



A Strong Foundation for Mental Health
Foundation Trust Members Newsletter
Issue 1 – March 2007

Dear Prospective Member

When we last wrote to you we updated you on the Gloucestershire NHS Financial position for 2005/6. As the achievement of these financial targets became the Partnership Trust's top priority, the decision was made that our application for NHS Foundation Trust Status should be delayed. Since then, the Trust has carried out a number of important changes including a significant programme of service redesign to aid in meeting both the financial challenges facing the Trust and to improve the way in which the Trust provides care. Other developments over the past year include the appointment to the Shadow Council of Governors and the appointment of a new Chief Executive. Some of the key developments have been highlighted in the sections below.

1. Appointment of a New Chief Executive

Following Jeff James' departure in November 2006 to become the new Chief Executive of Wiltshire PCT, the Trust is pleased to announce that it has appointed a new Chief Executive. Shaun Clew was appointed as Chief Executive from the 1 February 2007. Shaun has more than 28 years experience in the NHS, having originally trained as an RMN before moving into management in 1990. During his career, Shaun has been responsible for a number of high performance and innovative services. In 1989, he jointly ran one of the early crisis intervention services and in 1999, integrated community mental health services into a "One Stop Shop for Health". This initiative won the best primary care development project that year. Most recently, the Department of Health recognised his services in a publication looking at the 10 High Impact Changes in Mental Health. Shaun brings significant experience in both commissioning and provision of mental health; learning disability and substance misuse services, having led mental health services in South Warwickshire for the last six years. We hope you join us in welcoming him to the Trust.



2. Our Foundation Trust Application – Where are we now?

When the Trust made the decision to delay its application for Foundation Trust Status, we agreed with Monitor, the independent regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts, that we would inform them in December 2006 about whether or not we wished to proceed with our application to be a Foundation Trust this year. Following a Trust Board meeting held on 18 December, agreement was reached that the Trust would approach Monitor to restart the application process. Monitor agreed to our plans to proceed. This was great news and work is ongoing to pull together the necessary business plans and associated documents in support of our application. We will be making a number of written submissions to Monitor over the coming months as well as attending a Board to Board session. It is hoped that following the assessment process the Trust will become an authorised NHS Foundation Trust on 1 July 2007!

3. NHS Foundation Trusts – What are they and why do we want to be one?

As we have not been in touch for some time, we thought it would be useful if we provided you with a re-cap on what NHS Foundation Trust status means and why we would like to become one.

NHS Foundation Trusts are part of the NHS. They treat NHS patients according to NHS principles and standards. The difference is they will be run locally, not by Government, and so will be able to work closely with their community to develop services in the way that best suits the needs of local people. The new organisations will have boards of governors, with representatives elected by local people and staff. They will be free from Government control and free to manage their own budgets. As a key part of the NHS, Foundation Trusts will continue to be inspected by the Healthcare Commission to the same standards as other NHS Trusts. They will continue to provide services according to the NHS principle of free care – based on need and not the ability to pay – and the assets used to deliver NHS services will be protected under law.

With greater freedoms as an NHS Foundation Trust, we will be able to develop services that are more responsive to local needs. A new funding system will allow us to borrow, up to an agreed limit, and keep any surpluses. We can then use this money to improve facilities and services, without having to go through lengthy bidding procedures in competition with other NHS organisations. We will, however, still be able to apply for funds made available to meet national priorities. We will continue to plan and work closely with other partners in the local NHS and social services. However, the greater freedoms to set up new types of partnerships and to work differently will lead to new and innovative service developments.

4. Members

In receiving this newsletter it means that you are already a prospective Member of the Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. Once the Trust is authorised on 1 July 2007 you will become a fully fledged Member.

What does being a Member entail? A question we get asked frequently. Being an NHS Foundation Trust Member means that you will have greater influence on the development of our services and greater ownership of local strategies. You will help the Trust to strengthen its wider role in mental health promotion and tackling stigma. There will be Members' Events and meetings and quarterly newsletters inviting your thoughts and comments about the running of the Trust. Members can get involved as little or as much as you want. We require nothing from you in return. Being a Member also qualifies you to stand for election to the Council of Governors.

5. Members Event

We are planning to hold a Members Event on 16 April 2007. This event will give prospective Members the opportunity to see the work being carried out within the Trust and there will be stalls, presentations and talks by Trust staff as well as attendance by many local voluntary and community groups. All Members will be invited to attend. It is planned that the event will take place from 1.30pm – 7.00pm at Gloucester Guildhall so you can drop in at whatever time suits you. More information confirming this event will be sent out to you nearer the time!

