

Non-Executive Director Champion Roles Public Board

27 November 2025

Presented for:	Information, Governance and Approval
Presented by:	Antony Kildare, Trust Chair Jo Bray, Director of Corporate Affairs
Author:	Jo Bray, Director of Corporate Affairs
Previous Committees:	January 2022 public Board

Our Annual Commitments for 2025/26 are:	
Recognise and act upon moments that matter to our patients	✓
Support our patients to get home a day sooner	✓
Be in the top 25% for patient experience and efficiency in outpatients	✓
Support each other to act with kindness and compassion	✓
Reduce our carbon footprint by creating greener patient pathways	✓
Support our staff to manage every £ wisely	✓
Make best use of our estate, equipment and digital assets	✓

Trust Risks (Type & Category)				
Level 1 Risk		Level 2 Risks	(Risk Appetite Scale)	Risk
Workforce Risk				
Operational Risk				
Clinical Risk				
Financial Risk				
External Risk		Legal & Governance We will operate the Trust in compliance with the law and UK Corporate Governance Code, where applicable. Regulatory Risk	Averse	↔ (same)

		We will comply with or exceed all regulations, retain its CQC registration and always operate within the law.		
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Key points	
The Board are to note the changes to the named Non-Executive Director Champion roles, note on going in year reporting to Board, and support the introduction of a new annual report to Board against these roles.	Information, Governance and Approval

1. Summary and Background

Historically there had been a growing number of lead/champion roles defined for NHS Non-Executive Directors (NEDs). This contradicts the collective role of a unitary Board and Directors duties under the Company's Act. Following the publication by NHSE/I in December 2021 clarity was set out to the roles of NED Champions, and the assurance to be provided to Boards from scrutiny by Committees.

2. Proposal

There are five NED Champion roles which are either defined in legislation or are formal recommendations from national inquiries. For Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, we are re-confirming the NED Champion roles as the following (with supporting information for roles set out in appendices);

- Maternity Board Safety Champion – Laura Stroud
- Wellbeing Guardian – Simon Le Clerc (incoming NED)
- Freedom to Speak Up – Gillian Taylor
- Doctors Disciplinary – Amanda Stainton
- Security Management (Fraud) – Andrew Greenwood

The above NEDs will report to the Board or a Committee during the year to either provide assurance or escalation of issues from these roles. An annual report will be collated by the Director of Corporate Affairs, working with the NED Champions, to provide the Board with assurance of delivering these roles during the year.

3. Financial Implications

N/A

4. Risk

The changes set out will support and maintain the Boards averse risk tolerance for legal & governance and regulatory risk appetite.

5. Communication and Involvement

These roles are stated within the biographical information of 'who is who' for the Board on our website, along with information on the intranet for staff.

6. Equality Analysis

There are no equality issues to raise.

7. Improving Health Equity

The Trust is committed to Improving Health Equity meaning reducing the unfair and avoidable differences in health some groups experience, the work of the Board and our Committees aims to support the Trust's commitment.

8. Publication Under Freedom of Information Act

This paper has been made available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

9. Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the changes in named Non-Executive Director Champion roles and reinforce in year report along with the introduction of an annual report to Board.

10. Supporting Information

Roles, description and supporting information for the Champion Role

Appendix A – Maternity Board Safety Champion

Appendix B – Wellbeing Guardian

Appendix C – Freedom to Speak Up Champion

Appendix D – Doctors Disciplinary

Appendix E – Security Management

Reference

https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/B0994_Enhancing-board-oversight-a-new-approach-to-non-executive-director-champion-roles_December-2021.pdf

Jo Bray

Director of Corporate Affairs

13 November 2025

Appendix A - Maternity Board Safety Champion

Role descriptor for the Non-Executive Board Safety Champion

In line with recommendations from the Ockenden Review, the Board-level safety champion role should be supported by a Non-Executive Director. In trusts where this role is currently being undertaken by an Executive lead, a Non-Executive must now be appointed in addition and the two should work together to ensure a seamless leadership function. The role of the Trust Board Safety Champion is to act as a conduit between staff, frontline safety champions (obstetric, midwifery and neonatal), service users, LMS leads, the Regional Chief Midwife and Lead Obstetrician and the Trust Board to understand, communicate and champion learning, challenges and successes. Published guidance sets these responsibilities out in detail. The Non-Executive will act as a support to the Board Perinatal Safety Champion by:

