



Board Effectiveness

Please note: The policy description, purpose and outcomes are harmonized across the Huron Perth & Area Ontario Health Team Accreditation Collaborative.

Policy

Boards shall continually monitor and improve their performance. This can be achieved through board and individual board member evaluation, which provides powerful and valuable feedback mechanisms for improving effectiveness, maximizing strengths, and highlighting areas for further development. The evaluation process should be objective and thorough.

Purpose

To ensure the Board of Directors conducts assessment of the Board and individual Board members' performance on an annual basis.

Board of Directors conducts a meeting evaluation at a minimum of 4 times a year.

Board evaluation should promote continuous improvement in Board activities. The evaluation is also an opportunity for the Board to review skills, assess composition, plan for filling skill gaps, and increase diversity. The evaluation can help identify when new Board appointments may be needed and the types of skills that are required to maximize board effectiveness.

Evaluations should be rigorous and thorough, exploring the effectiveness of the Board as a unit. Some areas that may be considered, although they are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, include:

- Assessing the mix of skills, experience and knowledge of members required, in the context of developing and delivering the strategy, identifying challenges and opportunities;
- Ensuring principal risks facing the organization are addressed;
- Evaluating the clarity of, and leadership given to, the Vision, Mission and Values of the organization;
- Ensuring succession and development plans in place;

- How the board works together as a unit, and the tone set by the Board Chair and/or Executive Leader;
- Effectiveness of key board relationships, particularly Chair/Executive Leader, Chair/Board Directors, Board/Executive Leader;
- Effectiveness of Chair/and executive committee members;
- Effectiveness of Board subcommittees;
- Quality and timing of information provided regarding the organization and its performance, including papers and presentations;
- Quality of discussions;
- Process, including consideration of timing used to ensure sufficient debate for major decisions or contentious issues;
- Clarity of the decision-making processes and authorities;
- Processes for identifying and reviewing risks;
- How the board communicates with, listens, and responds to key stakeholders; and
- How the board evaluates itself as a whole, board meetings and individual board members.

Organizations may periodically have externally facilitated Board evaluations. External facilitation can add value by;

- Introducing a fresh perspective, new ways of thinking, and a critical eye to Board composition, dynamics, and effectiveness.
- Being useful in certain circumstances, such as when there is a new chair,
- Tactful identification of a known problem or
- Providing an objective perception regarding the effectiveness of the Board.

Outcomes

The results of the Board evaluation will be shared with and discussed by the Board. These results should inform the Board's work regarding its procedures, effectiveness composition, design of induction and development programs, and other relevant areas.

Outcomes of the Board evaluation process include:

- An understanding of the Board's effectiveness.
- Actions in response to the evaluation results.

Suggested evaluation tools

1. HPA-OHT Board of Directors meeting evaluation tool
2. HPA-OHT Board of Directors self-evaluation tool

HPA-OHT Accreditation organizations will include an organization-specific addendum to the harmonized policy to address their respective processes.