



Chair

Candidate information pack

September 2026

We value and promote diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity for all and appointments made on merit. We believe that the best boards are those that reflect the communities they serve.

We particularly welcome applications from women, people from the local black and minority ethnic communities and disabled people – who we know are under-represented in Chair and Non-Executive roles.

Our recruitment processes are conducted in accordance with the Code of Governance to ensure that they are made on merit after a fair and open process so that the best people, from the widest possible pool of candidates, are appointed.

Welcome

Hello, and thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chair of Devon Partnership NHS Trust (DPT). We are passionate about promoting good mental health and well-being, and we are looking for a Chair to lead our Board through the next stage of that ambition.

This is an exceptional opportunity to shape the direction of an organisation that makes a real difference to the lives of people across Devon, the wider South West and, for some of our services, nationally. Our mission is to achieve excellent health outcomes and address health inequalities, championing mental health, learning disabilities and neurodiversity.

Currently rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission, we aspire to be an 'Outstanding' organisation, providing the very best care to our communities and the very best working environment for our staff. We strive to use the expertise that sits within our own organisation and the resources and skills of our partners across the health and care economy to deliver services that are safe, focused on people's recovery and driven by the voices of those who use them.

Our growth has been significant. In recent years our income for delivering services has increased by around 50%, and our continuing role as lead provider in the strategic commissioning arrangements for specialist services across the South West asks still more of us.

Delivering that expansion within the envelope of our workforce, while up-skilling and re-skilling our people, is one of the defining challenges of the years ahead. So too is building the closer, more collaborative regional relationships that our lead provider role depends on. In recent years we have broken even and we have a plan to do so this year.

That is why the Chair's role matters so much to us now. The Chair leads the Board, sets the conditions for effective governance in line with the Nolan principles and NHS values, and secures a long-term vision and strategy for the organisation.

Just as importantly, the Chair sets the tone for the whole Trust: the culture we expect of ourselves, the openness with which we listen to people who use our services, and the confidence our communities, staff and partners have in us.

We are looking for a Chair who will be a genuine partner to the CEO and the Executive team, and an independent and constructive challenger of us. Someone who can hold a unitary Board together around a shared strategy, build trusted relationships across a complex system of commissioners, providers, local authorities and the voluntary sector, and keep the experience of people using our services at the centre of every discussion.

You do not need to have chaired an NHS Board before, and you do not need a clinical background. What you do need is a genuine commitment to patients and to excellent health care, the credibility to represent the Trust regionally and nationally, and a leadership style that reflects our values.

We would particularly welcome applications from women, people from local black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities and people from the LGBTQIA+ community, who we know are under-represented in Chair and Non-Executive roles.

If mental health, learning disability and neurodiversity care matters to you, and you want to lead a Board that is determined to keep improving it, we would be delighted to hear from you.

To learn more please contact our recruitment partners Hunter Healthcare. If you would like a confidential discussion about the role contact Rhiannon Smith at rsmith@hunter-healthcare.com and Jenny Adrian at jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com or 07939 250362.

Phill Mantay
Chief Executive

Simon Hamilton
Senior Independent Director

About us

We provide mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, gender and children's community services across Devon, the South West region and nationally. We are dedicated to improving mental health and wellbeing, working with our partners to provide high-quality, safe and recovery-focused care.

We have an annual income of more than £460m and employ around 4,500 colleagues. Each year we receive around 100,000 referrals and each month we support around 34,000 people.

We also have more than 50 peer support workers, 70 volunteers and 112 experts by experience who make a unique and invaluable contribution to our work.

Trust strategy

Our Trust strategy 2026-2030 sets our aims and ambitions for the coming years, based on what we've learnt from delivering our previous strategy and responding to local and national priorities.

