



AGM 30th November 2023: ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board

VHS is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. We are governed by our Articles which state we must have a minimum of three Directors and a maximum of fourteen Directors. Our Directors are also the Trustees of the charity and serve as our Board. Up to ten Directors may be elected by the membership or appointed directly by the Board of Directors. Elected/appointed Directors must be Full Members of VHS. Additionally, the Board of Directors may co-opt up to four additional Directors from other sectors/backgrounds.

Directors who are retiring or continuing

Voluntary Health Scotland wishes to record its grateful thanks to the four Directors who are retiring at the AGM: Rob Murray, David Main, Nicola Sinclair and Ian Bruce.

We are grateful to the following Directors, whose terms of office are continuing/ongoing:

1. Emma Nieminen, Diabetes Scotland – Elected Director
2. Maureen O'Neill, Faith in Older People –Elected Director
3. Wilma Paterson, Cumbernauld Action for Care of the Elderly (CACE) – Elected Director
4. Busha Riaz, Kidney Research UK – Elected Director
5. Christine Carlin – co-opted Director
6. Paul Mooney – co-opted Director
7. Billy McClean – co-opted Director

Vacancies

We have five vacancies for Elected Directors and by the deadline of 9th November we had received eight nominations to fill these places. As the number of vacancies exceeds the number of vacancies, there must be an election in the form of a secret ballot at the AGM on 30th November.

The eight nominees are:

1. Kirsty Cumming
2. Alan Eagleson
3. Jennifer Forsyth
4. Iona McCann
5. Richard Meade
6. Paul J Okroj
7. Tilly Robinson-Miles
8. Sarah van Putten

Personal statements from each nominee are set out below.

Election process

As there are more candidates than vacancies, VHS's Articles (our constitution) require us to hold a secret ballot at the AGM. This means members must be physically present at the AGM in order to vote, or else have completed and returned a proxy vote form to us. Voting will be electronic.

Each member organisation has one vote, so if your organisation is sending more than one person to the AGM, we will allocate the vote to one representative of your organisation on arrival.

Nominees' personal statements

1. Kirsty Cumming, CEO, Community Leisure UK

I am CEO of a membership association, similar in size to Voluntary Health Scotland, with a total of 2 full time and 4 part time members of staff. I have been in post for 3 years, my first CEO role and have reached the point where I am keen to look at my personal development. I feel that I would benefit from involvement as a trustee and would hope I could offer meaningful contributions. Specifically in terms of the wider health landscape and the role of public leisure and culture, as well as insight around the practicalities of running a small membership based organization.

With regard to knowledge, skills and experience, we are currently going through some Board Review work within our own organization and I believe there is an opportunity to learn and share insight around this. I also have a good understanding of the capacity pressures for a small organization and some of the opportunities around financial sustainability for the organization.

Community Leisure UK has been a member of VHS for a few years and I have found the network to be incredibly helpful and supportive. I believe that VHS has a unique position in representing health in the broadest sense in Scotland, and this is where my interest lies, in the wider public health landscape and the social determinants of health as well as some of the work focusing on health inequalities.

I am eager to support and learn and I thank you for considering this application.

2. Alan Eagleson, Head of Services (Scotland & Northern England), Terrence Higgins Trust

I am reliable, conscientious, ambitious and solutions focused with wide ranging capabilities and experience. I thrive on challenge and lead by honest, professional example, encouraging a collaborative, informed, empowered and diverse working environment. Passionately driven to champion causes close to my heart, such as LGBTQI+ rights and spotlighting the effects and drivers of health and social inequalities, I aim to help effect positive change through constructive, evidence based dialogue.

Throughout my time in Scotland's vibrant third sector, I have known Voluntary Health Scotland as an intelligent, flexible, diplomatic and well connected organisation that consistently 'punches above its weight'. It is a vital intermediary and advocate for all in Scotland's voluntary sector who work tirelessly to improve people's health and wellbeing outcomes and seek to influence the policy decisions and systems that drive them.

