

Our Ref:FT/061018

19th October 2006

Walsall Local Neighbourhood Partnerships - Request for Nominations

Dear Chairman

Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust is applying to join the 48 other hospital Trusts in England that have so far achieved Foundation Trust Status. We are working towards receiving authorisation as a Foundation Trust in Autumn 2007.

NHS Foundation Trusts are established in law with a new special form of public ownership as independent Public Benefit Corporations. This means far greater local ownership and involvement of patients, the public and staff rather than control from the Department of Health. The principles behind NHS Foundation Trusts build on the sense of ownership many local people and staff, feel for their hospital.

We are seeking representatives of the public from across the Borough to join our Foundation Trust **Stakeholder Reference Group** to take us up to authorisation. The purpose of the group is to:

1. Provide a forum for communication and informal consultation on Foundation Trust development
2. Through informal debate and discussion, advise the Trust on the acceptability and appropriateness of its Foundation Trust strategy
3. Through informal debate and discussion, advise the Trust on the acceptability and appropriateness of its proposed Foundation Trust governance (management and accountability) arrangements
4. Support the Trust in ensuring an appropriate public consultation process and communication strategy
5. Assist the Trust in understanding the wider implications of Foundation Trust status
6. Assist the Trust in realising the full potential of Foundation Trust Status

Other members of the Reference Group include:

- Walsall Primary Care Trust CEO or nominee
- Walsall MBC CEO or nominee
- Representatives from patient organisations e.g. PPI Forum
- Representative from Wolverhampton University
- Representatives from Walsall Regeneration Company
- Staff Representatives
- Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust Chair, CEO, Project Director and Communications Officer

Meetings will take place in the early evening, approximately once every two months and we will endeavour to meet at different venues across the Borough each time.

We are seeking nominations for individuals who can demonstrate a genuine interest in Healthcare and ideally who are already involved in community health interest groups. **I'd be extremely grateful if you could provide a couple of nominations as soon as possible from your LNP area.**

Further information can be obtained from the Communications Team at the Manor Hospital on 01922 656689 or email foundation.trust@walsallhospitals.nhs.uk

Further information about NHS Foundation Trusts can be found on the Department of Health website: www.doh.gov.uk

I look forward to receiving your nominations, so that invitations can be issued for our first meeting on the 6th December 2006.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Smith
Director of Development