

Membership matters

Foundation Trust Members Newsletter – May 2026

News and updates from North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust (NCM).

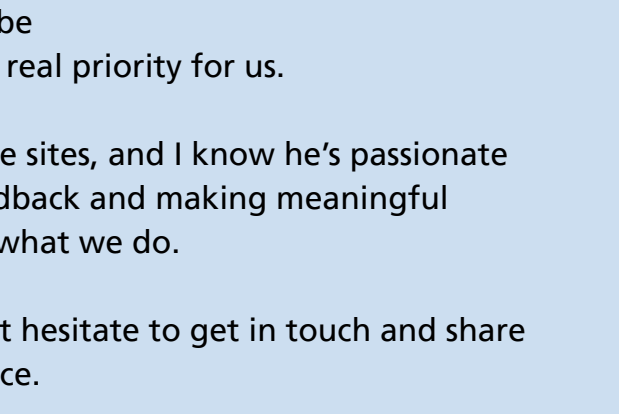
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Welcome

Hello everyone,

A very warm welcome to all members of our newly integrated organisation, North Cheshire and Merseyside NHS Foundation Trust. It's an exciting time for us all, and both the governors and I are really looking forward to representing you, as well as getting to know and work alongside our new colleagues across the trust.



We're keen to continue our observation and service visits across our sites, although with 66 locations, we may need a little patience as we make our way around them all! Please be assured that connecting with as many of you as possible is a real priority for us.

Our new chair, Andy, and I have already started visiting some sites, and I know he's passionate about getting out to every single one. Listening to your feedback and making meaningful improvements wherever we can will remain at the heart of what we do.

If you're a member, we'd love to hear from you, please don't hesitate to get in touch and share what matters most to you. Your voice truly makes a difference.

While our name may have changed, so much of what matters will stay the same, especially the wide range of services and care we provide to our communities. If you use our services, there will be no immediate changes to your care or treatment. You'll continue to hear from your care teams in the same way and attend appointments in the same locations.

All of our hospital buildings and community sites will keep their current names, addresses, and contact details, so you can continue to access our services just as you always have. We're really looking forward to this new chapter together.

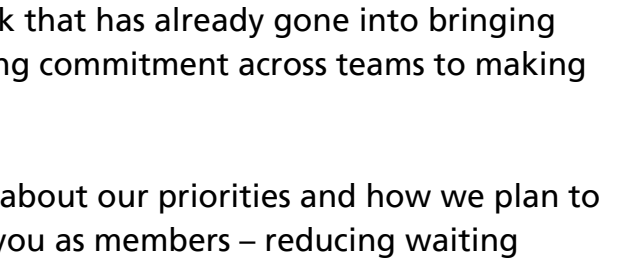
If you have any suggestions that you would like us to cover in the newsletter, do not hesitate to get in touch on ncm.foundation@nhs.net We look forward to hearing from you.

Sue Fitzpatrick

Welcome from the new chair

Andy Carter

I am very pleased to introduce myself to you as chair of North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust, and to welcome you as members at the start of this important new chapter for our organisation.



I want to start by sharing a little bit about me and my background. Between 2019 and 2024 I had the honour of representing Warrington South in Westminster as a member of parliament. During that time, I also served as parliamentary private secretary in the Department for Transport and Department for Work and Pensions. Earlier in my career, I led a number of national and regional media businesses, including launching Smooth Radio. Warrington has been home for almost 20 years, and I continue to feel a deep connection to the communities we serve.

Wednesday 1 April marked a significant milestone for our trust, with our first official day operating as North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust. It was also my first day in post, and I had the privilege of chairing our first Board meeting as a newly formed organisation. What was immediately clear was the enormous amount of work that has already gone into bringing our community and acute services together, and the strong commitment across teams to making this integration a success.

