



Three Non-Executive Directors

Candidate briefing pack

July 2026

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Non-Executive Director (NED) at East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUFT). I am delighted that you are considering joining us at such a significant and purposeful moment for our Trust.

EKHUFT is one of the largest hospital trusts in England, with five hospitals and a number of community sites serving a local population of around 700,000 people. We are committed to improving the health of the communities we serve through research and innovation and as a teaching Trust we play a vital role in the education of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals.

I want to be very open about our current challenges, which are both serious and sustained.

The trust is currently in the national Intensive Recovery Programme (IRP), operating under Segment 4 oversight and subject to Section 111 conditions.

In real terms this means we are receiving significant addition focus and support from colleagues at NHSE and Kent & Medway ICB to help us improve our quality, performance, financial sustainability and organisational culture.

We are learning, with determination, from Dr Kirkup's report Reading the Signals, which highlighted long-standing failures to provide safe services, high standards of clinical behaviour, effective team working and honest organisational behaviour.

We are using a nationally-recognised quality improvement program and a maternally renowned culture and leadership program to drive the change our patients and staff deserve.

These NED appointments are therefore critical to our improvement journey and you will be joining as part of an ongoing Board renewal and executive transition as we are also looking to appoint a new Chair, who in turn will appoint a new substantive CEO. Given the particular set of circumstances in which we find ourselves, we are looking for a very particular set of behaviours and experiences from our new NEDs, who must be compassionate, inclusive and values-based and also experienced, credible and resilient. We need people who will model the leadership culture we want to see across the Trust, make strong contributions to the Board, support the Chair CEO and executive team and help EKHUFT build stability, confidence and momentum.

At the same time, Kent and Medway ICS is also in turnaround and as the largest organisation in the system EKHUFT has a particular responsibility to engage seriously and constructively with the system transformation underway – including shared services, group working, service centralisation and reconfiguration. Our new NEDs will be expected to support and scrutinise the Trust's leadership through that engagement.

These are important roles with the potential to help radically transform and improve health outcomes for the people of Kent, but they are not for the faint-hearted. Before you decide whether to apply, we would strongly encourage you to have a confidential conversation with our recruitment partner, Rhiannon Smith, at Hunter Healthcare on 07860 773860 or rsmith@hunter-healthcare.com.

With best wishes,

Dr. Olu Olasode
Interim Chair
East Kent Hospitals University
NHS Foundation Trust

The year in numbers 2025-26

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust is one of the largest hospital trusts in England, with five hospitals and a number of community sites serving a local population of around 700,000 people. We also provide specialist services across Kent and Medway.

We have many excellent services and outstanding, dedicated staff. Every day we care for more than 1,000 people. We want every one of them to feel cared for, safe, respected and confident we are making a difference. We are not there yet – but we are committed to getting there, and to being honest about the distance still to travel.



309,180

Emergency Departments
and Urgent Treatment
Centre attendances



14,341,472

Pathology tests processed
e.g. blood test, skin
sample



1,056,264

Outpatient
appointments



173,122

Patients admitted to
one of our hospitals



57,463

Emergency
admissions



115,659

Planned operations and
elective treatments



93,217

Kidney
dialysis
treatments



6,159,653

Diagnostic tests
and scans



5,855

Babies born

26,470

Chemotherapy
treatments



743

New staff
joined



Our improvement journey

We have set ourselves stretching, ambitious targets for what we want to achieve, together we will:

- Reduce harm and deliver safe services by developing and fostering a safety culture in which all of us respond openly and learn when things go wrong, where we involve patients and families and do everything we can to improve the conditions where our staff work and patients are treated.
- Put patient, family and community voices at the heart of everything we do. We will be open and honest when things go wrong, we will constantly seek their feedback and design services with them, and make sure they are listened to, involved and their concerns are acted upon.