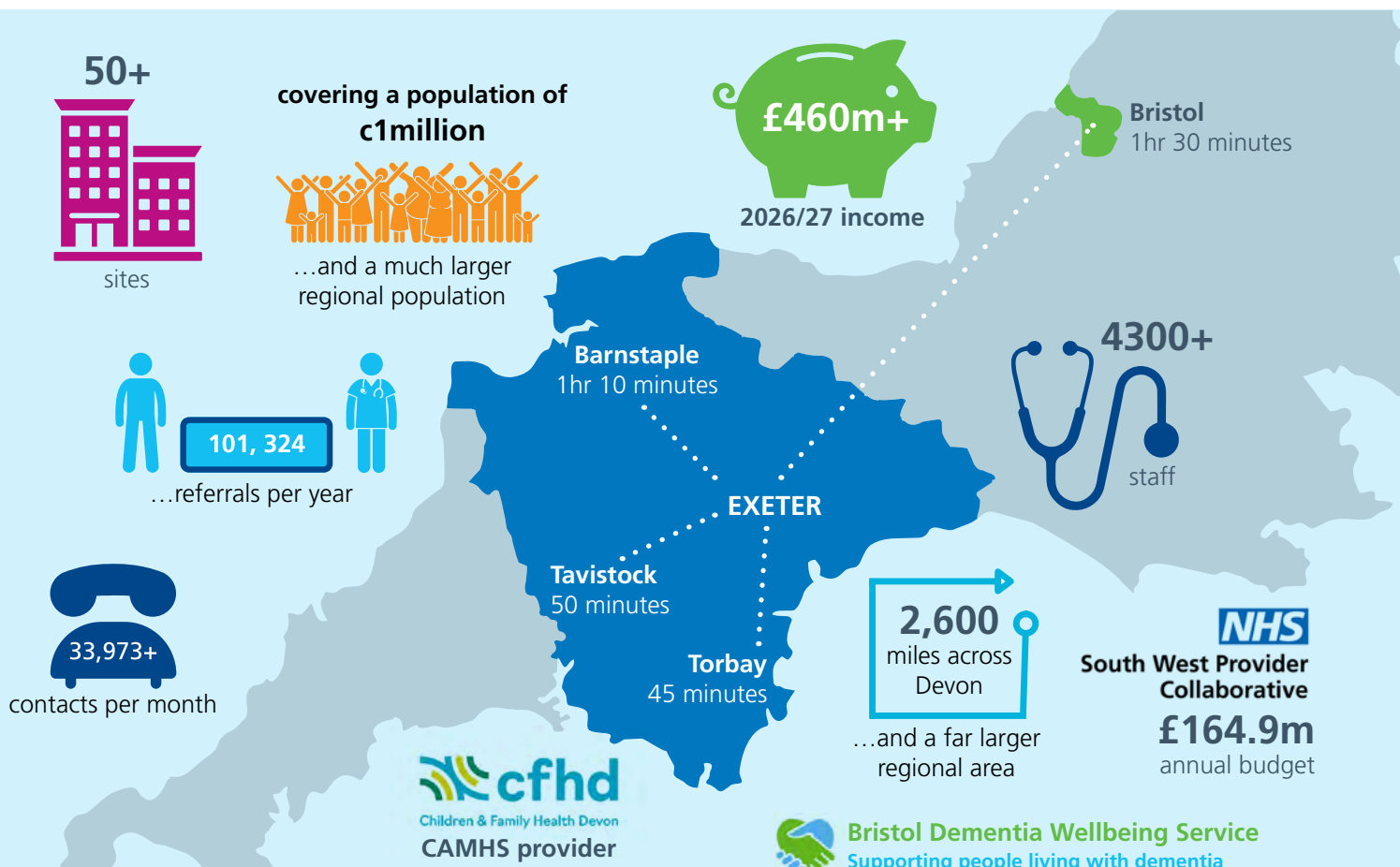
Our aims are to:

- Provide effective care and treatment
- Create a great place to work
- Be a collaborative partner
- Make best use of resources through improvement and learning
- Strengthen inclusion
- Make a positive contribution to our environment

Clinical strategy

Our clinical strategy 2025-28 sets out our commitment to people using our services, their families and carers; the people we employ; the communities we serve and our partner organisations. Our six clinical strategy principles are:

- Personalised care that is safe
- Prevention and early intervention
- Promoting independence
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Population approach to mental health
- Positively embracing technology



Equality, diversity and inclusion

At DPT, our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) remains at the heart of everything we do.