VHS' purpose to create a healthier, fairer Scotland served by a thriving voluntary sector, alongside its values of excellence, collaboration, initiative and equality, align closely with my own passions and approach. I would be privileged and driven to do the best job I could if afforded the rewarding opportunity to serve as a trustee and director of VHS, helping to ensure responsible governance, robust financial management, good HR practice and contribute to strategic development.

My relevant work experience includes:

- Budgetary management, overseeing multiple income streams, ensuring responsible, effective and accountable use of charitable funds
- Project managing the purchase, development and delivery of a new multi-service hub in Glasgow
- Collaboration, partnership development and community engagement
- Developing staff teams
- Co-production in shaping services and policy, ensuring the voices of community members and needs of service users are key drivers of ongoing improvement

3. Jennifer Forsyth, Policy and Evidence Manager, Obesity Action Scotland

I have a decade of experience working in policy for a range of public and voluntary sector organisations. Much of this has been spent working in public health policy, focusing on promoting the preventative health agenda and why it matters. I have a good working knowledge of the Scottish and UK political systems, including how to influence change in these arenas, and a sound understanding of current public health opportunities, challenges and policies in Scotland.

I'm experienced in researching and writing consultation responses, producing policy briefings and reports, organising large national conferences and events, and leading partnerships and stakeholder engagement. All of these skills I feel are highly relevant for and would be beneficial to the Board. I strongly believe in collaboration and partnership working as a way to achieve real change.

I have been involved in VHS's Health Policy Officers Network for several years and have always found it a really useful platform to share knowledge, ideas and learn from other policy professionals working in the health policy space. It is through my involvement in the network that I have become increasingly interested in the work of VHS. Being elected to the Board feels like the next natural step in my career journey and would enable to me to utilise my years of experience, knowledge and interest in health policy, and involvement with VHS to date, to drive forward the direction of the organisation.

Outside of work, I have been a volunteer team leader with my local foodbank since 2015 and became a co-opted Trustee in 2021. Through my involvement with the foodbank, I have good knowledge and awareness of the challenges facing voluntary sector organisations, of working with and coordinating a diverse group of volunteers, and of the expectations, responsibilities and duties of Trustees.

4. Iona McCann, Associate Director (Communities), Art in Healthcare

I have worked in the visual art sector for many years, co-ordinating and managing projects involving artists, community participation and partnerships. I am currently Associate Director (Communities) at Art in Healthcare where I manage our outreach programme including our Social Prescribing project, Room for art and contribute to fundraising and strategy. I have a BA (hons) Fine Art from Duncan of Jordanstone School of Art and Design in Dundee and an MA Art Museum and Gallery Education from

Newcastle University. I am passionate about the positive impacts the arts can have on health and wellbeing.

Art in Healthcare has been a member of VHS for many years and benefitted greatly from events, forums, networking and dissemination of information. I am particularly interested in the Scottish Community Link Work Network and greatly admire the energy of the organisation to be active in strong advocacy and policy development.

I would bring a good knowledge of the sector – particularly creative health, social prescribing, health inequalities and an understanding of the challenges currently faced by both the voluntary health sector and the people we work with. I would bring the perspective of a small organisation to the Board which reflects I'm sure many members of VHS. I am a good communication, motivated, enthusiastic, skilled at problem solving and creative thinking. I am really interested in the health and wellbeing of staff so would bring care, compassion and support if needed.

If successful, this will be my first role on a Board and would provide me with a different perspective and benefit both myself in terms of leadership development and Art in Healthcare in terms of connections and being more tuned into policy development.

5. Richard Meade, Director, Carers Scotland

I have worked in health and social care for over twenty years including the NHS and multiple third sector organisations, giving me a breadth of experience working in the same space as VHS. I understand the public health challenges facing Scotland and the policy and community work that needs to be undertaken to respond to these challenges.

Being a senior leader for over a decade, and a charity Trustee for 4 years has given me significant experience of strategy development, governance, and financial oversight which I believe would be useful for the Board.

I am also an expert in Scottish public affairs, and have an extensive network of contacts, as well as considerable experience of PR and corporate communications, and have won multiple awards for campaigning and influencing work. I would be happy to share this with expertise and knowledge with VHS via the Board, if elected.

