



## Board Quality Education Program: A Self-Assessment Tool



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## Introduction

This self-assessment tool offers Trustees a checklist that supports their fiduciary responsibility for their hospital's quality performance. It is a companion piece to the curriculum developed by the Massachusetts Hospital Association and the Center for Healthcare Governance, and funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts. Its intent is to build on work that is underway in many hospital boardrooms.

The tool is structured to support each of the six course modules. By asking a series of questions, Boards can assess their current efforts and focus on opportunities for improvement. A link to case examples and resources that offer suggestions and best practice solutions is included. The Center for Healthcare Governance has created a website for program participants containing materials and examples from various organizations ([www.americangovernance.com/checklist](http://www.americangovernance.com/checklist)).

Clearly, each hospital is unique. Hospital Boards therefore face different sets of challenges. This tool is one resource to help enable each Board, in partnership with its management team, to advance its quality improvement effort in an appropriate and customized fashion.

# Mission

A hospital's mission statement defines the organization's purpose. Quality of care is central to the mission of health care providers. Hospital Trustees derive their accountability for quality performance from the mission statement, which, in turn, sets expectations for caregivers, patients, and the community.

Beyond a mission statement, Boards often adopt a "statement of aim" that commits to specific quality improvements by a targeted date.

## Resources

For examples of mission statements and statements of aim, go to:  
[www.americangovernance.com/checklist](http://www.americangovernance.com/checklist)



## Self-Evaluation Questions

*Is quality appropriately addressed in our mission statement?*

Yes  No

*Do we review indicators that are linked to the mission quarterly to monitor mission fulfillment?*

Yes  No

*Do we deliver a report to the community regarding our mission fulfillment?*

Yes  No

*Do we have a statement of aim that commits to quality improvements by a targeted date?  
Is it public?*

Yes  No

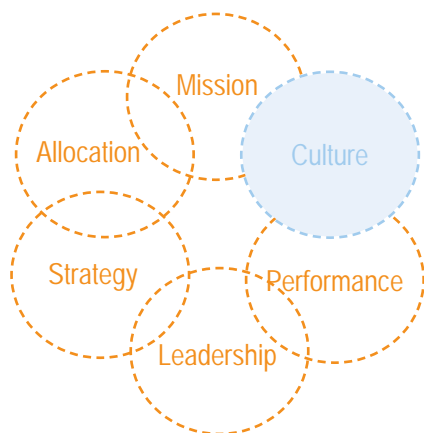
# Culture

An organization's culture is defined by its values and the degree to which its behaviors reflect those stated values. Concepts such as quality and excellence, if fundamental to a hospital's culture, should motivate, shape, and drive behavior. As the keeper of the organization's values, the Board has a role to affirm and reaffirm those values, and to monitor and ensure application of those values. Most important, the Board will recruit senior leaders who are committed to instilling and giving life to those values in the organization.

## Resources

For examples of value statements and cultural assessment tools, go to:

[www.americangovernance.com/checklist](http://www.americangovernance.com/checklist)



## Self-Evaluation Questions

*Have we defined a desired culture and set of values for our organization?*

Yes  No

*Are our organizational values reflected in the practices and attitudes of the organization?*

Yes  No

*Do we conduct a cultural assessment?*

Yes  No

*Do we devote time on the board agenda to discussing organizational culture?*

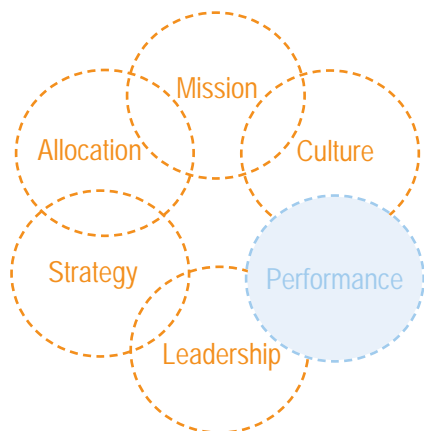
Yes  No

# Performance

The Board has an important oversight role with respect to the quality performance of its institution. It approves an annual comprehensive quality improvement plan that targets specific achievements by dates certain, as presented by management. The Board will monitor progress against the plan through the use of appropriate performance indicators and consider a policy of transparency (inside and outside the institution) with respect to performance measures.