We continue to nurture a compassionate and inclusive culture, tackling discrimination, striving to address inequalities and ensure that every individual, whether a member of staff, person using services, carer or relative, feels valued, respected, and empowered.

Our approach is rooted in listening to lived experiences, co-producing solutions, and working collaboratively with partners across the health and care system.

Established in 2004, MINDFUL EMPLOYER has a long history of empowering employers across the nation to achieve better mental health at work. As a part of Devon Partnership NHS Trust, MINDFUL EMPLOYER and its services are administered by a team of mental health and employment professionals.

It is our mission to provide employers with easy access to the information and support necessary to help them lead from the front on matters of workplace mental health and wellbeing.

2025 was a busy year: we launched our first Reciprocal Mentoring Programme, delivered significant progress against the ambitions of our Carer Strategy and maintained regular engagement between our seven Staff Networks and senior leadership.

Our status as a Disability Confident Leader was reaffirmed, we successfully progressed reasonable adjustments priorities and, as part of this, launched the Work with Me passport, making it quicker and easier for colleagues to receive the support they need. DPT was named as a regional champion in the NHS Excellence Awards for our work on improving reasonable adjustments for staff, in the Valuing Our People Category.



We improved access to care through introduction of new services, including a regional ten bed inpatient unit for adults with learning disabilities/autism (The Brook) and a Clinical Assessment Service for crisis care. We achieved Triangle of Care accreditation and strengthened partnerships with carer organisations. We continued our focus on tackling discrimination through bystander at work training, commenced the organisation's anti-racism campaign, and improved reporting systems for discrimination and hate crimes.

Our efforts have also been nationally recognised, with accolades including "Highly Commended Provider Collaboration of the Year" at the HSJ Awards, Memory Services National Accreditation Programme (MSNAP) accreditation for dementia care, and finalist status for the National Lived Experience Awards.

While we have seen increases in representation and leadership opportunities for Black and Minority Ethnic staff, disabled staff, and women, we acknowledge that inequalities persist, particularly in experiences of harassment and career progression.

Addressing these challenges remains an area of priority and we have ambitious plans to enhance our inclusive leadership and organisational practices further through our refreshed objectives.

This includes:

- enacting our anti-racism commitment through policy, cultural development and practice
- expanding reciprocal mentoring through the delivery of our internally developed programme
- strengthening equality monitoring and data collection and enhancing accessibility through direct improvement work with frontline clinical services
- increasing staff network engagement and supporting staff networks in their leadership structures, improvement opportunities and promotion
- progressing our restorative culture work as part of the Trust's wider organisational development ambitions



Strategy, mission and values

Our Trust Strategy sets out a small number of clear, interdependent strategic aims, underpinned by a shared way of working.

It balances ambition with realism, emphasises outcomes over activity, and places learning, inclusion, partnership and staff well-being at the heart of delivery.

Our strategy is intended to be a **living framework** rather than a static all-inclusive document. It provides clarity on what matters most, while allowing flexibility to respond to emerging need, evidence and learning over the period to 2030.

Above all, it reflects a collective commitment to improving outcomes, addressing inequalities and making the best possible use of resources for the people and communities we serve.

Our Strategic Aims

Underpinning our vision and mission are six strategic aims:

- Provide effective care and treatment
- Create a great place to work
- Be a collaborative partner
- Make best use of resources through improvement and learning
- Strengthen inclusion
- Make a positive contribution to the environment

Our Mission

Our mission is to achieve excellent health outcomes and address health inequalities, championing mental health, learning disabilities and neurodiversity



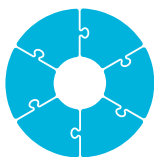
**Provide effective
care and
treatment**



**Create a
great place to
work**



**Be a
collaborative
partner**



**Make best
use of resources
through improvement
and learning**



**Strengthen
inclusion**



**Make a
positive
contribution to the
environment**

Our Values

We commit to living our values through how we lead, work and make decisions every day.



