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Chairman
(and Chief Governance Officer)



Policy Governance
The board's journey

The board is

- At the end of the accountability chain
- The agent of a largely unseen principal
- A set of individuals operating as a single entity
- Less disciplined than a single member
- A long arm's length from the next lower level, and part-time
- A group that oversees one person

“The thing that I find endlessly fascinating about boards of directors is that you take people, almost without exception of great ability, integrity and achievement; and yet somehow you put them around a board table and their IQ points drop by 50%”

Nell Minnow

Presentation content

- Reasons for adopting PG
- Distractions
- Chair's Responsibilities under PG
- Gains
- Some results so far
- The Future

Reasons for Adopting PG

- Traditional approach not fit for purpose
- PG has sound theory base
- Ownership relationship crucial component
- More governing, less managing
- Challenges to board thinking and practice
- Much greater clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Good networking with other practitioners and advisers

Distractions

- Starting with the ENDS work first
- New DoF
- CEO deciding to retire early
- DoN deciding to retire early
- Limitations monitoring development delayed
- Resistance to new ways
- Company Secretary new to PG
- Chairman as 'expert'

Chair's Responsibilities under Policy Governance

- Enshrined in board governance process policies
- Accountable to the board for these
- CEO reports to the board (not Chair!)
- Application of, and adherence to, the principles
- Discouraging the board from 'slipping back'

Gains

- Role clarity
- Process clarity
- Clarity of values
- Expectations of CEO
- Use of NED 'expertise'
- Constant reference back to ENDS
- Less 'managerial', less 'compliant'
- Lot less trying to 'read the board's mind'

How the board is making a difference – an example

Executive Limitation Policy: Patient and Carer Experience

With respect to interactions with people presenting to us and their carers, the Chief Executive shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures or decisions which are uncaring, unreliable, ineffective or unsafe

- Carers represent £5bn value in health and social care
- Southend area alone estimates £145m
- No acute hospital board receives reports on the carer experience – why not?
 - There is no national target
 - Hence no infrastructure enabling monitoring
 - The ‘Intelligent Board’ ignores them
- Yet Carers are a key influence on choice
- DoN ‘on the case’

The Board - some results so far

- Sharpened the debate about the role of the board
- Required the CEO to demonstrate compliance on matters previously unreported
- Delegated considerable freedom to the CEO whilst providing broad constraints through executive limitations policies

- Challenged the board's thinking on how 'assurance' can best be provided
- Set out the board's own processes in considerable detail
- Recognised the need to work in partnership with others in the NHS and to comply with our Terms of Authorisation as a NHS Foundation Trust

- Discouraged reports containing information for information's sake
- Highlighted – through policy discussion – what is important to the board
- Challenged a number of board 'traditions'
- Informed the content of board papers so that the relevant information is provided
- Created ongoing challenges – and not a little concern – about how we do things (both as a board and as a Trust)

- Regularly reviewed Ends and Limitations policies
- Identified actions intended to improve our use of the system
- Noticeably reduced the dependence on NEDs as the source of board challenge
- Provided rational way of dealing with external ‘impositions’ on the board

The Future

- Regularly review policies
- Refine monitoring of compliance
- Education, education, education
- Improve our agendas
- Challenge ourselves
- Develop our understanding and application of ENDS policies and monitoring them
- Exploit use of OurBoardroom

Thank you for listening

Any questions?