

Council of Governors' meeting, Tuesday 25th March 2014

Agenda item 13/14: Report on GovernWell Pilot Training Sessions

For information.

The FTN are working to implement a new national training and development programme for Foundation Trust governors – GovernWell. The program aims to equip all NHS Foundation Trust governors with the skills required to undertake their important role and to meet their new responsibilities set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

The programme consists of four key elements:

1. **Pre-Induction Resources** -- To support trusts to raise awareness and understanding of the governor role.
2. **Induction Materials** -- To support trusts' own induction programmes.
3. **Core Skills Module** -- For those in the first year of their first term of office and for those governors who require a refresher.
4. **Specialist Skills Module** -- For governors who are more experienced and for those with specific governor duties and responsibilities. Will include Finance and Business, Appointments and Remuneration, Accountability and Quality, Strategy Planning.

At the end of 2012 I attended a presentation of the Pilot for the Core Skills Module. The module included presentations on:

- **Introduction to the NHS** – The framework within which Foundation Trusts operate and how the links operate.
- **The Governor and the FT** – The FT code of governance. The original governor role and how it has expanded. Chain of accountability.
- **Effective Questioning and Challenge** – Developing the right skills to get your views across. Why do we ask them? Why don't we ask them? How do we ask them?
- **An Introduction to NHS Finances** – Funding levels and the financial climate. Funding flows around the NHS. FT freedoms and the role of governors. Business development.
- **Quality Matters** – What is quality? (Clinical effectiveness, patient safety, patient experience.) Cycle of improvement (owning, setting, monitoring, improving). Who is accountable? (Regulators, commissioners, professional bodies.)

Overall I felt that this module would give any new governor a good grounding on how the NHS operates and what they should be doing as a governor.

In June 2013 I attended a Pilot session for NHS Finance and Business Skills. This module is to enable governors to gain a better understanding of financial flows in the NHS and the financial context in which FTs operate together with an appreciation of income/expenditure, cost improvement plans etc. It also includes understanding the NHS as a business and the governor role in mergers and acquisitions. The module consists of four sessions:

- **NHS Finances** – Overall financial climate. How does funding reach your trust? What do trusts spend money on?
- **Financial Monitoring and Assurance** – What financial information do you see? What does it mean? What role do governors play in trust finances?
- **Business Development: Competition in the Market** – What does competition mean in the NHS and why might it be useful? What is the role of governors in approving business decisions such as mergers, acquisitions and significant transactions.
- **Business Development: non-NHS Income** – What is non-NHS income? Why might trusts need non-NHS income? What is the role of governors in approving increases in non-NHS income?

I found this module very interesting. A good module for those interested in FT finance and you don't need a financial background.

FTGA DEVELOPMENT DAY & AGM

I attended in November 2013.

Outline of agenda:

- Keynote speaker was David Behan, Chief Executive of the Care Quality Commission. He discussed the purpose and role of the CQC and outlined the proposed changes to the way the CQC would inspect and regulate care services.
- Choice of three workshops:
 1. The inner workings of The Independent Panel for Advising Governors – Chair Linda Nash (Chair of the panel). This session looked at the purpose of the Panel and how it functions.
 2. Working with Healthwatch – Chair Paul Devlin (CEO of Birmingham Healthwatch). This session explored the relationship between Healthwatch, FTs and governors.
 3. The Social Media Highway Code – presented by NHS Choices. Social media is an essential tool for all governors. This session outlined which blogs to read, who to follow on twitter and the simplest way to use LinkedIn.

I chose to attend option 3. The presentation was a bit of a disaster because they could not get any of their links running and were therefore unable to show any working examples. No doubt that social media has taken off over the last few years and maybe we should look at ways of using it to our advantage. Member engagement? Governors to communicate with constituents?

- FTGA – Fit for the Future. The Executive outlined the highlights of the past year. They discussed their four key development areas – Strategic Partnerships, Research, Member Engagement and Plans for the Future.

AGM Agenda

- Approval of previous minutes/matters arising. Approved.
- Highlights of last year and building on our strong foundation.
- Financial Review and approval of 2012/13 accounts.
 1. Accounts Approved.
 2. Re-appointment of Auditors – Approved.
 3. Increase in Subscription Fees in line with CPI from 1/9/14 (one year only) – Approved.

Les Catley

Public Governor, Rochford

