NHS

Essex Partnership University

NHS Foundation Trust

EPUT



Non-Executive Directors

Candidate Information Pack

November 2026

Hunter Healthcare

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining our Board here at Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) as a Non-Executive Director (NED).



With over 7,000 staff working right across Essex and further afield and a turnover of around £650m in 2025/26, EPUT is one of the largest non-acute NHS trusts in the East of England region. We are a major provider of mental health and physical health services and work in partnership with a wide range of local authorities and statutory and third sector providers.

There has never been a more interesting time to join an NHS mental health trust, as we await the publication of the Government's first national mental health strategy in over 15 years and the delivery of the forthcoming Health Bill, which places new emphasis on prevention and the value of community services and care closer to where people live and work.

We are in a good position to respond well to the opportunities both will bring – we have a track record of partnership working, especially in integrating community physical and mental health care and in working side by side with education, social care and employment services.

The creation in April of a new, single integrated care board for the county – NHS Essex – brings further opportunity for closer working relationships, particularly within emerging neighbourhood teams and primary care.

We are not without our challenges of course. The Lampard Inquiry – a statutory public enquiry examining deaths in Essex mental health services over a 24-year period – is entering its next phase of public hearings, bringing further scrutiny to EPUT and our current services, and we expect interim recommendations to emerge soon.

We are taking decisive steps to improve and open up our working culture in response to staff feedback and external inspections. Although a number of our individual services are rated Good by the Care Quality Commission, our overall rating of Requires Improvement does not reflect our full aspirations and ambitions, and we need to pick up the pace in our continued journey of improvement.

This is therefore a pivotal time for EPUT and for mental health and community services as a whole, and we are seeking two to three new Non-executive Directors to bring fresh ideas and challenge to our Board and to our plans for the future.

This pack will give you more insight into the work of EPUT and the skills we seek. Do contact Jenny Adrian at our recruitment partners, Hunter Healthcare by email: **jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com** or phone: **07939 250362** or James McLeod on **07842 424530** or **jmcleod@hunter-healthcare.com**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Jackie Craisatti
Interim Chair
Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

Video introduction from Jackie Craisatti

About Us

EPUT is a significant partner in the wider health and care sector in Essex and further afield in the East of England.

With over 7,000 staff working in over 200 locations, we are a large organisation with a wide range of services which support around 100,000 people at any one time.

The dispersed nature of the services we provide is an opportunity to work with a wide range of communities, partners and stakeholders, but at the same time it is a challenge to ensure we deliver consistently high quality care to everyone who needs our help, and with a strong shared sense of identity.

Our highly committed staff are at the centre of the Trust. We have worked hard together to reduce turnover, increase stability in our teams and provide consistent care to our patients, their loved ones and carers.

We actively support and encourage staff involvement and inclusion at all levels.

We have active staff networks, all with executive sponsorship, and our customised RISE talent development programme supports staff from global majority backgrounds in fulfilling their development ambitions.

We support teams to make direct improvements based on local feedback from the national staff survey, especially around leadership support, being more involved in decision making and improving communication and transparency.

In 2025, the Trust commissioned the King's Fund and BRAP, the equality, fairness, human rights and social justice charity, to carry out a culture review, covering staff engagement, psychological safety, leadership, equality and inclusion.

A new senior leadership programme is now commencing, covering a large number of professional groups and grades, informed and developed from the feedback received during the cultural review.



We welcomed over 1,200 new colleagues into the Trust in 2025, including over 170 newly qualified nurses and 200 colleagues who transferred from our staff bank or were previously employed through a staffing agency.

Our current turnover and vacancy rates are considerably below target. Our staff are also imaginative and innovative, jointly developing new services and opportunities with our patients to support people in our communities.

Our vision and values guide everything we do. Our vision is **To be the leading health and wellbeing service in the provision of mental health and community care**, and our values of **We Learn, We Care and We Empower** have been with us for several years.

We look to the future in the context of the Government's Ten Year Plan for health, the forthcoming Health Bill and other significant changes in the wider health and care system – this is the context for our vision and our three key priorities:

- Seamless access to care closer to home
- Personalised, inclusive mental health support for all
- Using digital innovation to improve access, experience and efficiency

Achieving our vision







As EPUT looks to the future in the context of the Government's 10 year plan for health, as well as significant changes in the wider health and care system, it is critical that our strategic plan continues to reflect how we will achieve our ambition to be the leading health and wellbeing service in the provision of mental health and community care.