Over the coming months, we will be sharing more detail about our priorities and how we plan to deliver them. Many of these will already feel familiar to you as members – reducing waiting times, improving patient flow, strengthening partnership working across health and social care, and making better use of digital tools so that patients can access care more easily. Bringing community and hospital services together gives us a real opportunity to improve outcomes and experiences for local people, while also building a supportive and sustainable organisation for our staff.

I have already had the privilege of visiting teams across our sites, including Halton Hospital, maternity services at Warrington Hospital, our district nurses at Bath Street and Grappenhall, and one of our community dental teams in Greater Manchester. These conversations have been invaluable and have reinforced just how much expertise, compassion and commitment exists across the trust. Over the next few months, I intend to spend as much time as possible out and about, listening and learning.

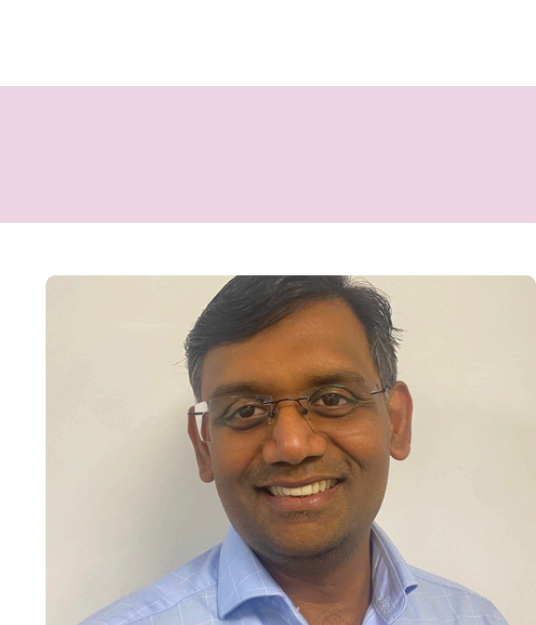
Your role as members is an essential part of our foundation trust model. Through your engagement, feedback and support for our governors, you help ensure that the voices of patients, families and communities remain central to how we work and how we make decisions. I am grateful for your continued involvement and hope you will stay actively engaged with us as we shape the future of North Cheshire and Mersey together.

I am genuinely excited about what we can achieve together, and I am proud to serve as your chair.

News from the trust

NCM named as regional champion at NHS Excellence Awards

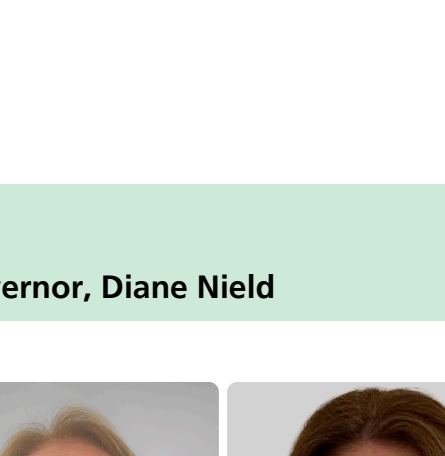
An outstanding programme to develop aspiring leaders from ethnic minority backgrounds has been named as a regional champion at the inaugural NHS Excellence Awards. The 'Your Future Your Way' programme has been recognised in the Valuing Our People category for its work to break down barriers to career progression.



[Read more.](#)

Accreditation achievements

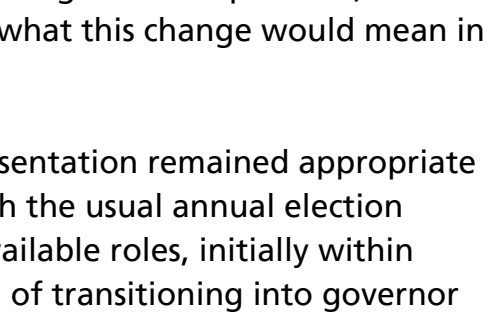
We are pleased to share that North Cheshire and Mersey have successfully been re-accredited as a Veteran Aware organisation. This recognition reinforces our ongoing commitment to ensuring that people who have served in the armed forces and their families are recognised, supported and able to access the care they need.



