



30 July 2021

Endings and new beginnings

In our final Illumination, we look back on the series – and forward to a period of great challenge and opportunity.

Today's illumination is the 100th in the series; it's also the last. Since 16 January, we have published these updates at a rate of three or four each week, totalling nearly 100,000 words of original material.

From the first piece about fake news, Covid denial and the infodemic, to this week's articles about creating the right culture for integrated care and exploring the differences between management and governance, we've covered a huge range of topics.

We've addressed practical issues of governance at times of crisis. We've explored the challenges of health and social care integration. We've looked at some of the issues facing non-health sectors involved in integrated care. We've tackled the big governance topics, such as risk, finance and quality. And we've highlighted best practice from around the world.

[Illumination greatest hits](#)

The whole series is available on our website. Today, we're going to revisit the five illuminations that attracted the most readers.

1. Good governance and the Sustainable Development Goals – on 22 April, we suggested that achieving the UN's goals will require strong leadership, a willingness to change and good, outcomes-based governance. Integrated thinking – and integrated reporting – will be key.
2. Provider collaboratives – time to build – on 8 April, we highlighted the important role provider collaboratives will play in the success of integrated care systems, offering our essential guide containing guiding principles to collaborative working, and common pitfalls and success factors.
3. ICS oversight – good governance arrangements will be key – on 1 July, we unpicked the newly-published NHS system oversight framework for 2021/22, summarising its main points and urging ICS leaders to consider the nature of the support they will need to drive improvement.
4. Asking the right questions: why constructive challenge is key to board effectiveness – on 23 June, we highlighted the importance of constructive challenge, stressing the importance of asking the right questions and being able to take, and value, criticism.
5. Purposeful quality committees – on 15 June, we put the spotlight on NHS boards' third most prominent committee, arguing that, although there might not be a formal requirement to have one, the case to do so is overwhelming.



Producing high quality thought leadership so frequently and over such a prolonged period is no small undertaking for an organisation such as GGI. But the positive feedback we've received from clients and partners confirm that the effort was worthwhile.

We're very proud of these Illumination bulletins – and of the Covid 100 series before them – and we hope they have made a small contribution towards delivering our mission of creating a fairer, better world during what has been a particularly challenging period.

Time to look ahead

But enough of looking back. As Heraclitus said more than 2,000 years ago, the only constant in life is change. And the pace of change right now in the world of health and social care seems particularly relentless.

As Amanda Pritchard settles in to her new role as NHS CEO and systems and their leaders all over the country work through the massive structural changes associated with the move to integrated care, the outlook remains challenging. The fight against COVID is far from over, staff absence levels are soaring, waiting lists are at their highest levels in a generation, budgets are strained to breaking point, and the prospect of inquiries into the handling of the pandemic looms ever larger.

But the pandemic has also shown us that life can be different – that we can be flexible, work smarter and quicker, collaborate more effectively, and support each other better. It has shown how important individuals are to the collective and how important the collective is to individuals.

One thing's for sure: good governance will be absolutely crucial as we rebuild and reshape health and social care in this country. Good governance is about much more than compliance; it is about outcomes, purpose, ethical leadership, values, legitimacy, transparency. We will need all of these.

Illuminations

- There are four crucial elements to navigating and optimising periods of significant change: intent, mindset, systems and culture – themes we'll be exploring in detail during our Festival of Governance.
- GGI has already worked with many ICSs, and we have extensive experience of working with non-NHS ICS partners – local government, third sector, hospices, the private sector – and related sectors such as education and housing. No one is better placed to support the big changes ahead.
- By turning ideas on their heads and seeing them differently, we can flip the script on ingrained and steadfast positions. That is what we have tried to do throughout the Illuminations series – and will continue to do at this year's Festival of Governance.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of our bulletin series – or find out more about the 2020 Festival of Governance – please call us on 07732 681120 or email advice@good-governance.org.uk.