

## GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

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## **GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

**The Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust is an apolitical organisation.**

In undertaking the role of Governor of the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust, all Governors shall read and comply with the following declaration.

**I will:**

### **General**

1. Abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan), which are listed below.

i) Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or friends.

ii) Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in their performance of their official duties.

iii) Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

iv) Accountability

Holders of the public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

v) Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

vi) Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

vii) Leadership

Holders of the public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

2) Act in the best interests of the Trust at all times;

3) Adhere to the Trust's values and ensure compliance with the Trust's Constitution and the Equality and Diversity Policy;

4) Not discriminate against anyone for any reason;

- 5) Recognise that the Council of Governors exercises collective, not individual, decision-making;
- 6) Contribute to the work of the Council of Governors in order for it to fulfil its role as defined in the Trust's constitution;
- 7) Attend meetings of the Council of Governors, members' meetings and development days and such other groups or committees as is necessary in order to carry out the role;
- 8) Recognise that the Council of Governors has no staff managerial/supervisory role within the RD&E NHSFT;
- 9) Recognise and respect that only collective decisions are promoted and supported in the public domain;
- 10) Support the vision and aims of the RD&E in developing as a successful NHSFT;
- 11) Where applicable, support and assist the Accountable Officer of the RD&E NHSFT in their role and responsibilities;
- 12) Cooperate fully and in a timely manner with any authorised due process or investigation, whether the investigation concerns alleged breaches of this Code or any other matter;
- 13) Support the Lead Governor and Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct at all times;
- 14) Seek to ensure that the membership of the constituency I represent is properly informed and given the opportunity to influence services;
- 15) Act as an ambassador for the Trust at all times;
- 16) By my actions not bring the Trust into disrepute;
- 17) Declare if my circumstances change and I can no longer continue my role as a Governor;
- 18) Challenge unacceptable behaviours at the time as far as reasonable and/or informally raise concerns directly with the Lead Governor/Deputy or Trust Chair;

### **Personal Behaviours**

- 19) Accept responsibility for my own actions;
- 20) Show my commitment to working as a team member by working constructively and collaboratively with other Governors and my colleagues in the NHS and the wider community;
- 21) Value fellow Governors as colleagues and consider their views;
- 22) Not expect any privilege arising from being a Governor and will not use my role as a Governor to pursue my own personal agenda or beliefs or that of any organisation that I belong to;
- 23) Uphold and respect the confidentiality of information received as a Governor and not disclose confidential information to the public;
- 24) Not knowingly make or permit any untrue or misleading statement relating to my own duties or the integrity and functions of the RD&E NHSFT;

- 25) Be punctual, have prepared for all meetings in advance, and have read the relevant papers as far as practicable;
- 26) Not start a second conversation during a meeting/presentation, inappropriately interrupt, or talk over people;
- 27) Respect the Chair of any meeting;

### **Communications**

- 28) Contact the Stakeholder Engagement & Inclusion Director (Trust head of communications) before liaising with the media;
- 29) Use professional, respectful and courteous tone and language in all communication including e-mails;
- 30) Take into account how any communication, including an email, might be perceived by the recipient;
- 31) When using email, identify all other recipients (i.e. do not use blind copy (BCC)), avoid use of "Reply All" wherever possible and to consider whether email is the most appropriate way to address the matter;

**I accept that I am required to abide by this Code of Conduct at all times, whether in the course of carrying out my duties as a Governor or otherwise.**

**Any breach of this Code or failure to uphold this declaration will be addressed in line with the Trust's Constitution and the Trust's Standard Operating Procedure for the Process for Alleged Breach of the Governors Code of Conduct**