

Governor story: Billie

About me: Billie Critchlow.
Mother of a woman who experiences psychosis and mood disorder. Retired teacher, interested in the arts, education, nature.

Following a Post graduate degree in Mental Health Recovery, it led to training of mental health nursing students and social workers as well as SHSC staff in Recovery Education Unit.

Academic **focus on family role in recovery from psychosis.** Supported by personal experience.

My governor journey:

My aim was to **champion the family** to have the best response from staff, and to influence best practice. **Over the years I have been able to:**

- ✓ Move issues and **needs for carers to the centre of service** development and policy making.
- ✓ Helped write the first **carers policy**
- ✓ Raise questions and **seek assurance on carers**
- ✓ Ensure **carers are considered** in all the Trust do
- ✓ **Staff conferences** on the role of the family



"I gained good insights into how a health care organisation is run".

Final thoughts:

"I understood that change does not always mean change for the better, and that the governors have a role to play in questioning what will and what will not improve services".

"I met a lot of brilliant people who are passionate about improving care."

Governor story: Jonathan

About me: Jonathan Hall

Suffered **chronic pain which had negative effect on mental well-being**. As disability worsened, so did my mental well-being. Following an attempt to end life I was hospitalised. This made me more aware of my own mental health needs. The support that followed from compassionate staff, encouraged me to **focus on what I had and who I am, rather than what I had lost** to my disability. **Recovery is a lifelong journey.**

Studied a Post graduate degree in Mental Health Recovery which challenged my own ideas. Governor and vice chair at a sixth form and volunteer at the Trust as a Psychoeducational trainer using lived experience and stories.

My Governor journey:

As part of my recovery journey, I was asked to become a Service User Governor. **Over the years I have:**

- ✓ Used **my lived and work experience** to seek assurance.
- ✓ Seen the Trust through the **lens of a service user**.
- ✓ Helped to **showcase research** and the need for grass roots knowledge.
- ✓ **Champion the term recovery** as an individual journey.
- ✓ Changed the opinion that **‘work’ is not a health measure**.
- ✓ Encouraged a more **supportive and less stigmatising view on the term ‘suicide’**.

Final thoughts:

“Becoming a Governor allowed me to voice my opinions on how the trust operates and feedback on how policies and procedures have a direct effect on service user individuals.”

“It has presented many opportunities to me that I never thought possible”



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“The Trust also offers several Governor training sessions to support our role”.

