



Governor Update

Surrey (including NE Hampshire)

Dear member

Who are your Governors?

Since the last issue of our Governor Update, the public members of SECAMB in Surrey have elected two new Public Governors to represent them on the Council of Governors.

Priscilla Chandro has had personal experience of SECAMB's services and is now an active ambassador for the British Heart Foundation. She sits on the Membership Development Committee and the Inclusion Hub Advisory Group. Priscilla aims to use her involvement in the various aspects of health service provision from a patient's perspective to ensure the best care for all. She has recently been appointed as Secretary of Cardiovascular Care Partnerships – the public side of the British Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation (BACPR).

Neil Baker is an active Community First Responder (CFR), and sees the needs of patients first-hand, interacting with SECAMB's front line staff and with our Emergency Dispatch Centre. Neil aims to bring his extensive financial and operational experience in international business to the benefit of patients, the Trust, its staff, volunteers and related organisations.

Terry Daubney, previously a SECAMB employee before his retirement, sits on the Governor Development Working Group and remains a Surrey Governor for a further year.

Ian Smith, Deputy Lead Governor, is a member of the Governor Development Working Group and the Audit Working Group and also remains a Surrey Governor for a further year. Ian continues to tour the SECAMB area giving talks to a wide range of groups such as Rotary Clubs,

Church Groups, the Women's Institute etc. If a group you are a member of would like to have an illustrated talk on our ambulance service, please contact the Membership Office.

What we do

It is now over two years since SECAMB was granted Foundation Trust status and the change of responsibilities, both operational and financial which went with it. In the meantime, there has been a raft of new regulations to cope with (not least the Health and Social Care Act 2012) and changes made to comply with the same.

The Trust's Board of Directors has been refreshed and two new Non-Executive Directors were appointed by the Council of Governors, bringing with them specific skills to complement those already existing on the Board. A further Non-Executive will be appointed in the coming months to replace an existing colleague who is retiring.

Likewise there have been a considerable number of changes within the Council of Governors, not only in Surrey and the other representative areas, but also to the Appointed Governors, who represent various authorities and organisations throughout the SECAMB area.

The Council of Governors holds six formal meetings each year. Governors are also encouraged to attend the regular meetings of the Executive Board as observers, but they may also ask questions in their role as members of the public. Any member of the public is welcome to attend both the Board and Council meetings, and the dates are advertised on our website or contact the Membership Office (contact details in the Your Call newsletter).

In addition to the Council of Governors' meetings, most of your elected members sit on one or more of the sub-committees, as well as attending other briefings, meetings, conferences etc.

This year we have been active in attending various major public events including the Surrey County Show (Guildford), East Grinstead 999, Eastbourne 999 and the Kent County Show. At these shows a huge number of the public visited the SECamb stand and we were very successful in signing-up new public members of the Trust, with 150, 105, 220 and 630 new members being recruited respectively. Attendance at these events is an excellent way to engage members of the public in the ambulance service – since the majority of people only wish to know about the ambulance service when they have an urgent need for our services.

Current Issues

The 'Make Ready System' for the preparation of our ambulances (i.e. cleaning, stocking and maintaining them) is continuing to expand and now covers Ashford, Chertsey, Hastings and Paddock Wood with Brighton, Polegate, and others to follow. This process moves the responsibility for fully maintained vehicles away from the ambulance crews to specialists.

The introduction of the new '111' service has not been without its problems, but with careful planning and the recruitment of significantly higher numbers of call-takers, the service is now operating close to its original plan. One of the major problems was the extra demand placed on the service – instead of the envisaged 5000 calls over a week-end, the number of the public using this service, which replaced the 'out-of-hours' and NHS Direct services is closer to 7000. Governors are receiving regular updates and continue to work with the Trust to get this operating as well as possible as soon as possible.

Both of the call centres – Ashford (operated by SECamb) and Dorking (operated by Harmoni) – are now operating at full capacity, albeit with additional clinical supervision by qualified personnel.

The 'Hazardous Area Response Teams' (HART – which respond to incidents in challenging environments such as involving chemicals or fuel, or on waterways) are now both fully operational at Ashford and Gatwick, each staffed by 72 paramedics to provide cover 24 hour / 365 day per year including training and time off. When not required for 'HART' activities, these staff undertake normal ambulance duties.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have now taken over the commissioning (procurement) of health services for the public.

We are regularly discussing ways to enable the views of members of the general public to be heard on all aspects of the SECamb operation. Suggestions about how this may be achieved would be welcome.

Future Events

We would love to see you at the Annual Members Meeting on 26th September 2013, at Effingham Park Hotel, Copthorne, RH10 6EU. This is an opportunity to hear from the Trust's leaders, meet the governors, and learn more about the ambulance service from our staff. We do hope to see you there.

Get in touch

We are keen to hear from members about your experience of the ambulance service or the 111 service. While we cannot respond to individual complaints (and will pass these on to the Trust's complaints office), we would love to understand our members' views so we can represent you more effectively. Contact details are in the newsletter.

Best wishes,

Ian, Priscilla, Terry and Neil.