- Bringing a degree of independent, supportive challenge to the oversight of maternity services
- Ensuring that they are resourced to carry out their role
- Challenging the board to reflect on the quality and safety of its maternity services
- Ensuring that the views and experiences of patients and staff are heard

Together the Non-Executive and the Board-level Safety Champion should:

- Adopt a curious approach to understanding quality and safety of services
- Jointly, with frontline safety champions, draw on a range of intelligence sources to review outcomes, including staff and user feedback to fully understand the services they champion
- Update the Trust Board **on a monthly basis**, on issues requiring Board-level action. (noting at LTHT we hold bi-monthly Board meetings and this would be escalated by exception between these formal meetings if required)

The Board should be updated using a Board level dashboard (see further guidance) which includes as a minimum:

- All maternity and neonatal Serious Incidents
- Incidents graded as moderate harm or higher
- Trust position in meeting national ambition trajectories for stillbirth, brain injury, maternal mortality, neonatal mortality and preterm birth rates; implementation rates of SBLCBv2 and Continuity of Carer
- Safe staffing levels
- Correspondence or concerns raised by the Regional Chief Midwife and Lead Obstetrician, Coroners, Deaneries, national bodies including NHS Resolution, CQC, HSIB or the Invited Review process
- Ensuring that Duty of Candour is upheld and that locally undertaken SI investigations meet national standards for review
- Ensuring themes and learning from SI investigations, Never Events, Invited Reviews and concerns raised by external parties, including service users, are implemented, audited for efficacy and monitored at board level ensuring accountability for actions being undertaken
- Providing oversight and appropriate challenge in relation to evidence for the CNST maternity incentive scheme safety actions
- Ensuring that learning as well as improvement activity is shared with the LMS, Regional Chief Midwife and Lead Obstetrician and Patient Safety Networks as part of revised oversight and governance structures.

Enablers to achieving these priorities include:

Protected time to undertake the Board Maternity Safety Champion role

- Together with your MVP lead, Non-Executive and Board Safety Champion, undertaking an assessment of the safety of your services using the Maternity Safety Self-Assessment Tool
- Taking into account locally undertaken culture surveys, working with service users and the wider clinical team to develop a common vision for safety
- Meeting monthly with midwifery, obstetric and neonatal safety champions to fully understand relevant insights, barriers and successes which need reflecting at Board level
- Acting as a key point of contact for the clinical triumvirate, national organisations, the Regional Chief Midwife and Lead Obstetrician and LMS lead to address identified issues
- Engaging with leaders in other parts of the organisation responsible for safety and improvement to ensure alignment of safety initiatives.

- Supporting improvement initiatives that require both maternity and neonatal collaboration
- Setting out clearly and publicly how the Trust is working to improve the safety of perinatal services – including those relating to service user feedback

Appendix B – Wellbeing Guardian

A successful Wellbeing Guardian will be values-driven, people-focused, and willing to challenge the status quo to empower a wellbeing culture within their organisation. Sometimes this can involve asking difficult questions when championing wellbeing and seeking assurance that this is of organisational priority.

To hold the organisation to account in this way, it is suggested that this role sits best with a Non-Executive Director (NED) or equivalent in the context of your healthcare organisation. If your healthcare organisation does not have a NED, individuals in equivalent roles, such as a lay member or clinical director may be considered.

The role should be that of assurance and be empowered to act strategically. Therefore, the organisation should enable the Guardian by aligning functions such as HR / OD / Occupational Health and Wellbeing to operationally support them.

From an organisational perspective, the Wellbeing Guardian needs to:

- Challenge the organisation to include employee wellbeing in everything they do and actively create a 'culture of wellbeing', to care for people who care for others.
- Act as a 'critical friend' to question the impact of decisions on employee wellbeing – just as financial, performance or care quality impact are questioned. Seek assurance that how the organisation enables the wellbeing of its employees, is given as much weight as what it achieves.
- Ensure the Board (or equivalent senior leadership team in the context of your healthcare organisation) holds senior leaders to account for the way employees are managed, empowered, and supported with their wellbeing.
- Seek data to show what's happening on the ground, evidencing the wellbeing needs of the diverse workforce (inputs) and that wellbeing strategy / policies / initiatives are working and impactful (outputs).
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring that the organisation considers the needs of the diverse groups within its workforce and adapts holistic approaches to wellbeing, appreciating peoples changing needs over time.
- Continually and strategically 'sense-check' the wellbeing agenda for the organisation and prompt improvement / developmental action if needed.
- Demonstrate that the Board (or equivalent senior leadership team) takes their personal wellbeing responsibilities seriously.
- Work closely with the organisations people function (i.e. HR, OD, Occupational Health and Wellbeing etc) as enabling operational functions to realise the wellbeing agenda for the organisation and that they are supportive to the Wellbeing Guardian to be effective in role.

