

NHS Director Competencies:

A maturity matrix to support development and improvement

Good Governance Institute

VERSION 1.0 JUNE 2015

| PROGRESS LEVELS  | 0 | 1 APPOINTABLE | 2 EARLY PROGRESS | 3 FT LEVEL | 4 MATURITY | 5 EXEMPLAR |
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| KEY ELEMENTS  | No | Meets the standard for appointment to an NHS Trust board | Demonstrates application of competencies to add value to the board | Meets the level to be part of board passing Monitor assessment | Proven success in independent director role. Appointable to an FT board | Demonstrates leadership and added value at the highest level |
| UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE directors must understand their role within a corporate board and their governance and legal responsibilities. | | Able to articulate governance and legal responsibilities of directors, and how governance works in an NHS organisation | Able to use constructive challenge in a way that is valued by colleagues | Able to explain BAF and provide examples without reference to documents | Can show how governance tools or concepts, such as risk appetite, have been used to improve governance in own organisation | Accepted expert on governance and involved in commenting or teaching around role of board |
| TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE anyone sitting on a board should have a sound and relevant knowledge of the law, finance, accountancy and compliances as it effects their organisation and role | | Knowledge and experience of appropriate legal issues. Able to read and explain a set of accounts. Able to understand data and metrics | Able to describe compliance/regulation regimes for healthcare organisations. Understands relevant healthcare legislation | Understands and can explain concepts such as EBITA, and why these are important. Knowledgeable about Monitor's governance codes and FT authorisation process | High level of relevant professional experience, e.g. commercial law, and board level experience in complex, large-scale organisation | Has led the board of complex organisation, or has had a board level leadership role in significant national/international enterprise |
| UNDERSTANDING THE ORGANISATION AND THE MARKET directors working in the NHS must understand the strategy and services of their own organisation, and be knowledgeable about national policy as it effects healthcare. | | Can describe the various types of NHS organisation and their functions/purpose | Can comprehensively describe own organisation, local healthcare economy and principle market features. Understands main healthcare processes of organisation and funding streams | Fully conversant with IBP and is able to describe how this was constructed. Would be confident to represent organisation. Knowledgeable about significant care pathways | Significant understanding of local health and social care market, including development aspirations of main stakeholders and local political forces | A national-level expert in a main specialism of the organisation, or in relevant management discipline in healthcare |
| STRATEGIC THINKING the ability to focus on strategy is a key factor of working on a board. | | Able to distinguish strategic from operational issues. Understands main policy strands affecting health and social care | Able to articulate local strategy and describe how it was developed. Fully conversant with policy environment | Able to describe risk environment to strategy, and relevant controls to these risks | Has contributed to reviews of strategic direction. Demonstrates insight and understanding of macro themes of the UK's healthcare development and policy and can apply this knowledge to local context | Has been intimately involved in strategic development of market, or directed national-level strategic initiatives |
| VOCATIONAL SKILLS directors need to have a number of skills related to the working methods. | | Able to digest and understand board papers. Experience of working in a senior team. Can understand a brief around a complex issue | Is able to Chair committee and contribute to quasi-judicial proceedings. Can make relevant challenge points around main areas of board work. Able to explain complex issues crisply. Quickly understands key points within a complex argument | Outputs from committees chaired demonstrate reason and logic, and are able to contribute as evidence of assurance for the organisation. Is able to rapidly review complex papers, such as business cases and can identify and test key points | Is able to dissect and offer commentary on complex papers, strategies and reports. Provides the board with stability and support by being able to reference back to previous decisions | Has successfully contributed to multiple boards of significant organisations over a period of at least a decade |
| BEHAVIOURS directors need to have personal gravitas and work in a professional manner. | | Has gravitas. Demonstrates listening skills and is able to crisply and succinctly contribute relevant points to discussion | Trusted by colleagues for personal integrity. Self-aware and politically savvy. Has natural authority. Good powers of persuasion | Able to answer detailed questions in board-to-board situation in clear, straight-forward manner. Unflappable under pressure | Has confidence to provide direct, relevant feedback to colleagues and authority/credibility in that such feedback is accepted as useful. Trusted by colleagues as a sounding board | Can withstand considerable personal and professional pressure. Imparts confidence and is considered a peer by national-level leaders |
| LEADERSHIP CALIBRE directors should have strong influencing skills, good powers of judgement, insight and vision, and good listening skills. | | Experience of having held a senior position | Has been able to exert influence and to persuade through reasoned argument. Discusses ideas rather than examples. Has achieved own PDP plan objectives for last year | Would be able to deputise for any other non-executive director if required | Has chaired board committee, or acted as SID, or has taken on a specific leadership assignment on behalf of Trust (e.g. partnership board membership) | Appointable as Chair of NHS Foundation Trust or similar. Has been trusted by peers outside of own organisation with a leadership role |