

AGM 27 November 2025: 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 Heath Scotland wishes to record its grateful thanks to the one Director who is retiring at the AGM: Emma Nieminen (co-opted).

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

1. Paul Okroj
2. Alan Eagleson
3. Jennifer Forsyth
4. Bushra Riaz
5. Richard Meade (Treasurer)
6. Sarah Van Putten
7. Christine Carlin (Chair) - co-opted Director
8. Paul Mooney (Vice Chair) - co-opted Director
9. Billy McClean - co-opted Director

Vacancies

We have two vacancies for Elected Directors and by the deadline of 5pm November 5 we had received eight nominations to fill these places. As the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, there must be an election in the form of a secret ballot at the AGM on 27 November.

The eight nominees in alphabetical order are:

1. Maree Aldam, CEO, Amma Birth Companions
2. Alan Deans, Peer Mentor, Who Dares Cares
3. Coleen Kelly, Director of Services, Change Mental Health

4. Tracey McFall, Chief Executive, Scottish Recovery Consortium
5. Barri Millar, CEO, St. John Scotland
6. Pasna Sallis, Founder/CEO and Public Health Occupational Therapist, Weekday Wow Factor
7. Louise Stewart, Director, WithYou
8. Dr. Julie Wardrop, Founder/CEO, Dundee Cancer Support Network

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 election at the AGM. Members must be in attendance (online) at the AGM meeting in order to vote, or have completed and returned a proxy voting form to us prior to the AGM event by 10am Wednesday 26 Nov.

Voting will be electronic and a link to the voting platform will be shared on the day of the AGM.

Please note: Each member organisation is designated one vote. The lead contact should cast the vote on behalf of the organisation or assign a proxy prior to the event if not in attendance.

Nominees' personal statements

1. Maree Aldam, CEO, Amma Birth Companions

Amma Birth Companions, where I've been CEO for the past 3.5 years, is a Glasgow-based charity supporting women and birthing people experiencing social exclusion, systemic inequities, and barriers to maternity care. Our mission is rooted in health creation, ensuring that every person has the support, dignity, and opportunity to have a safe and positive birth and parenting journey.

Before joining Amma, I spent nine years as Chief Executive of an international membership organisation, leading a network of homelessness-focused organisations. This experience gave me deep insight into the structures, opportunities, and challenges faced by intermediary bodies.

I'm drawn to VHS's board at this particular moment because both the Manifesto and new Strategic Plan articulate the challenges I see playing out daily: the implementation gap between policy and delivery, the precarity facing third sector health organisations despite rising demand, and the need for the sector to be recognised as an equal partner.

What I can bring to the VHS board:

- Strategic leadership and governance experience: I have 22 years' experience in the voluntary sector, across organisations with various governance structures. This includes 12 years in leadership roles plus several years' experience as a trustee.
- Frontline operational insight: My work at Amma grounds me in the realities facing small-to-medium health charities, securing sustainable funding, building NHS partnerships, and delivering equity-focused services.
- Health equity focus: Working directly on perinatal health inequalities, I bring knowledge of how social determinants and protected characteristics intersect with health access and outcomes.
- Collaborative approach: Actively developing connections across Scottish Government and NHS Scotland to advance collaborative, equity-focused approaches to health policy and delivery.

I would bring a blend of strategic and operational perspective to the Board, amplifying the voices of small and specialist health charities, and contributing to VHS's mission to build a fairer, healthier Scotland.

www.linkedin.com/in/mareealdam

2. Alan Deans, Peer Mentor, Who Dares Cares

As a former member of the armed forces and an active volunteer Peer Mentor with Who Dares Cares, I bring a unique combination of leadership, lived experience, and commitment to wellbeing that aligns strongly with the organisation's mission to create health and reduce inequalities in Scotland. My military background has instilled in me the values of service, teamwork, and resilience—qualities that are essential for effective governance and collaboration on a board. I understand the importance of structure, accountability, and strategic planning, and I am adept at working under pressure while maintaining focus on long-term objectives.

Through my role as a Peer Mentor, I have seen firsthand the challenges faced by individuals and communities in achieving good mental health and wellbeing. Supporting veterans and others in need has deepened my understanding of how health inequalities manifest and how compassionate, person-centred approaches can make a lasting impact. I have learned to listen, empathise, and help others build the confidence and connections they need to thrive—skills that are equally valuable in a boardroom setting.