- Treat our patients and each other with care and compassion at all levels across the organization, and create teams that work well together, trust, and respect each other and where people feel included.
- Work with our partners to improve patient outcomes and reduce health inequality and continuously improve by being a centre of research excellence.
- Strive constantly to reach national standards for access and outcomes in planned and emergency care and seek to deliver care in the most cost-effective way possible.

Achieving this change will take time. There is a great deal of work we need to do at every level of our organisation to provide the consistent standard of care we want for all of our patients and to improve how it feels to work here for our staff. We also recognise the importance of acknowledging the milestones and progress that is made along the way, as together we work to transform our Trust.



Vision, mission and values

Our vision

Our vision is **to deliver great healthcare from great people.**

Our strategic themes are Quality and Safety, Patients, People, Partnerships, Sustainability and Research.

Our strategic objectives are driven by our response to Dr Kirkup's report Reading the Signals; the importance of meeting national standards for planned, cancer and emergency care and the need to be financially sustainable by providing better care and reducing waste.

We will discuss our progress against key performance indicators, and the difference it is making, in public at our public board meetings which anyone can join, visit www.ekhuft.nhs.uk

Our mission

Our mission is improving health and wellbeing.

Our values

Everything we do is underpinned by our values: People feel cared for, safe, respected and confident we are making a difference.



Our future strategy

Our future strategy

We are currently working to develop our new Trust Strategy. This will set out what our long-term future will look like and how we will continue to improve our services.

The strategy will include our current improvement work and the changes we wish to make in the future.

The key aims and priorities of the strategy will include:

- Improving patient outcomes
- Addressing health inequalities
- Delivering sustainable, quality care

Alongside this, we are also developing our clinical, digital, workforce and estates strategies. These will underpin the Trust Strategy, and set out how these areas will be developed over the next 10 years. The strategy will also provide details of our Green Plan,

In its development, we are working with our clinical, operational, and managerial teams. We are also using feedback from patient groups and our communities.

These are a few examples of how we plan to achieve this:

- Engagement with community and patient networks
- Meetings with specialty teams and staff groups across the trust
- Engaging and collaborating with our partners across Kent.

This work will allow us to focus on:

QUALITY AND SAFETY

- Improving patient outcomes and supporting the delivery of quality improvements.

PATIENTS

- Providing services that deliver national standards
- Providing services that improve the experience for patients and families.
- Providing local services where possible; alongside centres of excellence for quality and efficiency.

PEOPLE

- Improving the experience for staff including workforce transformation and modernisation.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Working with other healthcare partners or providers to reduce health inequalities.
- Increasing opportunities to deliver services in the community wherever possible.
- Making best use of limited acute hospital space and capital funding.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Delivering services within the funding available that are sustainable long-term.
- Supporting our Green Plan including digital solutions.



About the role

Role specific duties

- To work alongside the Chair, executive and non-executive directors of EKHUFT as an equal member of the unitary Board of Directors.
- To set the strategy and direction of the trust, monitoring the delivery of those plans and ensuring the maintenance of the appropriate arrangements for promoting standards of governance, behaviour and financial stewardship.
- To engage with the stakeholders within and beyond the organisation, building a productive dialogue, building understanding and supporting continuous improvement.
- To engage with the Council of Governors with regard to its duty to hold the non-executive directors, individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.

1. Contributing to the work of the Board

- Contribute to the development of the strategic direction of the organisation and set challenging objectives to underpin continuous improvement in performance.
- Shape the culture of the organisation, its values and behaviours, ensuring they are demonstrated by the Board in all its actions.
- Participate fully in the work of the Board, ensuring the corporate responsibility of the board of Directors.
- Establish clear objectives to deliver the agreed plans and strategy to meet the Provider Licence and regularly review performance against those objectives.
- Ensure that strategies and actions approved by the Board of Directors are implemented effectively by the Chief Executive and the senior management team.
- Monitor the performance of the organisation and have a clear understanding of the risks and challenges (both internal and external) facing the organisation.
- Account to the Council of Governors for the performance of the Board.

