

Council of Governors	Item: Proposed Return of Governor Desks
Date: 12th October 2021	Enclosure: F
<p>Executive Summary: The attached paper provides background and a proposed way of re-introducing Governor Desks in the Trust with covid-related restrictions still in place.</p> <p>The Governor Desks were used as a way for Governors to obtain feedback and triangulate on patient experience, as well as to promote membership to non-member patients and visitors.</p> <p>The Governor Desks ceased during the pandemic, however there is a desire to re-instate them when safe, and it's noted that volunteering has started to re-commence in varied forms.</p> <p>The Chief Nurse and Infection Prevention and Control team have endorsed, in principle, the phased return, however the Trust will need to continuously monitor the Covid-19 situation and respond, where needed, to any significant changes.</p>	
For: Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assurance <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion and input <input type="checkbox"/> Decision/approval <input type="checkbox"/>	
Sponsor (Executive Lead):	Sam Armstrong, Director of Corporate Affairs and Trust Secretary
Author:	Sam Armstrong, Director of Corporate Affairs and Trust Secretary
Author Contact Details:	samuel.armstrong@nhs.net
Risk Implications – Link to Assurance Framework or Corporate Risk Register:	-
Legal / Regulatory / Reputation Implications:	-
Link to Relevant CQC Domain: Safe <input type="checkbox"/> Effective <input type="checkbox"/> Caring <input type="checkbox"/> Responsive <input type="checkbox"/> Well Led <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Link to Relevant Strategic Theme:	-
Document Previously Considered By:	-
<p>Recommendations: The Council of Governors are asked to note the planned re-introduction of the Governor Desks.</p>	

Return of Governor Desk

Background

The Governor Desk programme previously in place created opportunities for Governors to meet with patients, their family and friends to hear about experiences whilst being treated at the hospital. It also provided the opportunity for Governors to encourage people to become members of the Foundation Trust by completing a membership form.

The Governor Desk was stood down due to the pandemic, along with such usual activities as face-to-face meetings and volunteering work onsite at the Trust. It is noted that while everyone is aware of the restrictions still in place in hospitals – even though national restrictions have been reduced – many Governors are keen for the Governor Desk to recommence when safe and allowable.

In keeping with developments with the volunteering programme at the Trust, the Trust is now exploring the possibility of re-introducing the Governor Desk. Any Governor wishing to take part in these would need to complete a risk assessment similar to those completed by volunteers. They must also agree to wear a mask when conducting the Governor Desk session, regularly sanitise their hands, maintain social distancing rules and provide evidence they have had both vaccination shots, and where appropriate have received a booster shot.

Pre-pandemic Governor Desk process

Typically, two governors would be based in a nominated department for two hours e.g. Outpatients.

The main purpose of the Governor Desk was twofold:

1. To collect information about the current or recent patient/family experience of the hospital and the department(s) visited.
2. To sign up patients, family members, members of the public to becoming a member of the Kingston Hospital Foundation Trust.

When approaching patients or family members, Governors introduce themselves and explain why they are speaking to them.

- During the Governor desk session, Governors should gather as much information as possible about the patients and visitors experience of the hospital, and note down comments, positive and negative.
- Patient information is confidential so Governors should take care with the completed feedback forms and the questions that they ask – **keep questions general, and do not note down patient's name/ address/ date of birth/ any clinical or personal information.**

Governors participating in the Governor Desks will receive further information on its format as part of the Governor Desk packs, and any training provided by the Corporate Governance Team.

Feedback

In normal times, regular Feedback Reports are presented to the Governor Membership, Recruitment and Engagement Committee (MREC) and Governor Quality Scrutiny Committee (GQSC) as well as the Patient Experience Committee. MREC receives quarterly data on number of patients spoken to and the number of new members recruited whilst the GQSC receives quarterly reports of patient feedback. An annual analysis of the patient feedback is now prepared by the Chair of the GQSC and presented to its October meeting.