I believe health is not merely the absence of illness but the presence of opportunity, purpose, and community connection. My lived experience, combined with my voluntary and professional background, positions me to contribute meaningfully to discussions around strategy, partnership building, and lived experience representation. I am passionate about amplifying the voices of those who are often

unheard and ensuring that decisions made at board level reflect the needs of the people and communities we serve.

As a board member, I would bring dedication, insight, and a strong commitment to collaboration—helping Who Dares Cares and its partners continue to create health, reduce inequalities, and enable people across Scotland to live well.

3. Coleen Kelly, Director of Services, Change Mental Health

With over 15 years of experience across both the voluntary and public sectors, I bring a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities within Scotland's health landscape. My career has been dedicated to tackling health inequalities, particularly in the areas of long-term conditions and homelessness- issues that remain at the heart of Voluntary Health Scotland's mission.

As a senior leader at Change Mental Health, I provide strategic direction to my team and to the wider organisation, shaping services that respond to the evolving needs of the communities we serve. I am a values-led leader who believes that integrity, honesty, and accountability are essential in driving forward meaningful change. I am committed to fostering inclusive, collaborative environments where diverse perspectives are welcomed and respected. By joining Voluntary Health Scotland as a Trustee, I would be able to support a powerful network of organisations and ensure they have the platform they need to be heard.

My approach is both strategic and pragmatic. I am confident in making sound, evidence-based decisions and have a proven track record of exercising good judgement. I am not afraid to challenge constructively and believe in holding myself and others accountable to ensure we deliver on our commitments. I am passionate about influencing policy and systems to create fairer health outcomes for all. Joining the board of Voluntary Health Scotland would allow me to contribute my experience, insight, and energy to an organisation that shares my commitment to equity and social justice. I am excited by the opportunity to support strong governance, shape strategic direction, and work alongside fellow trustees to amplify the voice of the voluntary health sector in Scotland.

4. Tracey McFall, Chief Executive, Scottish Recovery Consortium

I am honoured to nominate myself for a position on the VHS Board. With over three decades of leadership experience across Scotland's health, social care, and third sector landscapes, I bring a wealth of strategic, operational, and policy expertise that aligns with VHS's mission to improve health and wellbeing through voluntary action.

As Chief Executive of the Scottish Recovery Consortium, I lead national efforts to embed recovery-oriented systems of care, co-producing strategic plans with stakeholders and people with lived and living experience. I believe that lived experience must be central to shaping policy, practice, and service design—ensuring that the voices of those most affected are not only heard but drive meaningful change.

My previous roles, including CEO of Partners in Advocacy and Strategic Lead at Turning Point Scotland, demonstrate my commitment to human rights, inclusion, and systemic change. I have a proven track record in governance, strategic planning, income generation, and performance management. My experience spans national policy development, workforce planning, and quality improvement, particularly in drug and alcohol services, criminal justice, and advocacy.

I currently serve as Chair of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA), Vice Chair of the Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum (CJVSF), and a member of several national oversight groups, including the National Care Service Interim Advisory Board. I am currently the Independent Chair of Argyll and Bute Alcohol and Drug Partnership. These roles reflect my ability to influence policy, build partnerships, and champion the voluntary sector's voice.

I am passionate about equity, participation, and ensuring that voluntary health and support organisations are recognised as essential partners in Scotland's health system. I would bring to the VHS Board a strategic mindset, collaborative spirit, and deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our sector and communities across Scotland.

5. Barri Millar, CEO, St. John Scotland

I first came across VHS in the past year and have been genuinely encouraged by the organisation's role in strengthening the voice and value of the voluntary and community sector within Scotland's health landscape. Your commitment to reducing health inequalities, building partnerships, and championing community-based approaches resonates deeply with my own values and professional experience.

Over the last 20 years I have served as a trustee across a range of charities, including LinkLiving (where I served as Chair), the Northern Lighthouse Heritage Trust, and the Inch Park Community Sports Club. I stepped down from the latter in 2023 after three years to balance family and personal commitments, and with that period now passed, I am keen to re-engage fully in a governance role with real social purpose.

My career has been rooted in leadership, governance, and organisational development, with a strong focus on ethical decision-making, community impact, and constructive partnership working. I bring experience in strategy, stakeholder engagement, charity compliance, financial oversight, and constructive challenge at board level.

