogue (both formal & informal) to ensure consistent member engagement. Responding to the constantly shifting digital landscape is important if we are to meet the expectations of those who interact with us. We need to adapt our communications to meet stakeholder expectations, showcasing the benefits of membership more prominently across our communication channels and harnessing new technology.

We have identified four priorities to support objective 3.

Developing Communications	
Priorities	To provide appropriate information to members and the Council of Governors to promote understanding and ensure they are able to make informed decisions
	To communicate the benefits of membership and create new engagement opportunities to a wider audience.

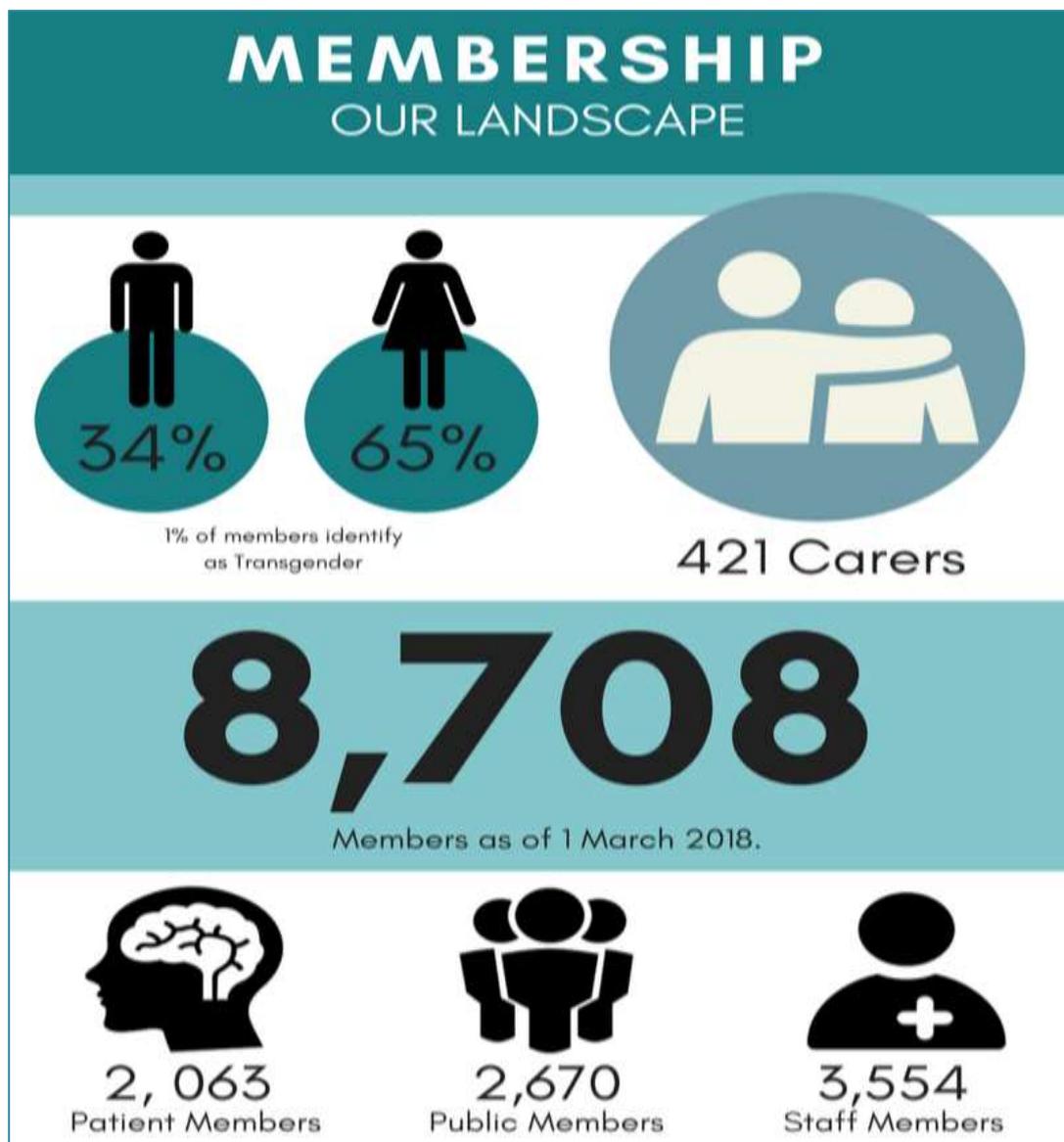
To build more awareness, communication, and interaction between governors and their constituents (including events and use of social media).