RESPECT AND DIGNITY

We value each person as an individual, respect their aspirations and commitments in life and seek to understand their priorities, needs, abilities and limits. We take what others have to say seriously. We are honest about our point of view and what we can and cannot do.



COMMITMENT TO QUALITY OF CARE

We earn the trust placed in us by insisting on quality and striving to ensure the basics are right every time: safety, confidentiality, professional and managerial integrity, accountability, dependable service and good communication. We welcome feedback, learn from our mistakes and build on our successes.



COMPASSION

We respond with humanity and kindness to each person's pain, distress, anxiety or need. We search for the things we can do, however small, to give comfort and relieve suffering. We find time for those we serve and work alongside. We do not wait to be asked, because we care.



WORKING TOGETHER FOR PEOPLE WHO USE OUR SERVICES

We put patients first in everything we do, by reaching out to staff, service users, carers, families, communities and professionals outside the NHS. We put the needs of service users and communities before organisational boundaries.



EVERYONE COUNTS

We use our resources for the benefit of the whole community and make sure nobody is excluded or left behind. We accept that some people need more help, that difficult decisions have to be taken – and that when we waste resources, we waste others' opportunities. We recognise that we all have a part to play in making ourselves and our communities healthier.



IMPROVING LIVES

We strive to improve health and well-being and people's experiences of the NHS. We cherish excellence and professionalism wherever we find it – in the everyday things that make people's lives better as much as in clinical practice, service improvements and innovation. We recognise that all have a part to play in making ourselves, patients and our communities healthier.

Recent developments & achievements



Work begins on £2.2m mental health Research and Development facility

Work has almost completed on a £2.2m state-of-the-art research facility at Wonford House in Exeter, designed to widen access to clinical trials and tackle inequalities in research participation. Part-funded by the NIHR, the centre will support studies in mental health, dementia, CAMHS and physical health, with laboratories, therapy and assessment rooms, pharmacy facilities and virtual follow-up spaces. It is expected to open in autumn 2026.



NHS Excellence Award regional champions

We have been named regional champions in the NHS Excellence Awards 2026 for improving reasonable adjustments for staff. The award-winning project introduced a centralised budget, dedicated support, a Work With Me Passport, workplace assessments and improved DSE systems. Since September 2025, more than 100 requests have been supported, with staff praising the process for its kindness, efficiency and responsiveness.



First person in the world recruited to digital dementia study by our Research Team

Our Exeter Research Team recruited the first person in the world to take part in the Five Lives MED study, an international project testing a digital health app for people aged 50 and over with mild cognitive impairment (MCI).

MCI causes changes in memory and thinking that are greater than expected with normal ageing, although they do not usually have a major impact on everyday life. People with MCI may also have an increased risk of developing dementia in the future.

Supported by the NIHR Research Delivery Network, the study compared two groups of participants. One group used the Five Lives MED app at home three times a week for 12 weeks, while the other received general health advice. The app combines coaching to encourage healthy exercise habits with brain-training games designed to support thinking skills. Participants completed memory and thinking assessments at the beginning and end of the study.

Recruitment has now finished across several international sites. The team behind the app is developing an improved version, with another study planned for early 2027.

The project has also strengthened the South West Peninsula's reputation as an attractive location for commercial dementia research and has already led to further collaboration.



Provider Collaboratives

The South West Provider Collaborative (SWPC) is an award-winning partnership of nine provider organisations – six NHS trusts, one community interest company and two independent sector providers – with DPT as lead provider.

Together we cover almost 24,000 km² and a population of around 5.8 million people, from Cornwall to Gloucestershire.

The Collaborative commissions specialised services including medium and low secure mental health care, CAMHS Tier 4, adult eating disorder services and, since April 2024, full delegated responsibility for inpatient perinatal services across the South West.

Since April 2023 the SWPC has funded dedicated specialist forensic community services in every area of the South West, and it consistently meets the highest level of quality assurance across all service lines.



Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD)

For the first time, services for children, young people and families across Devon have come together under a single NHS provider. Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD) has developed through a strong partnership between DPT and Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, and this next step builds on that shared history.