2. Board and other activities

- Participate in the Board's Nomination and Remuneration committee.
- Attend sub committees of the Board and other ad hoc meetings of the main Board.
- Join sub-committee(s) and/or group subsidiary boards as needed.
- Participate in Executive Patient Safety and/or ward and staff Visits.
- Attendance at full Council of Governors meetings.
- Undergo an individual and Board performance appraisal, attending any additional training highlighted as a result of the evaluation process.
- Act as an ambassador of the Trust through active participation in external meetings and other events, including membership engagement events.
- Ensure a high level of visibility throughout the organisation and personally engage with staff across the organisation.

3. Governance and Compliance

- Ensure the Trust complies with its licence, constitution and all relevant legislation and regulations.
- Ensure the highest standards of probity, integrity and governance and that the Trust's internal governance arrangements conform to best practice and statutory requirements in particular for financial sustainability, and for clinical and financial systems of control.

Person specification

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

- Board level experience in a large, complex customer facing organisation.
- An outstanding record of achievement in the individual's chosen career.
- Excellent understanding of the role of a Non-Executive Director.
- A sound knowledge of good corporate governance.
- Effective in communicating at all levels.

DESIRABLE

- Previous NED experience.
- Board level experience in a large, complex customer facing organisation in a regulated sector.
- Knowledge/Experience of the healthcare sector, in particular the East Kent Health Economy.
- A demonstrable commitment to compassionate, inclusive and values-based leadership, and the ability to model and champion the culture the Trust is working to build.
- Knowledge of patient experiences, perhaps as part of a 3rd sector organisation.

ELIGIBILITY

The successful candidate must be available to work for the Trust 4-6 days per month. You must also satisfy all of the criteria of the Fit and Proper Persons Requirement, as outlined [below] of this document. To be eligible for appointment as a Non-Executive Director you will need to be a member of the Trust. You can complete the membership form on-line [here](#).

The successful candidate will ideally be resident within one of the following areas:

- Ashford Borough Council
- Canterbury City Council
- Dover District Council
- Shepway District Council
- Swale Borough Council
- Thanet District Council

However, applications from individuals who live outside East Kent are welcome, provided they maintain strong visibility in the Trust and fulfil the expected time commitment for the role. Such applicants will need to be a member of the Trust and can join as members of the 'Rest of England and Wales' constituency.

DISQUALIFICATION CRITERIA

- To be eligible for appointment as Non-Executive Director you must not be disqualified by virtue of the criteria set out below:
- a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or whose estate has been sequestrated and (in either case) has not been discharged.
- a person who has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, his creditors and has not been discharged in respect of it.
- a person who within the preceding five years has been convicted in the British Islands of any offence if a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months (without the option of a fine) was imposed.

How to apply

The recommended first step for anyone considering one of these roles is a direct, candid and confidential conversation with our recruitment partner Rhiannon Smith at Hunter Healthcare.

Rhiannon can share with you more detail about the roles, the context and what it would mean in practice to become one of our NEDs. She can be contacted by email at rsmith@hunter-healthcare.com or on 07860 773860.

KEY DATES

Application closing date	6 August 2026
Shortlisting	w/c 17 August
Interviews	w/c 7 September

Applications should include:

- A **covering letter** explaining why the appointment interests you, how you meet the appointment criteria and what you specifically would bring to the post (**no more than two pages**).
- A **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** with education and professional qualifications and full employment history. Please include daytime and evening telephone contact numbers and email addresses. The CV should include names and contact details of three referees. References will not be taken without your permission (**no more than three pages**).
- You will need the following reference code: **EKHU-NEDS-0726**

All applications will be acknowledged.