6. Governors

Back in March 2006, we carried out an election to the Shadow Council of Governors. This was a successful election which saw a number of valuable appointments. Since that time, we have held induction sessions and have recently started some working groups with the prospective Governors looking at areas such as Codes of Conduct, Appointment of Board Members, Membership Involvement and Business Planning.

The Trust has appointed both staff and public Governors:

Public Governors		
Cheltenham Borough Council	3 Posts	Amanda Fisk <i>Vacant Post</i> <i>Vacant Post</i>
Cotswold District Council	2 Posts	Keith Blundell Heather Masek
Forest District Council	2 Posts	Angela Lewis <i>Vacant Post</i>
Gloucester City Council	3 Posts	Anthony Birt Carol Dass <i>Vacant Post</i>
Stroud District Council	3 Posts	Janet Newbould Linda Townley <i>Vacant Post</i>
Tewkesbury Borough Council	2 Posts	Francesca Toland <i>Vacant Post</i>
Staff Governors		
Medical	1 Post	Dr Chandni Mehta
Nursing	3 Posts	Mervyn Dawe Stephen Skinner Anthony Warnes
AHP and Social Care	1 Post	Bronwen Carless
Support Staff	1 Post	Tim Stokes
Management, Administrative and other staff	2 Posts	Richard Butt-Evans Judith Morris

These people are your Governors. Once we become a Foundation Trust you will be able to get in touch with them and they will be able to bring your questions and queries to the attention of the Council of Governors. For now, if you are interested in finding out more about your Governors, please contact Anna Hilditch who can help.

7. By-Election to the Council of Governors

As you will be able to see from the Governors list above, the Trust has six vacant Governor posts within the Public constituencies. We are keen to get these posts filled as soon as possible as we want our Council of Governors to be as representative as possible.

You can stand for election! On Friday 2 March we will be issuing nomination packs to all public members within the constituencies in which vacant posts have arisen. If you are interested in standing for election to the Council of Governors all you need to do is complete the nomination form and return it to us. We are here to offer support and guidance in completing the forms and to offer further advice on what the role of a Governor will entail.

Carol Dass, one of our Prospective Governors for the Gloucester constituency told us about her reasons for applying to be a Governor of the Trust:

“I was pleased to be asked to write this piece because it gave me a chance to take a fresh look at why I wanted to become a Public Governor for Gloucester. And I am convinced that my reasons are still valid and that I continue to be enthusiastic about the role. What attracted me to the role was something I read in the membership application form. It said: “NHS Foundation Trusts become accountable to local people through a Council of Governors, elected by the

Members.” That meant to me that the Members, the local people, must have some involvement in the decision making and that the Governors would be a sort of bridge between the Members and the Foundation Trust.

I was a carer, until my partner died in 2003 from his addiction to alcohol. His death led me to start an organisation called Footprints, a support organisation for carers of those dependent on alcohol or drugs. Even today, support for carers and services for carers are not as good or plentiful as they should be. I am not talking only about carers for those dependent on a substance, but all carers. I have enormous respect for the role they carry out and the considerable time given to those they care for.

So, I thought that becoming a Public Governor would be a perfect opportunity to ensure carers, in particular, became members and that their involvement within the health system would grow and would become even more valued and respected. I did think very carefully before standing as a candidate, making sure I could commit the time and effort it might take. It is a new role in Gloucester so we are all learning together.

Do I detect some cynics among you? Wondering if this will really make a difference? Will the Governors really do anything? Yes, this will really make a difference. If we work together, communicate well and understand each other, it must work. The Governors will have certain duties to carry out and we are beginning to work together already. We have expressed our interests in certain working groups, and most of the groups have held at least one meeting.

So, we, the prospective Governors, are not waiting for authorisation as a Foundation Trust, and then madly scrambling to do the work.....it has already begun!”

8. Join Us!

Do you know anyone who would be interested in becoming a Member of the Trust? If you live in the county of Gloucestershire and are aged 16 or over, you can become a member. Log on and complete an on-line application form from our website at www.partnershiptrust.org.uk or simply send us the name, address (including postcode) and date of birth of any interested parties and we can get them signed up!

Join us!

If you no longer wish to be a member of the Trust – have changed your name or address – or simply wish to know more – please don't hesitate to get in touch. We apologise if the receipt of this information causes any inconvenience and would be happy to update our records accordingly. Thank you.



A Strong Foundation for Mental Health

Please forward any queries or questions to:

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