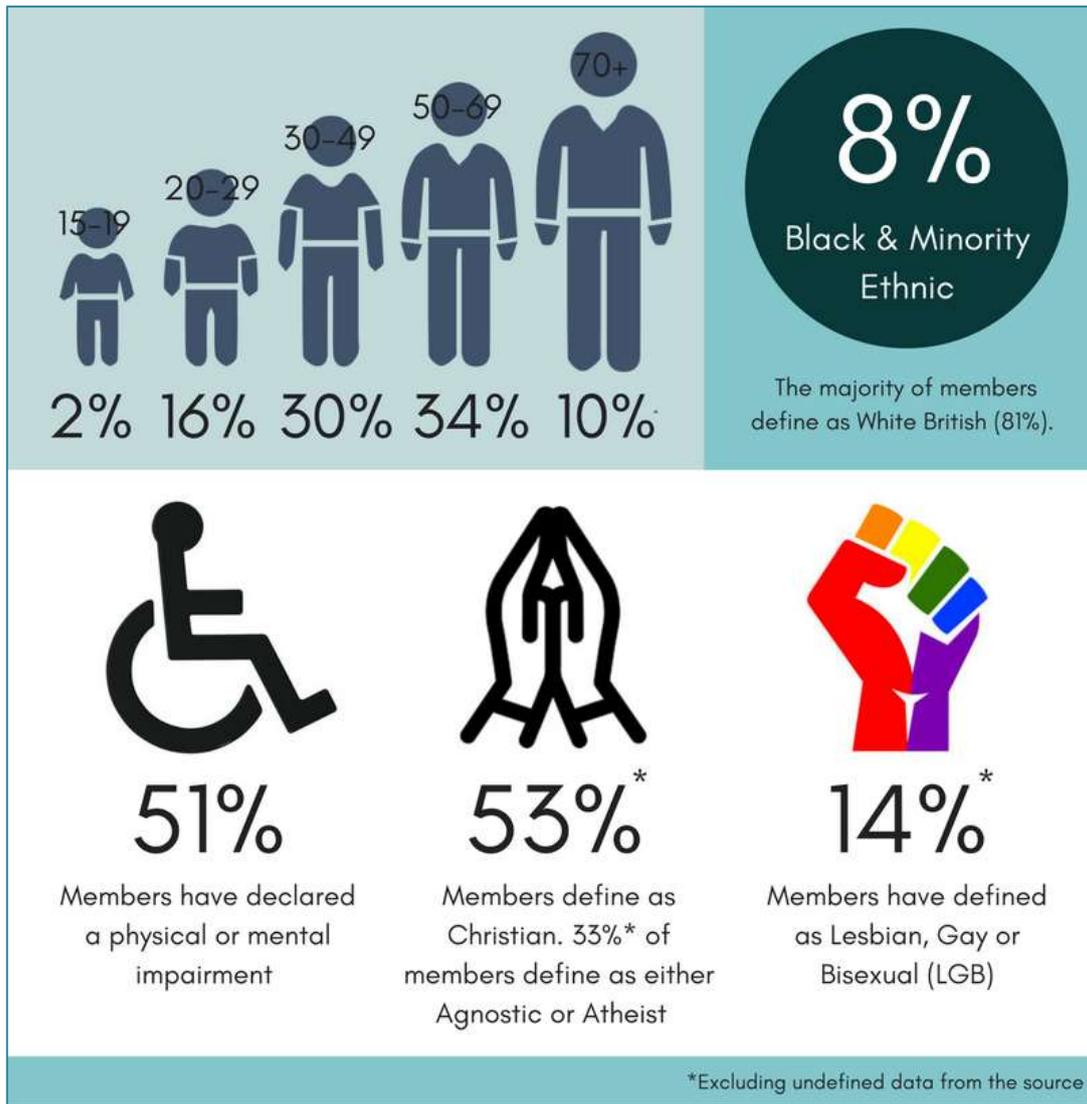
To ensure Partnership Matters is member focused by encouraging members to share their experiences and direct how the publication develops over time

Our Members & the Landscape

The Trust covers a broad geographical catchment area; however our dispersed 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.

Below is a snapshot of the profile of our members, for more information visit www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/equality-performance-hub-equality





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. The constituency is sub-divided into 5 classes to represent geographical areas (W/Sussex, Brighton & Hove, E/Sussex, An Area Outside of Sussex serviced by the Trust).
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 W/Sussex, Brighton & Hove, E/Sussex, An Area Outside of Sussex serviced by the Trust
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.