Our vision, values and strategic objectives remain the same, and our next phase in achieving them is focused on meeting people where they are and strengthening mental health and community care across our system. Our ambition is underpinned by three priorities: seamless access to care closer to home; personalised, inclusive mental health support for all; and the use of digital innovation to improve access, experience and efficiency.

Delivering these priorities requires strong partnership working across the NHS, local authorities and the voluntary sector. EPUT is playing a leading role in delivering joined-up care and working differently with partners to improve how services are planned and delivered. This includes transforming community mental health support through Community First, expanding West Essex Hospital at Home, and working with acute hospitals and primary care to support more people at home and in their communities, contributing to system sustainability and financial resilience.



We are integrating physical and mental health services, modernising our estate to support new models of care, and aligning our services with the NHS Long Term Plan. Our approach focuses on understanding the wider factors that shape someone's health, not just their diagnosis. This includes delivering trauma-informed care through initiatives such as the South East Essex Trauma Alliance, improving support for neurodivergent people, and co-designing services with people who use them.



Digital transformation is central to this work. We are developing a single shared patient record through NOVA, supported by shared care records accessible across partner organisations.

Patients are being given greater control through tools such as Patients Know Best and virtual services, while staff benefit from improved access to information and more efficient systems. We are also using AI to support better outcomes, productivity and value for the health and care system.

By combining innovation with compassion, and partnership with accountability, EPUT's next chapter will deliver measurable improvements in access, experience and outcomes, supporting healthier communities across Essex and beyond.

Delivering our priorities

Delivering our priorities requires strong partnership working across the NHS, local authorities and the voluntary sector.

EPUT is playing a leading role in delivering joined-up care and working differently with partners to improve how services are planned and delivered. This includes transforming our services through our major development programmes, in particular **Time to Care**, which is revolutionising the way we care for patients on our mental health inpatient wards, whilst also developing our community mental health services to help improve access for patients and bring more support closer to home.

At the same time, we are further integrating physical and mental health services, modernising our estate to support new models of care and aligning our services more closely with the national direction of travel. Our approach focuses on understanding the wider factors that shape someone's health, not just their diagnosis.

This includes delivering trauma-informed care through initiatives such as the South East Essex Trauma Alliance, improving support for neurodivergent people and continuing to co-design services with people who use them.

Digital transformation is central to this work. We are developing a first-in-type single shared patient record – NOVA – with colleagues in acute services, supported by shared care records which are already accessible across partner organisations.

We are empowering patients to take greater control of their care and health records through tools such as **Patients Know Best** and other virtual services, while ensuring our staff can benefit from improved access to information and more efficient systems.

We are also using AI to support better outcomes, productivity and value for the health and care system.



Involving and empowering

Working together with our patients, their loved ones and carers

We work hard to involve and empower the people we care for in what we do. We have a co-production first approach and aim to work in partnership with our patients, their loved ones and carers.

We have a valued community of people who work with us as lived experience ambassadors, family and carer liaison ambassadors and peer support workers, and we have plans to expand these roles further as we can see how much value they bring.

Benefits of involvement and co-production include:

