

NOTE: INITIAL RESPONSES ONLY. FINAL RESPONSES WILL BE POSTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE DURING NOVEMBER

BRIEF RESPONSES (FROM A POLICY GOVERNANCE® PERSPECTIVE) TO KEY ISSUES RAISED BY AUDIENCE AT BUILDING EFFECTIVE NHS BOARDS/POLICY GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP, BIRKBECK, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, 22 OCTOBER 2008

| | ISSUES/QUESTION | POLICY GOVERNANCE RESPONSE |
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| 1 | What is the role of the FT Board of Governors? | Represents the members ('owners') of the FT and should provide an ownership input to the overall governance of the FT. |
| 2 | What are the competencies required for governing? | Ability to connect with owners, set values and hold management to account through constructive challenge. |
| 3 | What is the difference between the roles of Execs and Non-Execs? | When they are on the board, there should be no difference. |
| 4 | How do we build local vision? | By connecting with the 'owners' to determine Ends, |
| 5 | What is the definition of board governance? | Boards exist to translate owner's wishes into organisational performance. |
| 6 | How does the board ensure everyone is facing in the right direction? | By setting agreed Ends and Executive Limitations. It's the job of the Chief Governance Officer (i.e. Chair) to ensure that everyone is on-board. |
| 7 | How to build the team and still maintain the challenge? | Job of the Chief Governance Office (i.e. Chair). |
| 8 | Managing external demands (e.g. Strategic Health Authority, Monitor, etc.) | This is part of the job of management. However, when external bodies place demands on boards that are really the responsibility of management to deal with then these demands may be accommodated through use of a 'required approvals agenda'. |
| 9 | How to delegate and hold people accountable | Make it explicitly clear what you are delegating and hold people to account through periodic monitoring reports. |
| 10 | How should board sub committees be structured and what is the role of board members on them? | Board sub committees should only exist to do the job of the board – not management. They are instruments of governance, not management. Board members on board sub-committees are representing the board's interest. |
| 11 | How should boards handle "rubber stamping" decisions on Executive work? | Board's should try wherever possible to avoid rubber stamping. Where they are required to 'rubber stamp' because of some external demand, the 'required approvals agenda' should be used. |
| 12 | What is the appropriate level of detail required for board decisions? | Boards should make strategic decisions relating to Ends and Executive Limitations. |
| 13 | How can boards change entrenched ways of governing to make way for new PG thinking? | Through a joint commitments to improving the working of the board. |

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| 14 | How to get Executive and Non-Executive board members to work together as a cohesive, strategic, forward thinking board? | A board development issue. |
| 15 | To what extent should the board directly engage with owners and stakeholders | To the maximum extent possible. |
| 16 | How should Policy Governance be implemented in detail? | There are several good books that deal with this issue, e.g. see <i>Reinventing Your Board</i> by John and Miriam Carver. |
| 17 | How do boards become leaders within their organizations and in the wider community | By connecting with owners and other stakeholders, setting Ends and Executive Limitations and delivering success and safety, where success relates to the delivery of quantifiable benefits (outcomes) for intended beneficiaries. |
| 18 | How to executives provide reasonable assurances to the board? | By providing appropriate monitoring reports in accordance with Policy Governance requirements. |
| 19 | How to avoid Non-Execs feeling bounced? | By ensuring, through Policy Governance, that the whole board, including non executives, have a proper 'grip' on the organisations. |
| 20 | What is the role of the board and how does it add value and focus on things that really matter? | The role of the board is to ensure organisational success and safety. Success is all about translating owners' requirements into organisational performance. The board adds value by setting Ends policies that reflect owners' wishes, setting Executive Limitations policies that ensure safety, and holding management to account for delivery of Ends (i.e. success) within the limitations imposed on management (i.e. safety). |
| 21 | How do boards understand the balance between "risk" and "strategy"? | The determination of strategy is the job of management once the board has agreed the Ends for the organisations. Management exists to translate organisational Ends into deliverable success. That's not to say that the board has no role in determination of strategy. Risk relates to the Executive Limitations set by the board – Executive Limitations is really the board's translation of risk into things that management cannot do, even if it were to enhance achievement of organisational Ends. |
| 22 | We need a governance model that will work in changing circumstances. | Go for Policy Governance! |
| 23 | How much time for NED and Chair roles? | With Policy Governance, the time requirement for non executives, including the Chair, can be significantly reduced compared to more traditional unitary boards where non executives can get embroiled in operational detail. Properly implemented, Policy Governance will free up time for non-executives to engage in more strategic matters related to Ends. The current guidance from the NHS Appointments Commission of 2-3 days per month for non-executives does not seem unreasonable for a Policy Governance Board. Chairs are likely to need to devote more time. |

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| 24 | How to comply with external demands | See response to 8. |
| 25 | What are the training requirements for executives and non executives? | See 2. Also training required on Policy Governance. |
| 26 | What exactly is the PURPOSE of the NHS? | If you look on the Department of Health website, it says that “The Department of Health (DH) exists to improve the health and wellbeing of people in England.” We suggest, as a starter for ten and based on Southend FT’s Ends policy (see John Gilham’s slides) that the NHS exists so that people presenting to it achieve the best possible health outcomes at sustainable cost. |
| 27 | What’s the difference between governance and management? | Governance is a function of ownership. Governance is ownership one level down, not management one level up. Governance exists to ensure organisational success and safety. Management delivers organisational success and safety. |
| 28 | How do you deal with lack of trust in the system putting people under lots of pressure? | Part of the solution is to ensure clarity of purpose and requirements through, for example, implementing a Policy Governance approach. |
| 29 | How do we practically implement what’s in the Niall Dickson report – Implementing trust, assurance and safety (i.e. implementing Policy Governance). | This will require extensive Policy Governance training for boards. |
| 30 | How do we get anything done when faced with constant change? | This is a constant challenge for the NHS. A Policy Governance board will ‘buffer’ the organisation against the worst excesses of constant change, providing a calmer environment for staff do deliver organisational Ends. In such a highly politicizes environment, however, this can be a very challenging task. |