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY ONLINE](#) ➔



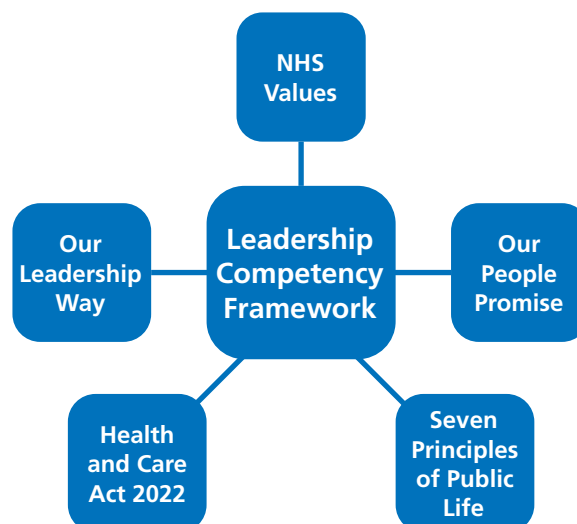
Appendix 1:

NHS leadership competency framework for Board members

Leaders in the NHS help deliver better health and care for patients by setting the tone for their organisation, team culture and performance. We have worked with a wide range of leaders from across the NHS to help describe what we do when we operate at our best.

The competency domains reflect the NHS values and the diagram opposite shows how they are aligned.

The competency domains are aligned to **Our NHS People Promise**, **Our Leadership Way** and the **Seven Principles of Public Life** (Nolan Principles).



Working together for patients*	Compassion
Building a trusted relationship with partners and communities	Creating a compassionate, just and positive culture
Respect and dignity	Improving lives
Promoting equality and inclusion and reducing health and workforce inequalities	- Setting strategy and delivering long term transformation - Driving high quality sustainable outcomes
Commitment to quality of care	Everyone counts
- Driving high quality and sustainable outcomes - Setting strategy and delivering long term transformation	- Promoting equality and inclusion and reducing health and workforce inequalities - Creating a compassionate, just and positive culture
Providing robust governance and assurance	

Appendix 2:

The six NHS Leadership competency domains

DRIVING HIGH-QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES

The skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to deliver and bring about high quality and safe care and lasting change and improvement – from ensuring all staff are trained and well led, to fostering improvement and innovation which leads to better health and care outcomes.

Candidates will have:

- A demonstrable interest in health and social care and a strong desire to achieve the best sustainable outcomes for all patients and service users through encouraging continuous improvement, clinical excellence and value for money
- Strong understanding of financial management, with the ability to balance the competing objectives of quality, operational performance and finance
- An appreciation of constitutional and regulatory NHS standards

SETTING STRATEGY AND DELIVERING LONG-TERM TRANSFORMATION

The skills that need to be employed in strategy development and planning, and ensuring a system wide view, along with using intelligence from quality, performance, finance and workforce measures to feed into strategy development

Candidates will have:

- Experience of leading and delivering against long-term vision and strategy
- Experience leading transformational change, managing complex organisations, budgets and people

PROMOTING EQUALITY AND INCLUSION, AND REDUCING HEALTH AND WORKFORCE INEQUALITIES

The importance of continually reviewing plans and strategies to ensure their delivery leads to improved services and outcomes for all communities, narrows health and workforce inequalities, and promotes inclusion.

Candidates will have:

- A clear commitment towards issues of equality, diversity and inclusion
- Significant experience of engaging with the diverse social, economic and cultural groups served by the organisation

PROVIDING ROBUST GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

The system of leadership accountability and the behaviours, values and standards that underpin our work as leaders. This domain also covers the principles of evaluation, the significance of evidence and assurance in decision making and ensuring patient safety, and the vital importance of collaboration on the board to drive delivery and improvement.

Candidates will have:

- Prior board experience (any sector, executive or non-executive role)
- Evidence of successfully demonstrating the NHS Leadership competencies in other leadership roles
- An ability to identify and address issues, including underperformance, and to scrutinise and challenge information effectively for assurance

CREATING A COMPASSIONATE, JUST AND POSITIVE CULTURE

The skills and behaviours needed to develop great team and organisation cultures. This includes ensuring all staff and service users are listened to and heard, being respectful and challenging inappropriate behaviours.