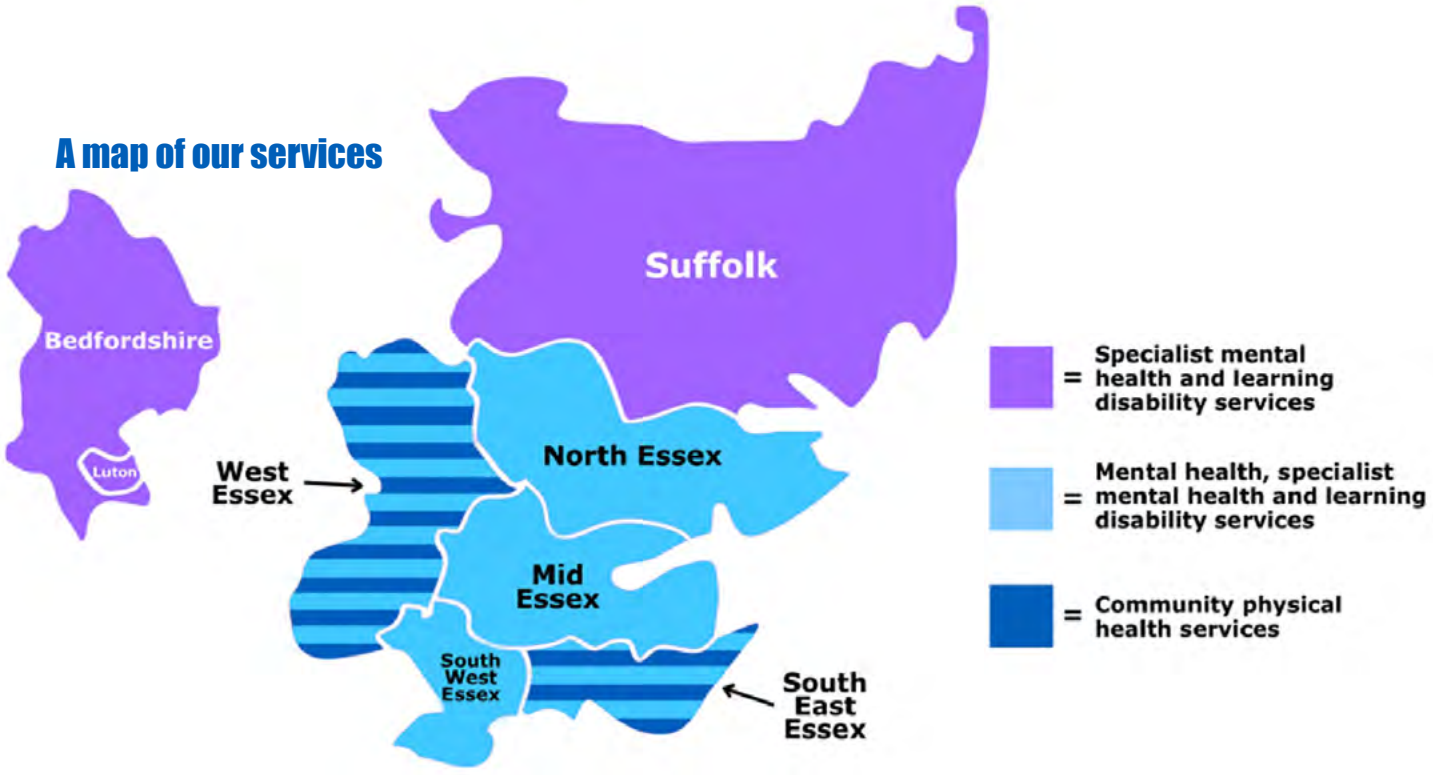
- Peer reviewing patient facing information to ensure it is meaningful and easy to understand
- Support beneficial and meaningful activities for patients on our inpatient wards and in community teams
- Using personal experiences of mental health care to improve staff understanding of patient needs
- Participating in interview and recruitment processes
- Active involvement in designing and delivering patient/service forums, networks, and focus groups – internally and externally, supporting system partners as thought leaders



Our services

- **Mental health services** for adults of working age and adults aged 65 and over, including community, urgent care and inpatient services, specialist low and medium secure inpatient units, a specialist mother and baby unit and CAMHS inpatient services
- **Community health services** for adults and children, including district nursing and therapy teams, physiotherapy, virtual hospital wards and end of life care
- **Adult learning disability services** delivered in partnership with other NHS and social care organisations
- **Health and justice services** for people aged 10 and over who are in the criminal justice system and have been identified as having mental health problems, learning disabilities or difficulties, cognitive disorder, substance misuse and other vulnerabilities
- **Collaborative arrangements:** the Trust is part of both the Mid and South Essex Community provider collaborative and the East of England Specialist Mental Health Commissioning Collaborative.
- **The Mid and South Essex Community Provider Collaborative** is a contractual joint venture that brings together three community service providers (EPUT, North East London NHS Foundation Trust and Provide) to explore ways to improve services, learn from each other, provide a coherent voice of community services and create a platform for developing our services further. The collaborative is overseen by a Board made up of the constituent Trust Chairs, CEOs and Executives.
- **The East of England Mental Health Specialist Commissioning Collaborative** is a partnership between EPUT, Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust and independent sector providers which commissions specialist services utilising knowledge and skills from within all three organisations. It covers specialist children's and young people's services, medium and low secure adult services and specialist adult eating disorder services.

A map of our services



Structure and governance

The Trust is organised internally into six care units, alongside our corporate services:

- Community Mid and South Essex
- Community North East Essex
- Community West Essex
- Psychological services
- Specialist services
- Inpatient and Urgent and Emergency Care Mental Health

The Care Units are responsible for general business within a delegated portfolio and budget. They report monthly to accountability meetings against performance metrics which are set out within our accountability framework (AF). They also have responsibility for governance: safety, clinical effectiveness, safeguarding and patient experience. The Executive Team reports into the Trust Board committees on a monthly basis. The committees and their remits are as follows:

- Finance and Performance committee – finance and operational assurance.
- Quality committee – safety, experience and effectiveness assurance.
- Audit committee – independent and objective advice on financial and governance obligations and compliance with all relevant legislation and guidance.
- People, Engagement and Culture committee – oversees the Trust's People Plan, monitors standard workforce metrics, recruitment strategies and approaches.