I have recently completed a Master of Public Health with distinction from Edinburgh University. I am also a member of the Institute of Leadership.

6. Paul J Okroj, Director External Stakeholder Engagement & Service Development, Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland

Specific Interest and Knowledge:

It is essential that voluntary health sector organisations have greater influence and subsequent recognition for their contribution to the health and wellbeing of our communities with stakeholders across Scottish Govt' Health & Social Care, Public Health and the public sector.

I believe that the achievements of VHS can be amplified with the delivery of its current strategy and beyond 2025 as we tackle health inequalities in Scotland and create a lasting health and wellbeing legacy.

I have a specific interest in reducing isolation and loneliness in Scotland and highlighting the impact that volunteering in our communities makes to the individual and the benefits volunteering brings to supporting community development and connectivity.

I am passionate about promoting equity of opportunity and not just equality.

Strategic Skills & Experience:

- A recognised expert in the Third Sector and Volunteering involving Organisations in Scotland. I have 20 years' experience of leadership and senior management experience at a strategic management and board level.
- Currently the Director of External Stakeholder Engagement & Service Development at Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland (CHSS).
- Embedding people-driven volunteering and service user programmes along with an awareness of the social, political, economic and equality factor impacts on the Scottish and UK Third Sector, Volunteering and Health & Social Care.

Governance and Board Experience:

- Current Chair of Volunteer Scotland and member of the Board Governance Sub Group.
- Ensuring efficient, effective and accountable governance and reporting.
- Experienced in Trustee responsibilities for strategic auditing, compliance, finance and risk management.
- Trustee for Victim Support Scotland. Member of the People Quality & Improvement Board Sub Committee.
- Strong skills in influencing, communicating, collaborating, and engaging with multiple external stakeholders and extensive experience of partnership working, including Scottish Government Cabinet Secretaries, Ministers, MSP's, Health & Social Care and Local Authorities.
- Member of the Scottish Government National Advisory Group on Isolation and Loneliness.
- Co-Chair of the Action Group on Isolation and Loneliness in Scotland.

7. Tilly Robinson-Miles, Policy and Parliamentary Engagement Manager, Food Train

I am a social scientist and public health professional. As a geographer working in the public health field I have a strong understanding of the extensive remit of Voluntary Health Scotland, including the role of prevention and of tackling health inequalities. I can bring this subject expertise and knowledge to the board as well as a public health specific skill set. Having worked closely with the VHS staff team I have huge respect for their work, their approach and their determination.

I have existing experience of being on a board, as until July this year served as Associate Trustee for the ME Association, which is a UK wide health charity working to support people with M.E. and long covid, including through research, policy influencing and direct support. I also serve as Equality, Diversity and Inclusions Officer for Edinburgh Climbing Club working to tackle structural inequalities to accessing the outdoors. Therefore I have a strong understanding of the importance of the approach of different boards and their critical role in governance and organisational culture, including strategy development and critically, implementation. I also understand the relationship

between the board and staff and work closely with the board alongside the CEO in my own organisation. I recognise this will be especially important in a period of transition for VHS.

Finally, I believe that it is crucial for a board member to care, for their personal values to align closely with the work of the organisation. I believe the work of VHS is critical in creating a fairer, healthier Scotland and I would like to play a role in supporting that to continue to have a significant impact long into the future.

8. Sarah van Putten, CEO, LifeCare

I have been employed in the health and social care sector for over 30 years, starting my career as a nurse. I have over 15 years as a senior manager/CEO of third sector organisations including a national intermediary, so understand the particular challenges faced by this type of organisation. I feel my time as CEO of Befriending Networks would be of particular use to the board of VHS.

I am currently CEO of an Edinburgh-based charity providing a range of support services to older people. I believe the role on the board would be mutually beneficial enabling me to share the voices of those that we support and their lived experience, share my leadership and third sector experience and that I would benefit from new connections and increasing my health policy and practice understanding which would also hopefully benefit LifeCare.

I was delighted to be asked to consider this role and would be delighted to serve on the board at a significant time of change for both VHS and the health and social care landscape.