

## Meet the governor: Richard Allen



Richard Allen has been lead governor at Kingston Hospital for the last four years and will complete his term this June. Richard was elected as a public governor, representing the Kingston community. We spoke to Richard about his time as a governor.

### **Q. When were you elected as a governor?**

I was elected a governor in autumn 2012, in readiness of the establishment of Kingston Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. I was then elected to be the first Lead Governor, but because of a pressing work commitment was unable to carry forward this opportunity. Subsequently I was then elected to the position in 2016.

### **Q. Why did you decide to be a governor at Kingston Hospital?**

Kingston Hospital has mattered to me personally throughout my whole life. I was born in the maternity unit and in 1996 I had my life saved by the swift actions of a junior doctor.

### **Q. Do you live locally?**

I live in Berrylands.

### **Q. How does your role as governor support the hospital, patients and members?**

Governors are frequently a channel of information between the public, staff and the Trust management. The lead governor often has to pool the feedback from other governors, combining an array of thoughts, concerns, praise and opinions.

### **Q. What other involvement have you had in the local community?**

In October, I will complete five years as Chairman of the Kingston branch of Diabetes UK. In May 2019 I also became the first Chairman of the national charity RALPHH, whose aims include providing defibrillation equipment at sporting locations – the first of these will be installed at Kingston Rowing Club later this summer. I am also a past Chairman of Kingston Victim Support.

### **Q. What do you think have been the biggest successes of the hospital over the past four years?**

I believe we have seen improvements in the transparency of decisions being made, so now the public have extended means of finding out what is happening at their hospital. I am also pleased to have played a small part in helping improve service to patients with diabetes – we now have one of the best reputations in the country.

### **Q. What has been your highlight as lead governor?**

No single highlight but I am pleased to have helped governors reach many collective majority views on various matters, increasing the influence and reputation of the Council of Governors.

### **Q. Would you recommend the role of governor to members of Kingston Hospital?**

For those prepared to devote the necessary time, the role of a governor can be extremely rewarding and the Trust will always benefit from independent minded people who combine their own research with public accessibility.