I also have hands-on understanding of the practical realities facing third-sector organisations – particularly around culture, sustainability, and delivering meaningful outcomes for communities.

I am motivated by the opportunity to support VHS in advancing community voice in health and care, strengthening cross-sector collaboration, and ensuring that voluntary sector expertise remains at the heart of Scotland's public health agenda.

I believe in thoughtful, disciplined governance; transparent and values-based leadership; and the importance of building strong relationships with partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders.

I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Board and to play a small but committed part in advancing VHS's mission.

6. Pasma Sallis, Founder/CEO and Public Health Occupational Therapist, Weekday Wow Factor

I am a passionate and highly motivated third sector leader who is interested in changing systems to best work for the health and wellbeing of local communities. I enjoy continuing to co-create and deliver occupational therapy-based opportunities to community members experiencing inequalities. I would like to contribute more holistically to the VHS strategy, so everyone feels included, regardless of age, background or abilities. I want to contribute to cross sector work through the exciting autumn strategy to impact more grassroots charities to remain sustainable and improve lives.

I am a Scottish Indian and an unpaid Carer for my dad with Parkinsons and Lewy body dementia so have lived experience as a carer. I attended the VHS conference last month and learnt so much about the amazing work that is being carried out by VHS to raise the profile of our sector, the work we do and the close links with Private, Public and Third Sector to move the agenda forward to help remove barriers towards health creation and address intersectionality factors. I want to contribute and be part of steering the direction of the organisation as it launches a new strategic plan in Autumn.

I possess 28 years Occupational therapy experience, with 20 years across NHS Scotland Health Boards in acute, long stay hospital physical and mental health wards and community. My NHS career highlight was that my innovative Occupational Therapy based in public health was used by the Scottish Government to launch their 1st ever National Dementia Strategy in 2010. This project is still running in Lanarkshire with people with dementia, shoulder to shoulder with people without dementia. I founded Weekday Wow Factor charity in February 2017 as a result of my learning and gaps identified in the NHS for people with advanced stages of dementia.

7. Louise Stewart, Director, WithYou

I am hugely passionate about tackling health inequalities and take approaches to address these through my daily work as Director of a national charity. I am an advocate for systemically addressing this and will always use my voice to advocate for this to be a priority, whether that be in press statements, forum engagement, blogs or media interviews.

To achieve our aims of a healthy and thriving society, we must always be proactive and work collaboratively to address ingrained inequalities. We must also be role models and influence those around us, from our neighbours and friends to our leaders and policy makers.

I am a member of the National Collaborative Change Team and am passionate about embedding human rights approaches in all that we do, letting people know that they have rights, and working with others to implement practice and culture shifts where needed.

As Director at WithYou, a drug and alcohol charity, I am responsible for the operational delivery of frontline services in Scotland and the North East of England. I have worked in the third sector for 25 years and am an experienced charity trustee committed to delivering high-quality, responsive services that make a real difference to people. I am also an active member of ACOSVO (Charity Leadership Scotland) and continually seek easy to engage cross sector and value relationships with partners as integral to what we do.

Key areas for me are leading on innovation, collaboration and partnership approaches and creating pathways across multiple service delivery areas.

8. Dr. Julie Wardrop, Founder/CEO, Dundee Cancer Support Network

In 2018, as cancer patient and carer for a parent at the end of their life, I became passionate about the importance of listening to lived experience when designing, delivering and improving healthcare and support services. To this end I founded CANDU, a lived experience support charity which incorporates Dundee Cancer Support Network. This is a patient-led network which meets regularly with representatives of local statutory & 3rd sector organisations to share the lived experience of local people with the aim of influencing change and improvement in services and encouraging meaningful participation in local decision making.

We participate in local & national forums including the Scottish Government CPPG, NHS Tayside Living with & After Cancer Forum, NHS Tayside Palliative & End Of Life Forum and also facilitate our own lived experience events. In 2023 and 2024 we held lived experience conferences in partnership with V&A Dundee Design Museum and the Dundee & Angus College Service Design Academy. Bringing together patients, carers and professionals to discuss what lived expertise really brings 'to the table', facilitates trust, open communication and strong relationships between local people and the organisations which support them.

The VHS shares our core values and I feel my experience in coordinating and facilitating meaningful & creative lived experience involvement would be of great value to the Board.