## Resources

For examples of scorecards and other measurement tools, go to:  
[www.americangovernance.com/checklist](http://www.americangovernance.com/checklist)



## Self-Evaluation Questions

*Do we have a quality improvement plan that identifies specific gaps in performance and targets improvement by date certain?*

Yes  No

*Do we have the right measures to evaluate our quality performance?*

Yes  No

*Do we have the right tools to monitor our progress?*

Yes  No

*Are we benchmarking against high-performing organizations and/or the theoretical limit?*

Yes  No

*Do we have the right board processes in place for reviewing and evaluating quality performance?*

Yes  No

*Do we share our performance with our patients, employees, and the community?*

Yes  No

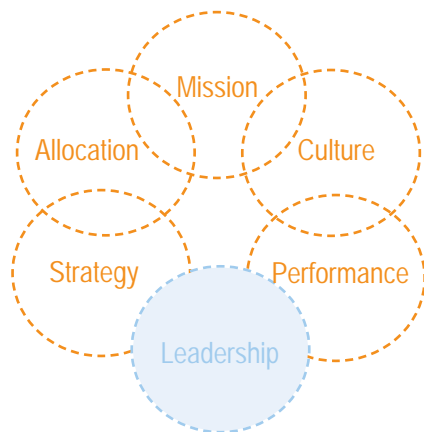
# Leadership

There is no more important decision than the selection of a CEO who champions the mission and values of an organization. The Board can establish incentive compensation and performance goals to encourage and reward performance of the hospital executives against important goals. In addition, the Board is responsible for its own composition and has a responsibility not only to ensure that it has the right mix of skills and competencies to fulfill its fiduciary role, but also to provide ongoing training to achieve an educational standard.

## Resources

For examples of board self-assessment tools, quality committee charters, and other leader performance assessment tools, go to:

[www.americangovernance.com/checklist](http://www.americangovernance.com/checklist)



## Self-Evaluation Questions

*Do we have the right skills and competencies on the Board?*

Yes  No

*Do we address gaps in Board skills through education or targeted recruitment?*

Yes  No

*Do we have the right mix of incentives for our executives to drive performance improvement?*

Yes  No

*Do we have a quality committee in place?*

Yes  No

*Does the quality committee appropriately include representation of patients and/or their families as well as medical expertise?*

Yes  No

*Does the quality committee report regularly to the Board?*

Yes  No

*Do our credentialing and privileging policies support our quality goals?*

Yes  No

# Strategy

An organization's strategy must connect to its mission. Therefore, when considering strategic issues, the Board should evaluate each issue's impact on quality performance in addition to financial measures.

## Resources

For examples case studies regarding strategic plans, go to:

[www.americangovernance.com/checklist](http://www.americangovernance.com/checklist)



## Self-Evaluation Questions

*Are our strategies consistent with the mission of the organization?*

Yes                       No

*Do our strategies improve the organization's financial and quality performance?*

Yes                       No

*Are there specific quality objectives and targets included in the organization's strategic plan?*

Yes                       No



# Allocation

An organization's commitment of its resources (time and money) reflects its priorities. The Board should devote a significant portion of its agenda, and that of its committees, to discussion of quality performance. It should also make sure that the allocation of financial resources invested in quality improvement align with the mission.



## Self-Evaluation Questions

*Do we invest the appropriate level of financial support in improving quality and safety?*

- Yes       No

*Do we devote sufficient Board meeting time to discussing quality and safety performance?*

- Yes       No

# Notes

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