The move creates opportunities to strengthen partnerships, reduce complexity and build on the excellent work already being delivered across the county. It also marks a new chapter for our organisation as we deliver physical health services alongside our existing mental health, learning disability and neurodiversity services. The skills, knowledge and experience of our new CFHD colleagues will help shape how services continue to develop to better meet the needs of children, young people and families.

CFHD will operate as an alliance, working with NHS organisations, local authorities, education settings, voluntary and community sector partners and families themselves. This ensures care remains joined-up, community-focused and responsive to local need.



Open Up

DPT is also supported by its special charity, Open Up, which raises money to support the Trust, enabling enhancement and improvement of mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity and children's community services across Devon and beyond. Open Up's aim is to make a positive, lasting impact on those receiving care from and working within the Trust, by investing in additional projects and services that otherwise wouldn't receive funding, while also supporting broader initiatives that indirectly benefit the Trust, patients and NHS staff.

Role description

The Board sets the Trust's vision, values and strategic direction and ensures there is sufficient management capacity and capability to deliver the objectives of the organisation.

It also holds the organisation to account and monitors performance, keeping patient safety central to its operation. It ensures that public funds are used efficiently and effectively for the benefit of people using our services, the public and other stakeholders.

Led by an independent Chair, the Executive and Non-Executive members, are collectively responsible for the Board's decisions and the Trust's performance and will constructively challenge each other in the development of proposals on strategy, priorities, investments, risk mitigation and standards.

The Executive Directors are responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the Trust.

The Board is comprised of Executive and Non-Executive Directors with different skills, knowledge and expertise from both within and outside of the NHS and the current skills portfolio includes healthcare management, research, accountancy, legal, social care and management consultancy.

The Board has established Committees to help it scrutinise its work in quality, safety and workforce, finance and investment, performance, strategic development, improvement and mental health act compliance oversight.

Trust Board meetings are held in public unless there is confidential or sensitive information which require discussions to take place in private. Representatives from the Directorates and the Senior Leadership Team are often invited to attend Board meetings to help inform debate as subject matter experts.



At the start of each Board meeting people using or who have used services, carers and members of staff will share their stories about using services or their experience of working in the organisation. To maintain a focus on quality and experience, a Board visit programme is in place to ensure that all members of the Board have regular opportunities to visit services to meet people using services, carers and staff and talk about their experiences of health, care and treatment at the Trust.

The purpose of NHS Boards is to govern effectively, and in so doing build patient, public and stakeholder confidence that their health and healthcare is in safe hands. This fundamental accountability to the public and stakeholders is delivered by building confidence:

- in the quality and safety of health services
- that resources are invested in a way that delivers optimal health outcomes
- in the accessibility and responsiveness of health services
- that people using services and the public can help to shape health services to meet their needs
- that public money is spent in a way that is fair, efficient, effective and economic

To carry out their role effectively, the Chair must cultivate a strong, collaborative relationship with the Chief Executive. Many responsibilities in this role description will be discharged in partnership with the Chief Executive. It is important the Chair and the Chief Executive are clear about their individual and shared roles, and their respective responsibilities towards the unitary Board.

Together, the Chair and the Chief Executive set the tone for the whole organisation. They are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the population the Trust serves and the wider system in which the organisation sits receive the best possible care in a sustainable way.

Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair has a unique role in leading the NHS Trust Board. The role combines the duty to lead effective governance, consistent with the Nolan principles and NHS values, with securing a long-term vision and strategy for the organisation. Fundamentally, the Chair is responsible for the effective leadership of the Board. They are pivotal in creating the conditions necessary for overall Board and individual director effectiveness. Central to the Chair's role are the six NHS leadership competency domains.