NHSE Guidance for Hospitals

The updated guidance from NHS England for hospitals, dated 27th September 2021, has suggested circumstances where the need for social distancing can be reduced. A reduction of physical distancing from 2m to pre-COVID levels with appropriate mitigations, such as the continued use of face coverings/masks, in clinical areas where patient admission is planned/scheduled can be implemented, however this reduction in physical distancing will only apply to clinical areas where patients are asymptomatic, not a contact of a suspected/confirmed case of COVID-19 and have a negative test for SARS-CoV-2 and fully vaccinated.

Providers of healthcare will need to undertake local risk assessments to include the hierarchy of controls, to identify where physical distancing can safely be reduced, and this decision will need to be based upon factors such as the configuration of wards/departments, controlled access, ventilation etc.

Proposed re-introduction of Governor Desks

The Trust protocols to ensure a safe environment for patients is overseen by the Chief Nurse and the Infection Prevention and Control Team, and its safe implementation in the Trust is regularly reviewed. Areas that may be used for Governor Desks would need to be reviewed and advice on the protocols provided to Governors attending. In the absence of this, all should assume the two metre social distancing requirements remain, along with the current necessity of personal risk assessment and continued use of face coverings.

Areas initially proposed for Governor Desks to be re-introduced are as follows:

- Outpatients
- REU
- Pain Clinic

The appropriateness and possible use of these areas does need to be confirmed.

By completing the self-assessment (appendix A) and sharing the results with the Director of Corporate Affairs, Governors will need to demonstrate that they are within an acceptable risk level to participate.

The process of commencing the Governor Desk sessions would have Governors initially check in for their session with a member of the Corporate Governance team who would escort them to the area where the Governor Desk was to take place. Once there, they would check in with the service contact who would pass on any relevant information and particular instructions for the day. Upon

completing the session, Governors would report back to let the service contact know they were leaving the area and report back to the Corporate Governance Team, where, if ready, they would provide feedback, however this could be followed up at a later time.

Should there be the need for urgent feedback then Governors should alert the service contact or a member of the Corporate Governance Team.

Those Governors wishing to participate in the Governor Desks should contact the Director of Corporate Affairs and Trust Secretary.

Further engagement

Only the Governor Desk within the hospital has been addressed here. The re-introduction of events outside the hospital, for example the Annual Ham Fair held on Ham Common, the Richmond Volunteer Fair, will be further explored and opportunities to participate provided to Governors in due course.

Ward rounds will not be able to take place presently. This will remain under review and once they are reinstated, governors will be invited to participate in them.

Proposed timeline

By the end of October all Governors wishing to participate should contact the Corporate Governance Team (an email will be sent out reminding Governors to make contact); a timetable of areas will also be established along with a list of service contacts, the latter for use by the Corporate Services Team.

During November the first of the Governor Desks would commence. It is envisaged that these sessions will need to start slowly and build up in number and frequency as appropriate over time, as appropriate.

DBS Checks

While Governors are basically supervised while being onsite for the Governor Desks sessions, they should have completed an initial DBS check when they commenced as a Governor. This was paused during the pandemic, however the process has recommenced recently. The Trust no longer requires staff with a general DBS check (i.e. not those who are required to undertake an enhanced DBS check) to have them renewed. The same approach is taken with Governors.

Conclusion

While some of the logistical details are still being determined, the Chief Nurse and Infection Prevention and Control Team have given in-principle endorsement for the phased return, however the Trust will need to continuously monitor the Covid-19 situation and respond, where needed, to any significant changes.

The Director of Corporate Affairs will update Governors in due course on progress of the re-introduction of the Governor Desks.

COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT FORM TO SUPPORT GOVERNORS

The purpose of this form is to assist governors to assess the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus - and to consider how individual health and wellbeing factors may impact on them on the Governor Desk. Please take some time to read the form and the guidance notes

Once completed, please return to samuel.armstrong@nhs.net

SECTION 1: GOVERNOR DETAILS

Data Protection information: All information provided within this document will remain confidential and secure in line with GDPR, tailored by the Data Protection Act (2018). This information will be visible by Occupational Health and Corporate Governance Team ONLY.

COMPLETE YOUR DETAILS IN THE FOLLOWING BOX:

First name	
Last name	
DOB	
Job Title	
Your contact number	
Your preferred email address	
Date of self-declaration	
Signature	

SECTION 2: SELF DECLARATION OF RISK FACTORS

Please mark the below questionnaire to the best of your knowledge. Occupational Health will verify scores in discussion with you if your score is 4 or higher.