Hello from your governor

Suresh Krishna Arni Sukumaran

Suresh, head of medical engineering, was elected as staff governor in December 2025. With strong personal and professional ties to the organisation, he is passionate about fairness, inclusion and creating opportunities for all staff to thrive.



We caught up with him to hear about his priorities and what he hopes to achieve in the role.

[Read more](#) from Suresh.

If you want to contact your governors, please email ncm.foundation@nhs.net with your query or with a request for them to contact you, include your location so that we can ensure the correct governor gets in touch with you.

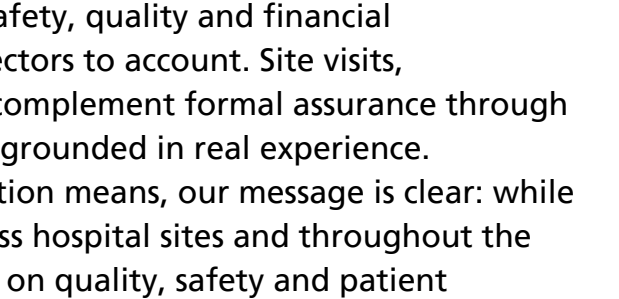
You can also call us on 01925 662139.

[Find out more about your local governors.](#)

Governance through change

Reflections from your lead, Sue Fitzpatrick and deputy lead governor, Diane Nield

Reaching 1 April and formally becoming North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust marked the culmination of many months of detailed planning and careful governance oversight.



Governors were involved from the very beginning ensuring that non-executive directors provided oversight and appropriate challenge regarding the decision on the type of transaction to be undertaken. We were informed every step of the way. For governors, preparation gained pace in August and September, once agreement on integration was reached and attention turned to what this change would mean in practice for our roles as elected representatives.

As governors are elected by members, it was essential that representation remained appropriate and up to date. Governor vacancies were therefore filled through the usual annual election process, and existing governors were encouraged to apply for available roles, initially within Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals, with the expectation of transitioning into governor roles within the integrated organisation. Alongside this, key governance documents, including the Constitution, were reviewed to ensure they became fit for purpose for a larger trust delivering both hospital and community services.

In our roles as lead and deputy lead governor, a central focus throughout the transition was providing assurance. This meant maintaining consistent oversight of Board and committee meetings, while adapting to a broader scope of services and information. With the inclusion of former Bridgewater Community Healthcare services, governors were exposed to new and sometimes unfamiliar datasets. However, reporting frameworks have remained broadly consistent, supported by shared senior leadership and joint committees that present information in a common format. This has enabled clear comparison, transparency and effective scrutiny. Since integration, we have begun visiting services that now operate as part of North Cheshire and Mersey. Previously, much of our direct experience was limited to a small number of hospital sites. We now span more than 66 locations across Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester, varying significantly in size, function and setting. Despite these differences, our approach to visits is consistent. We look at first impressions, leadership, safety, quality of care and, importantly, how well staff are supported to do their jobs. The openness and honesty of staff during these visits have been reassuring, and it has strengthened our confidence in continuity of care and support for colleagues following integration.

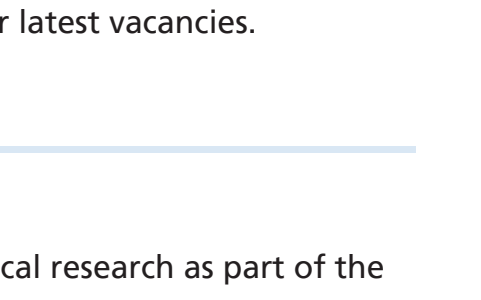
What stands out most in these conversations is the dedication of staff. Across all services, there is a clear commitment to patients and a genuine desire to provide the best possible care. From a governance perspective, this reinforces the importance of our role in supporting improvement where possible.

