

Role of the Lead Governor

The role of Lead Governors in Foundation Trusts is very limited as defined by NHS Improvement (formerly Monitor, which became part of NHS Improvement in April 2016). It is to provide liaison between the Council of Governors and NHS Improvement in certain circumstances.

Guidance from NHS Improvement says that *'Where NHS foundation trusts choose to broaden the lead governor's role, directors and the council of governors should agree what it should and should not include'*.

The role of the Lead Governor at ASPH is currently defined in the Trust's Constitution and covers mainly the statutory duties. The relevant parts of the Constitution are Annex 7, clauses 1.1, 1.2, 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9. The Lead Governor is also defined as chairing the Remuneration and Appraisal Committee.

Since the role was first introduced the Governors have agreed informally that they would like the Lead Governor to represent them in certain circumstances mainly to simplify the communication with the Chairman and Board of Directors.

In line with the NHS Improvement guidance the additional Lead Governor duties are documented and were approved at the Council of Governors on 11th December 2013.

Additional Lead Governor Duties

The main purpose of the following duties is to improve the efficiency of communication between the Governors and the Trust and its Directors, particularly regarding the agenda and smooth running of Council of Governor business.

1. To chair informal meetings of the Governors in order to gather opinions about subjects that are requested to be covered at formal Council of Governor meetings. To summarise the Governors' opinions and circulate them to all Governors for comment. To then send the final information to the Trust's Head of Corporate Affairs and/or Chairman and liaise as appropriate regarding the proposed agenda of the forthcoming Council Meeting.
2. To chair informal meetings of the Governors held immediately prior to formal Council Meetings in order to discuss the meeting papers. The purpose of these pre-meetings is for Governors to share their views about points to be raised at the Council Meeting. If a number of people make similar points then one Governor can be agreed as the first Governor to raise the subject at the Council Meeting. In certain cases the Governors may decide they would like the Lead Governor to speak on their behalf at the Council Meeting, however this should not be the default situation.
3. To speak at Council Meetings on behalf of Governors when there is an agreement to do so and in such cases to be clear the opinions expressed are of a group of Governors and not just his/her own. Note: This should not be regarded as a majority

or consensus view of all Governors, merely of those attending the pre-meeting. In all cases individual Governors are entitled to express their own views at Council Meetings.

4. To liaise with the Trust's Head of Corporate Affairs and/or the Chairman regarding other meetings that the Governors request and are then agreed, such as periodic meetings with the whole Board of Directors, meetings with only the Non-Executive Directors, meetings with other Trust management and hospital 'walk about' visits.
5. To update Governors as appropriate on relevant matters taken up on their behalf.
6. To speak on behalf of Governors at the Trust's Annual Meeting.
7. Not to represent the views of Governors in any other situation except when agreement has been received from the majority of Governors.