From a personal perspective, the Wellbeing Guardian needs to:

- Strategically influence and shape the wellbeing agenda, speaking to the hearts and minds of the organisation's diverse workforce.

- Hold the values reflected in the role description, role modelling the values of fairness, compassion and inclusivity.
- Actively promote opportunities for the most vulnerable in the workforce to contribute and address wellbeing inequalities and the needs of diverse groups and individuals.

Although Wellbeing Guardians must be competent and confident in their ability to challenge the executive / senior leader team on behalf of the board (or equivalent senior leadership team) Wellbeing Guardians are not accountable for the entire people agenda. They do not need to be an expert in wellbeing, but they do need to be adept at understanding the breadth of wellbeing in the context of their organisation and holding the organisation to account where improvements are identified.

With this in mind, a Wellbeing Guardian does not need to:

Be a wellbeing expert.

- Take on executive/management responsibilities for ensuring wellbeing policies are operationally actioned and delivered.
- Get involved in 'the doing', operational management, or individual staff cases.
- Personally collect, analyse or present data on wellbeing.

Appendix C - Freedom to Speak Up Champion

Non-Executive lead for FTSU

The Non-Executive lead is responsible for:

- role-modelling high standards of conduct around FTSU
- ensuring they are aware of the latest guidance from National Guardian's Office
- challenging the chief executive, executive lead for FTSU and the Board to reflect on whether they could do more to create a healthy and effective speaking up culture
- acting as an alternative source of advice and support for the FTSU Guardian
- overseeing speaking up matters regarding Board members – see below.

We appreciate it can be challenging to maintain confidentiality and objectivity when investigating issues raised about board members. This is why the role of the designated non-executive lead is critical. Therefore, in exceptional circumstances, we would expect the non-executive lead to take the lead in determining whether:

- sufficient attempts have been made to resolve a speaking up concern involving a Board member(s) and
- if so, whether an appropriate fair and impartial investigation can be conducted, is proportionate, and what the terms of reference should be for escalating matters to regulators, as appropriate.

Depending on the circumstances, it may be appropriate for the Non-Executive lead to oversee the investigation and take on the responsibility of updating the worker. Wherever the non-executive lead does take the lead, they inform the FTSU Guardian, confidentially, of the case; keep them informed of progress; and seek their advice around process and record-keeping.

The Non-Executive lead informs NHS Improvement and CQC that they are overseeing an investigation into a Board member (depending on the circumstances we may require you to provide the name of the board member under investigation). NHS Improvement and CQC can then provide the non-executive with support and advice. The Trust needs to consider how to enable a Non-Executive lead to commission an external investigation (which might need an Executive Director to sign-off the costs) without compromising the confidentiality of the individual worker or revealing allegations before it is appropriate to do so.

Appendix D - Doctors disciplinary NED champion/independent member

Under the 2003 Maintaining High Professional Standards in the modern NHS: A Framework for the Initial Handling of Concerns about Doctors and Dentists in the NHS and the associated Directions on Disciplinary Procedures 2005 there is a requirement for chairs to designate a NED member as “the designated member” to oversee each case to ensure momentum is maintained. There is no specific requirement that this is the same NED for each case. The framework was issued to NHS foundation trusts as advice only.

Appendix E – Security Management

Under the Directions to NHS Bodies on Security Management Measures 2004 there is a statutory requirement for NHS bodies to designate a NED or non-officer member to promote security management work at Board level. Security management covers a wide remit including counter fraud, violence and aggression and also security management of assets and estates. Strategic oversight of counter fraud now rests with the Counter Fraud Authority and violence/aggression is overseen by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

While promotion of security management in its broadest sense should be discharged through the designated NED, relevant Committees may wish to oversee specific functions related to counter fraud and violence/aggression.

Boards should make their own local arrangements for the strategic oversight of security of assets and estates.