Now, as one organisation, governors remain focused on safety, quality and financial performance, while continuing to hold non-executive directors to account. Site visits, conversations with staff and engagement with members complemented formal assurance through meeting papers, helping ensure that governance remains grounded in real experience. For members who may feel uncertain about what integration means, our message is clear: while the organisation's name has changed, care continues across hospital sites and throughout the community, delivered by our dedicated staff, with a focus on quality, safety and patient experience. Over time, improved integration should make patients' journeys simpler, more joined up and better supported.

As lead and deputy lead governor, we remain committed to strong, visible governance, maintaining continuity, expanding engagement and ensuring your voices continue to shape the future of North Cheshire and Mersey.

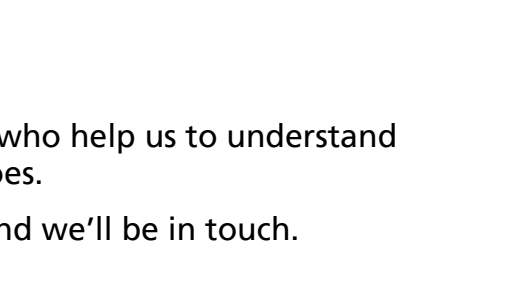
WHH Charity

At [WHH Charity](#), we are proud to see the kindness and generosity of our community every day. This ongoing support helps us enhance care and create experiences that truly matter for patients, families and staff across our hospitals.



WHH Charity 30th birthday celebrations

This year marks a special milestone as [WHH Charity celebrates its 30th birthday](#). It is a moment to reflect on three decades of generosity and impact, and to look ahead to what we can continue to achieve together.



There are many ways to get involved in our anniversary year. You can join in with our 30 for 30 challenge, take part in fundraising activities, come along to our events, volunteer your time, or help spread the word. Every contribution, big or small, helps make a real difference.

Join our events and challenges

We have an exciting programme of [events](#) planned throughout 2026, with something for everyone. Get your steps in on a giant walk, face your fears with a thrilling abseil descent, or race across the water in our team dragon boat race. We are also proud to support [Tom Dore's fundraising challenge](#), taking on seven marathons in seven days to support the neonatal unit at Warrington Hospital. You can follow his journey or get involved to show your support.

Something nice to share

Recently, a [new ICU balcony](#) opened at Warrington Hospital thanks to a £140,000 donation from the League of Friends. The space gives critically ill patients safe access to fresh air and a peaceful outdoor setting, bringing comfort and special moments with loved ones.

To learn more about our charity or to get involved, email whh.charity@nhs.net or [visit our website](#).

News at NCM

News and updates from the Trust are available to view on the [latest news pages](#) on our website.

Events at NCM

For more information on events that WHH are involved with or arranging visit the [events section](#) on the NCM website or contact ncm.engagement@nhs.net

Work at NCM

If you are interested in a role in healthcare and with us, check out our latest vacancies.

[Click here to view our current vacancies.](#)

Get involved

Support vital research work at NCM by signing up to take part in clinical research as part of the Pathway to Research programme.

[Find out more.](#)

Experts by Experience (EbyEs) are volunteers with lived experience, who help us to understand how it feels to either access services, or to care for someone who does.

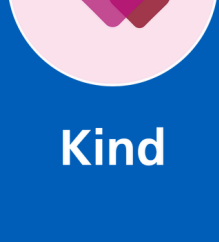
Signing up takes just a minute or two. Just fill in the form at [here](#) and we'll be in touch.

For more information, please email ncm.engagement@nhs.net

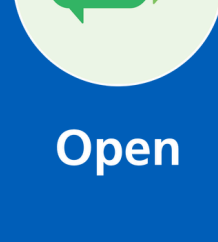
Your governors

For more information on the role of governors at NCM, from some of our current governors, please watch our [YouTube video](#).

For more information on North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust visit www.northcheshireandmersey.nhs.uk/



Kind



Open



Fair



One team