



## Revitalizing the Hospital Board

Overseeing rural hospitals today comes with an unusual set of challenges. Board members are tasked with guiding their facility's financial health despite ever-changing circumstances. The current healthcare environment has placed unprecedented demand on healthcare organizations and the communities they serve. To be effective, a board must be aligned with the hospital's needs and equipped with knowledge and tools.

### SOLUTION

Community hospital board members are often community leaders who participate fully in making and supporting decisions that further the hospital's mission, vision and values while ensuring that every patient receives safe, high-quality, compassionate care. Backed by a high-performing, effective board, hospitals are well positioned for success. There are several key areas of focus for improved board performance.

### BOARD BOUND

Recruitment to fill open board positions takes a bit more sophistication than asking for board nominations from the community. Traditionally, hospital boards have been composed of community and business leaders skilled in finance, investment, fundraising, marketing and other key areas. Ideally, boards are diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, age and gender.

## FIVE STEPS TO PROACTIVE HOSPITAL BOARD RECRUITMENT

### The Onboarding Process

A strong onboarding process ensures new members have all the information they need to make informed decisions. These adjustments can help make the onboarding process easier for new trustees:

- Ask a seasoned board member to mentor new trustees and answer questions
- Educate new board members about the organization's finances
- Provide a password-protected digital library so new trustees can access resources
- Create an educational webinar outlining the hospital's history, mission, vision, organizational structure and values
- Survey new trustees after six months



### BOARD COMPOSITION

Including outside board members can be a best practice for good governance while providing fresh perspective and valuable expertise not found within the hospital's service area. Board culture can also produce more honest assessments and swifter action in response to today's rapidly changing healthcare environment. Avoiding conflicts of interest can be particularly challenging for trustees serving on smaller, more rural hospital boards. Bringing in outside members can help boards avoid this common issue and help keep hospital leadership accountable.



## THE BOARD'S ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Too often, community hospital board members blur the lines between governance, management and operations. It's important to keep the board focused on developing effective strategies and let hospital leadership handle the execution. Board responsibilities include providing guidance in these six key areas.

### Six Categories of Board Governance



Posting clearly defined job roles and requirements when recruiting new community hospital board members can help eliminate organizational dysfunction. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities can also reduce board turnover while increasing membership diversity. Having job descriptions for board members, board chairs and/or committee chairs helps to guide actions that have the hospital's best interest in mind.

Board responsibility is deciding the right thing to do.

Management responsibility is deciding the right way to do the right thing.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENT

Many boards have no continuing education requirements. Yet ongoing education can provide a wealth of benefits that increases board effectiveness as well as engagement, including:

- New skills, knowledge and behavioral competencies critical for good governance
- Direction for making sound, responsible and well-informed decisions
- Better understanding of current liability exposure, legal compliance issues and potential conflicts of interest
- Productive meetings in which issues for discussion and voting remain on the agenda, leaving informational items for reference only

## HOSPITAL BOARD ADVISORY HELP

It's no coincidence that well-performing boards often represent well-performing hospitals and health systems. A strong board and dependable, trustworthy leadership can make all the difference.

CHC Consulting offers Hospital Board Advisory services to help board members navigate changing regulations, challenging market conditions, and ultimately hospital performance. These services help to clarify the board's authority over hospital financial health and welfare.

### About Community Hospital Corporation

Community Hospital Corporation owns, manages and consults with hospitals through CHC Hospitals, CHC Consulting and CHC ContinueCARE, with the purpose to collaborate with partners and bring innovative solutions to support the vibrancy and accessibility of community healthcare. Based in Plano, Texas, CHC provides the resources and experience community hospitals need to improve quality outcomes, patient satisfaction and financial performance.

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