	Risk Factor	Risk score	Score
2.1	Age group		
	16 – 49	0.0	
	50 – 59	1.0	
	60 – 69	2.0	
	70 and above	4.0	
2.2	Gender assigned at birth		
	Male	1.0	
	Female	0.5	
2.3	Health condition (comorbidity)		
	Heart disease (<i>i.e. hypertension on treatment, past heart attack, angina, heart failure, heart arrhythmia on treatment, heart surgery, valve disease</i>)	1.5	
	Diabetes mellitus on treatment (insulin or tablets)	1.5	

	Chronic lung disease : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthma on regular steroid inhaler, recent short courses of steroid tablets, Immunosuppressive drugs, current symptoms or past hospital admission. • COPD, fibrosing lung disease, bronchiectasis and cystic fibrosis etc. .who have not had 'shielding letter' 	1.5	
	Chronic kidney disease needing Hospital clinic monitoring	1.5	
	Chronic Liver disease with liver fibrosis or active hepatitis	1.0	
	Chronic Rheumatic conditions such as Rheumatoid arthritis, SLE etc.	1.0	
	Immunosuppressive therapy, conditions causing immune deficiency and HIV/AIDS -steroid and other immunosuppressive medication, except steroid inhalers and short courses of steroid tablets for asthma. Check the advice given by the GP or specialist clinic on the risk to COVID	2.0	
	Recent history of cancer (within 1 year) or past history of Lymphoma or Leukaemia in remission	2.0	
	Chronic neurological conditions including Cerebral Palsy and Learning Difficulties (i.e. Muscular dystrophy, Myasthenia, other neurological muscle disorders, Parkinson disease, MND, MS, nerve damage affecting swallowing /breathing)	2.0	
	Sickle Cell disease (not trait), Thalassemia or other blood disorders under specialist clinic (not trait)	1.5	
	Obesity BMI more than 30: BMI more than 40: use the BMI calculator tool linked below https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/	1.0 1.5	
2.4	Other risk factors		
	Belong to a Black, Asian or other minority ethnic (BAME) group (please see section 2.4 of the guidance documentation for further information)	1.0	
	Please note that the above scoring criteria may not always accurately reflect the level of risk in every case and may therefore not provide an accurate risk score. If required, a further discussion or referral to Occupational Health to thoroughly assess the impact of risk can be conducted.	Total Score	

2.5 Are you pregnant? Yes No

(If **yes**, complete Covid-19 risk assessment for pregnancy, found on the intranet, COVID webpage, under HR and OH documents)

SECTION 3: CONTROL MEASURES TO MANAGE THE RISKS OF COVID-19 FOR GOVERNORS

It is important that you take responsibility for ensuring you are up to date with published guidance on Covid-19 and safe working. Please confirm you are aware of the following:

Complete all	✓
Willing to undertake training on Control of Infection procedures that is specific to the role and area at present including training that is applicable to controlling COVID-19 exposure	
Aware of government social distancing guidelines	
Aware of government hand-hygiene guidelines	
Aware of government face-covering guidelines when using public transportation and when working across the Trust	
Willing to undertake and adhere to training of Trust infection control guidance when returning home from a shift	

SECTION 4: OUTCOME OF RISK ASSESSMENT

GUIDE FOR INTERPRETATION OF SCORES ACHIEVED IN SECTION 2 – see guidance notes for details

- **0 – 3.9 Indicates a Low Risk**

When we are ready to bring your role back on site, you will be invited to continue current duties with adherence to best infection control practice including use of PPE in accordance with latest guidelines.

- **4-6.9 Indicates an Increased Risk**

When we are ready to bring your role back on site, we will advise you to discuss your score with your Occupational Health (OH) for further guidance.

- **Greater than 7 Indicates a Very High Risk**

If your self-assessment places you in this category you should already have been shielding supported by a letter from the Government. If this is not the case please contact your GP. When we are ready to bring your role back on site, you will be referred directly to OH for further guidance.