Person specification

Essential criteria

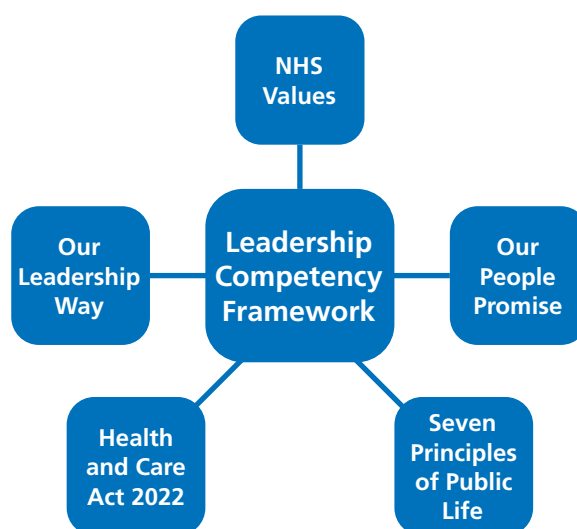
Previous NED experience from any of a wide range of relevant sectors and a genuine commitment to patients and the promotion of excellent health care services.

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 following diagram 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	

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.

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.

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 at the same time as tackling discrimination in the pursuit to be an anti-racist 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.

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.

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, and our workforce. Strengthening relationships and developing collaborative behaviours are key to the integrated care environment.

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, people with disabilities and people from the LGBTQIA+ community who we know are all under-represented in these important roles.

Applicants should live in or have strong connections with the area served by the trust.

Given the significant public profile and responsibility members of NHS Boards hold, it is vital that those appointed inspire confidence of the public, patients and NHS staff at all times. NHS England and the Trust make a number of specific background checks to ensure that those we appoint are “fit and proper” people to hold these important roles. More information can be found on our [website](#).

Appendix 1:

Values and concepts from NHS Leadership Competency Framework

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 improve continually, 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

Seven principles of public life

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Appendix 2: More information

For information about Devon Partnership NHS Trust, such as business plans, annual reports, and services, visit our **website**.

For information about what it is like to work at DPT and to hear from DPT staff visit the dedicated jobs **website**.

For information about the Trust, such as business plans, annual reports, and services, visit the **website**.

Other sources of information include:

- **Care Quality Commission website**
- **NHS Devon Integrated Care Board**
- **Vision and Ambitions for Devon Integrated Care System**
- **Twitter**
- **LinkedIn**

Follow the links for more information about:

- **Support to prepare candidates to apply for a Non-Executive vacancy including:**
 - Building your application
 - Sources of information and useful reading
 - Eligibility and disqualification criteria
 - Terms and conditions of Chair and Non-Executive director appointments
 - How we will handle your application and information
- **Sign up to receive email alerts on the latest vacancies**
- **Contact details for the Non-Executive Appointments Team**

NHS England respects your privacy and is committed to protecting your personal data. We will only use personal data where we have your consent or where we need to comply with a legal or statutory obligation.

It is important that you read **this information** together with our **privacy notice** so that you are fully aware of how and why we are using your data.

Appendix 3: How to apply

- Hunter Healthcare are helping us to identify potential candidates, if you would like a confidential discussion about the role contact Rhiannon Smith at rsmith@hunter-healthcare.com and Jenny Adrian at jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com or 07939 250362
- NHS England – for general enquiries contact Miriam Walker by email miriam.walker@nhs.net

KEY DATES

- Closing date for receipt of applications: **TBC**.
- Please forward your completed application to england.chairsandneds@nhs.net quoting reference number **TBC**
- Longlisting meeting: **TBC**
- Long-listed candidates may be invited for a preliminary interview with Hunter Healthcare. To facilitate this, we will share your application with them. Feedback from these interviews will be given to the panel
- Shortlisting meeting: **TBC**
- Interviews and stakeholder sessions: **TBC**

If you wish to be considered for this role please provide:

- a CV that includes your address and contact details, highlighting and explaining any gaps in your employment history
- a supporting statement that highlights your motivation for applying and your understanding of the NHS and the role. You should outline your personal responsibility and achievement within previous roles and how your experience matches the person specification
- the names, positions, organisations and contact details for three referees. Your referees should be individuals in a line management capacity, and cover your most recent employer, any regulated health or social care activity or where roles involved children or vulnerable adults. Your references may be taken prior to interview and may be shared with the selection panel
- please complete and return the monitoring information form which accompanies this pack and is available for download
- tell us about any dates when you will not be available



Devon Partnership

NHS Trust



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