

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

Trust Board - November 2011

Observer Status at Trust Board Meetings

Executive Lead	John Davies, Chairman
Author	
Strategic Domain	B. Patients, GPs and Commissioners
Organisational Objective	B7. Work in partnership to ensure services meet local needs
Executive Summary	<p>This paper sets out a proposal formal Observers to the Trust Board from :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telford & Wrekin Local Involvement Network, ▪ Shropshire County Local Involvement Network (operating as Community Involvement in Care and Health) ▪ Montgomeryshire Community Health Council <p>at Trust Board meetings in accordance with the provisions set out in Standing Order 3.43.</p>
Recommendations	<p>The Board is asked to APPROVE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inviting Board Observers from Telford & Wrekin Local Involvement Network, Shropshire County Local Involvement Network (operating as Community Involvement in Care and Health) and Montgomeryshire Community Health Council in accordance with Standing Order 3.43. ▪ The Board Observer will be the Chairman of the relevant body or their named deputy confirmed in writing at least annually to the Chairman of the Trust Board. Only the Chairman of the relevant body or their named deputy may attend as Board Observers. Other representatives from the relevant bodies may attend as members of the public. ▪ Board Observers are not members of the Trust Board and do not have the corporate decision-making responsibilities of Trust Board members, for example, they do not have voting rights. ▪ Board Observers are required to comply with all relevant Standing Orders of the Trust Board in relation to proceedings, standards and behaviour. Specific attention is drawn to the Standing Orders in relation to the Declaration of Interests (Standing Order 6) and Standards of Business Conduct (Standing Order 8) which shall apply to Board Observers. ▪ Board Observers are invited to attend Part I of the Trust Board meeting, with reserved seats in the front row of the public area to ensure that their roles and responsibilities are distinct from those of the Chairman and Members of the Trust Board. ▪ In common with members of the Trust Board, Board Observers may be called on to speak by the Chairman of the Trust Board and may ask the Chairman for permission to speak.

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Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ This paper recommends the recognition of formal observers to the Trust Board from Telford & Wrekin Local Involvement Network, Shropshire County Local Involvement Network (operating as Community Involvement in Care and Health) and Montgomeryshire Community Health Council.
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Many Trusts across the country have formal observers at their Trust Board meetings.▪ The Trust previously recognised formal observers from Community Health Councils before they were abolished in England, and subsequently from the Trust's Patient and Public Involvement Forum before this was abolished. There are currently no formal observers, and representatives from local patient representative bodies only have the right to speak during the standing item for questions from the floor.▪ A formal request has been received from Montgomeryshire Community Health Council for observer/speaking rights at meetings of the Trust Board. The Trust Chairman has indicated that he is supportive of this approach and has asked that a proposal be developed which has been discussed and supported by Executive Directors.▪ Standing Order 3.43 permits formal observers. This states that "The Trust will decide what arrangements and terms and conditions it feels are appropriate to offer in extending an invitation to observers to attend and address any of the Trust Board's meetings and may change, alter or vary these terms and conditions as it deems fit."▪ These arrangements will need to be reviewed subject to changes in patient and public involvement mechanisms that may result from the Health and Social Care Bill 2011 currently being discussed. This proposes the abolition of Local Involvement Networks and the establishment of local HealthWatch.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Observers on behalf of patient and public monitoring organisations bring a valuable patient perspective to Board discussions, ensuring that Trust Boards maintain a strong focus on the needs of patients when making decisions about the services they operate.▪ The main statutory bodies providing a public monitoring role are Local Involvement Networks in England and Community Health Councils in Wales. The Trust has two main Local Involvement Networks (Telford & Wrekin; Shropshire County) and one main Community Health Council (Montgomeryshire)▪ It is vital for the purposes of Board Governance that a clear distinction is made between non-statutory observer roles and statutory members of the Trust Board. Clear and simple guidelines will support both the Trust and the observers to ensure that the role is beneficial for patients and for public scrutiny.▪ We also need to consider appropriate engagement between the Board Observers and other patient involvement and experience mechanisms in the Trust, and particularly the Patient Experience and Involvement Board. It is proposed that Board Observers are invited to attend the Patient Experience and Involvement Board, to reinforce and strengthen the reporting arrangements from this important group to the Trust Board alongside the existing reports from the Chief Nurse (as Chairman of the Patient Experience and Involvement Board).

Recommendations

The Board is asked to **APPROVE:**

- Inviting Board Observers from Telford & Wrekin Local Involvement Network, Shropshire County Local Involvement Network (operating as Community Involvement in Care and Health) and Montgomeryshire Community Health Council in accordance with Standing Order 3.43.
- The Board Observer will be the Chairman of the relevant body or their named deputy confirmed in writing at least annually to the Chairman of the Trust Board. Only the Chairman of the relevant body or their named deputy may attend as Board Observers. Other representatives from the relevant bodies may attend as members of the public.
- Board Observers are not members of the Trust Board and do not have the corporate decision-making responsibilities of Trust Board members, for example, they do not have voting rights.
- Board Observers are required to comply with all relevant Standing Orders of the Trust Board in relation to proceedings, standards and behaviour. Specific attention is drawn to the Standing Orders in relation to the Declaration of Interests (Standing Order 6) and Standards of Business Conduct (Standing Order 8) which shall apply to Board Observers.
- Board Observers are invited to attend Part I of the Trust Board meeting, with reserved seats in the front row of the public area to ensure that their roles and responsibilities are distinct from those of the Chairman and Members of the Trust Board.
- In common with members of the Trust Board, Board Observers may be called on to speak by the Chairman of the Trust Board and may ask the Chairman for permission to speak.