

HOW AN NHS FOUNDATION TRUST WORKS

Q: How does an NHS Foundation Trust operate?

A:

- The Board of Directors runs the day-to-day operations of the Trust.
- In addition, a Council of Governors will be made up of elected members of the public, stakeholders, and staff and appointed people from local organisations.
- The Council of Governors represents the interests of the local community and can influence the strategic direction and service development of the Trust. However, they are not involved in operational matters.

Q: Will becoming an NHS Foundation Trust mean that we become too business-minded?

A:

- All NHS Trusts have to spend money wisely, hire the best staff, and think carefully about what they do.
- As an NHS Foundation Trust, we would have to be more like a business, but a business owned by its members – the public, staff and stakeholders. The NHS Foundation Trust Governors will ensure that whatever we do is for the benefit of our patients, their families and services.

Q: Will becoming an NHS Foundation Trust mean more bureaucracy?

A:

- It should mean less bureaucracy. We would no longer be supervised day to day by the Strategic Health Authority and the Department of Health. The public interest is protected by an independent regulator called 'Monitor'.
- 'Monitor' will check how we are running the services we are required to run, that our finances are sound, and that we run ourselves properly. They are much less concerned about the detailed decisions we make on services.
- Our day-to-day performance will be overseen by our Governors and NHS Foundation Trust members.

Q: How will NHS Foundation Trusts be regulated?

A: Each NHS Foundation Trust will have an authorisation (which is a like permit) issued by the Independent Regulator ('Monitor'). Authorisations will set out the framework within which an NHS Foundation Trust will agree to operate. They will be individually tailored to suit the circumstances of each NHS Foundation Trust. Its terms will cover things that an NHS Foundation Trust can and cannot do, such as:

- the governance arrangements that must be in place
- the NHS services that must be provided and the circumstances in which those services can be changed
- any safeguards on disposal of any property or other assets that are needed to provide NHS services