Developing members Involvement

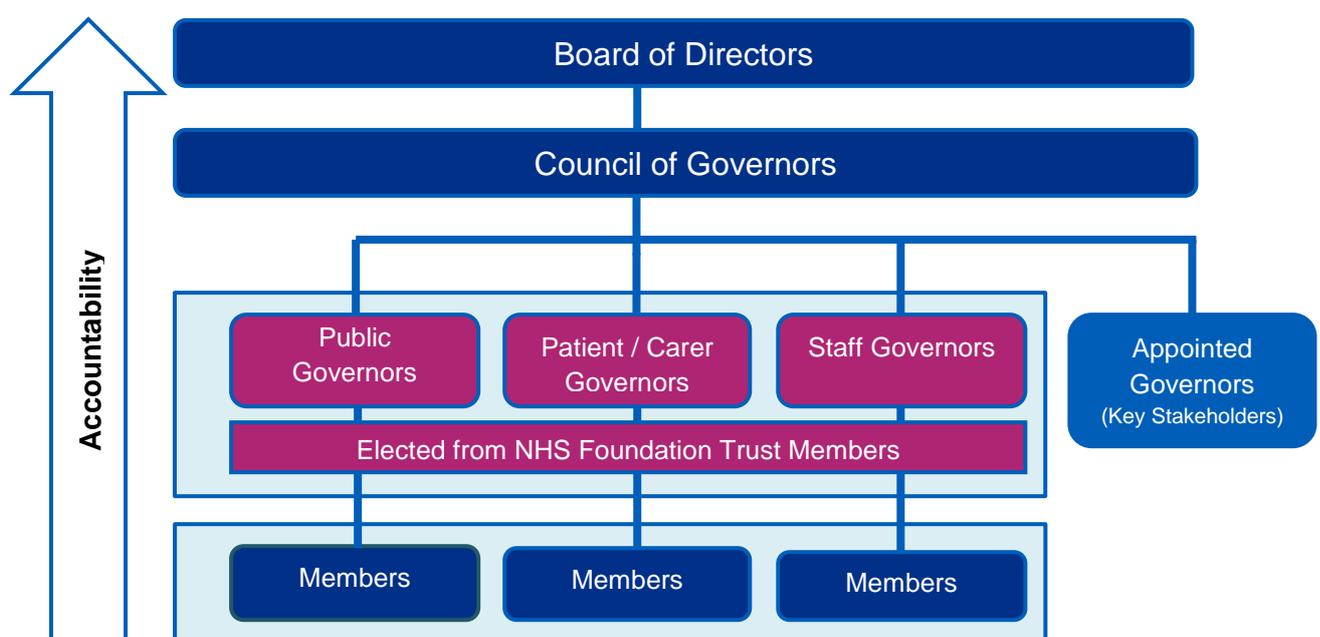
The Trust will provide leadership opportunities for members who wish to play a more prominent role or wish to progress through the tiers. These opportunities will primarily be through the People Participation Team and include

- Opportunities to volunteer
- Opportunities to be an “Expert by Experience”
- Invitations to join “Working Together Groups”
- Opportunities to be involved in our “Recovery College” & “Discovery College”
- Opportunities to become involved in PLACE assessments
- Opportunities to be involved in Quality and Safety Reviews.
- Opportunities to become involved in Trust research
- Opportunities to write articles for the Trust quarterly magazine

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.

Our 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.

Public Governors (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brighton & Hove (1) - East Sussex (2) - West Sussex (2) - Outside of Sussex (2)
Carer Governors (3)	Represent Carers in all geographical areas
Staff Governors (5)	Represent the view of staff. Individuals voluntarily put themselves forward for election. Staff Governors bring a unique perspective to the Council of Governors and have an important role in supporting, informing and influencing at a number of levels.
Service User Governors (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brighton & Hove (2) - East Sussex (3) - West Sussex (4) - Outside of Sussex (2)
Appointed Governors (8)	The appointed Governors are not elected but are invited and appointed by Sussex Partnership on the recommendation of their organisations. 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 NEDs 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 Neds whom they hold to account through
 - o Observing Board Committees
 - o The attendance by designated Non-Executive Directors at Governor Working Groups
 - o Regular access to the Trust Chair (Governor Lunches)

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 quarterly reporting back on progress at the Council of governors through a written or verbal update from the committee Chair.

There is a strong alignment between our Membership and Involvement Strategies and additional layers of governance and scrutiny on the delivery of our objectives will be taken through the Trusts Quality Committee periodically.

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 ft@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk or 0800 0153357.



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