Candidates will have:

- A clear commitment to the NHS and the trust's values and principles
- Experience of building effective teams, encouraging change and innovation and shaping an open, inclusive and compassionate culture through setting the right tone at the top and championing diversity at, and across, all levels
- Strongly focused on the experience of all staff and patients
- Experience managing conflict, finding compromise and building consensus across varied stakeholder groups with potentially conflicting priorities

BUILDING A TRUSTED RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES

The need to collaborate, consult and co-produce with colleagues in neighbouring teams, providers and systems, people using services, our communities, our workforce, and the Council of Governors – recognising their role as the voice of patients and staff.

Candidates will have:

- A desire to engage with the local population and to collaborate with senior stakeholders across the health and care system
- Strong interpersonal, communication and leadership skills

Applications will be assessed on merit, as part of a fair and open process, from the widest possible pool of candidates. The information provided by applicants will be relied on to assess whether sufficient personal responsibility and achievement have been demonstrated in previous/other roles, to satisfy the experience being sought.

The best boards are those that reflect the workforce and communities they serve. We particularly welcome applications from women, people from local black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, and people with disabilities, who we know are all under-represented in these important roles.



Appendix 3:

NHS Leadership Competency Framework values and concepts

Our people promise:

- We are compassionate and inclusive
- We are recognised and rewarded
- We each have a voice that counts
- We are safe and healthy
- We are always learning
- We work flexibly
- We are a team

NHS values

- Working together for patients
- Respect and dignity
- Commitment to quality of care
- Compassion
- Improving lives
- Everyone counts

Health and Care Act 2022

- Collaborate with partners to address our shared priorities and have the core aim and duty to improve the health and well-being of the people of England
- Improve the quality, including safety, of services provided
- Ensure the sustainable, efficient use of resources for the wider system and communities

Our leadership way

We are compassionate

- We are inclusive, promote equality and diversity, and challenge discrimination
- We are kind and treat people with compassion, courtesy and respect

We are curious

- We aim for the highest standards and seek to continually improve, harnessing our ingenuity
- We can be trusted to do what we promise

We are collaborative

- We collaborate, forming effective partnerships to achieve our common goals
- We celebrate success and support our people to be the best they can be

Appendix 4:

Fit and Proper Persons requirement

All organisations regulated by the Care Quality Commission need to ensure that successful candidates meet the Fit and Proper Persons Requirement (Regulation 5, The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations Act. This means that the care provider must not appoint a director unless:

- The individual is of good character.
- The individual has the qualifications, competence, skills and experience which are necessary for the relevant office or position or the work for which they are employed.
- The individual is able by reason of their health, after reasonable adjustments are made, to properly perform tasks which are intrinsic to the office or position for which they are appointed or to the work for which they are employed.
- The individual has not been responsible for, been privy to, contributed to or facilitated any serious misconduct or mismanagement (whether lawful or not) in the course of carrying on a regulated activity or providing a service elsewhere which, if provided in England, would be a regulated activity; and
- None of the grounds of unfitness specified in Part 1 of Schedule 4 apply to the individual (e.g. bankruptcy, sequestration and insolvency, appearing on barred lists and being prohibited from holding directorships under other laws).

Good character is measured by the criteria set out in Part 2 of Schedule 4 of the Regulations:

- Whether the person has been convicted in the UK of any offence or been convicted elsewhere of any offence which if committed in any part of the UK would constitute an offence; and
- Whether a person has been erased, removed, or struck off a register maintained by a regulator of a health or social work professional body.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

SELFLESSNESS

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

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 the performance of their official duties.

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.

ACCOUNTABILITY

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

OPENNESS

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

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.

LEADERSHIP

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



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