The Board meets on a bi-monthly basis. The Board and its committees have formal minutes and the Senior Leadership Team provides strategic and operational support.



Role description

Job Title:	Non-Executive Director
Time Commitment:	Four days per month average (48 days per annum)
Remuneration:	£15,835
Start Date:	1 February 2027

Main Responsibilities

There are five key elements of the role of an independent Non-Executive Director as a member of the Board. These elements reflect relevant statutory responsibilities and established best-practice guidance:

- **Strategy:** constructively challenge and help develop strategic plans
- **Performance:** scrutinise management's performance against agreed goals and objectives, monitor performance reporting, and support Executive Directors in implementing Board decisions
- **Risk:** satisfy themselves as to the integrity of financial, clinical and other information, and that internal controls and systems of risk management are robust and effective
- **People:** determine appropriate levels of remuneration for Executive Directors and play a leading role in their appointment and, where necessary, removal, as well as in succession planning
- **Accountability:** ensure that the Board acts in the best interests of the public and is fully accountable for the services provided by the Trust and the public funds it uses.

Commitments

Independent Non-Executive Directors are also required to fulfil a number of fixed commitments, including, but not limited to:

- Visits to Trust sites to triangulate information received at the Board level membership of standing committees, including acting as committee chair where required, and regular attendance at meetings
- Standing committee membership (including acting as chair) and attendance
- Attendance at Board of Director meetings and development sessions as well as other internal and external training opportunities
- Attendance at Council of Governors meetings when invited
- In addition, all Non-Executive Directors will meet periodically with the Chair, without the Executive Directors, including the Chief Executive, to discuss matters of interest or concern
- Involvement with Governors' constituency work.

Person specification

We are seeking two – possibly three – Non-executive Directors. The essential criteria complement the expertise currently represented on the Board and will equip it to meet the Trust's demanding future agenda:

- **Role 1:** Recent senior clinical leadership experience in healthcare. Candidates will be able to demonstrate clinical expertise and/or strategic leadership in either research, digital transformation or quality improvement, with an understanding of how these areas contribute to the delivery of high-quality, safe and effective healthcare.
- **Role 2:** significant commercial experience, with demonstrable experience of leading significant transformation and large-scale, sustainable organisational change.
- **Role 3:** Significant strategic experience in communications, marketing and brand management, with a track record of using effective communication and engagement to build organisational reputation, strengthen stakeholder relationships and support organisational objectives.

All candidates will have

- Recent experience at senior director, Board or equivalent level within a progressive and complex organisation
- A proven track record as a strategic thinker, with experience of looking beyond organisational and/or geographical boundaries
- Experience of developing successful alliances and effective working relationships with a broad range of stakeholders
- Sound knowledge of, and commitment to, the highest standards of corporate governance, with experience of operating within a high-accountability environment
- The ability to communicate and influence confidently, listen effectively, probe issues and offer constructive challenge
- A strong personal commitment to public service values, including the Nolan Principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership; equality, diversity and inclusion; the NHS principles and values set out in the NHS Constitution; the Trust's Standards of Business Conduct; and the highest standards of personal integrity and probity.

How to apply

The closing date for applications is **17 December 2026.**

Applications should include:

- A **covering letter ideally no more than two pages**, explaining why the appointment interests you, how you meet the appointment criteria and what you specifically would bring to the post.
- A **Curriculum Vitae (CV; ideally no more than three pages)** 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 referees covering the last six years of employment. References will not be taken without your permission.
- You will need the following reference code: **EPUT-NEDS-1126**

All applications will be acknowledged.

For an informal conversation about the post, please contact Jenny Adrian at our recruitment partners, Hunter Healthcare by email: **jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com** or phone: **07939 250362** or James McLeod on **07842 424530** or **jmcleod@hunter-healthcare.com**

CLICK HERE TO APPLY ONLINE

KEY DATES

Application closing date	17 December 2026
Stakeholder events	Early January 2027 TBC
Interviews	Early January 2027 TBC



Appendix I:

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	

Appendix II:

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.

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, and people with disabilities, who we know are all under-represented in these important roles.

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.

NHS

Essex Partnership University

NHS Foundation Trust



Floor 2, Berkshire House
168-173 High Holborn, London WC1V 7AA

T: 020 7935 4570
E: enquiries@hunter-healthcare.com