

# Leading a Safe and Ethical Workplace Culture in Health

## Facilitated Sessions

These presentations have been developed to enable boards to discuss fictional case studies in order to develop an understanding of appropriate director conduct

# Leading a Safe and Ethical Workplace Culture in Health

Facilitated Session for Board members

## Case study part 1

### Over-stepping the line

Harry, an energetic Board member is anxious to make a contribution to Glenlyon Regional Health Service. He is keen to prove himself and constantly 'name-drops' who he knows and how the health service should be contacting this company or that. You are aware that he is well connected in the area, including politically.

At the most recent Board meeting, he expressly states that he is willing to work with management to prepare a paper on why a major capital purchase should be made, as he has already discussed this with the local member of parliament.

1. What concerns do you have about Harry's conduct?
2. How has Harry crossed the line between governance and management?
3. As a peer, how could you handle this?
4. What types of influence or intervention do you think will work best with Harry?

## Case study part 2

### **Bullying accusation**

After Harry tells the Board that he has already talked to the local MP, you are very concerned. You suspect that this will reach the papers before the Board has even discussed the matter. The rest of the Board is silent and everyone looks uncomfortable.

1. What could you say to Harry, in the boardroom?
2. How could you encourage the Chair to intervene, during the meeting?

## Case study part 3

### Performance management

The Chair then intervenes firmly but respectfully. The Chair tells Harry that the Board as a whole has a variety of factors to consider before making a decision, and that he shouldn't have spoken to the MP prematurely. The discussion becomes heated. Harry raises his voice and talks over the top of the Chair.

The Chair refers Harry to the Code of Conduct/Conduct Charter, which the Board recently approved but Harry has not yet signed, in particular the sections about public statements and unity amongst Board members.

Harry tells you that the Chair that he is bullying him by trying to humiliate him in front of his peers. The room falls silent again.

1. What do you do?
2. Is this issue solely the Chair's to deal with now?
3. How could you use your influence to support good governance in this meeting?
4. Would you make any calls after the meeting? To whom and for what purpose?
5. When does disagreement and criticism become bullying or a breach of the Code of Conduct?

# Leading a Safe and Ethical Workplace Culture in Health

Facilitated Session for Chairpersons

## Case study part 1

### Interactions with staff

Geraldine was advised at the end of June that her application to be a Board member of Hanover Health Service has been approved and she will be able to attend her first Board meeting in mid-July.

In order to prepare herself, Geraldine visits two of the community health centres, the Emergency Department and the Renal Dialysis Unit that the health service operates.

Her drop-in is not expected by staff, who are surprised when she introduces herself as a Board Member.

1. How should this be handled?
2. How should Geraldine's induction have explained the expectations for new Board members?
3. What effect would this have on Staff members?
4. As Chair, would you counsel Geraldine that her behaviour was inappropriate and that Board members should not be making "surprise" visits? Why?

## Case study part 2

### Over-stepping the line

Harry, an energetic Board member is anxious to make a contribution to Glenlyon Regional Health Service. He is keen to prove himself and constantly 'name-drops' who he knows and how the health service should be contacting this company or that. You are aware that he is well connected in the area, including politically.

At the most recent Board meeting, he expressly states that he is willing to work with management to prepare a paper on why a major capital purchase should be made, as he has already discussed this with the local member of parliament.

1. What concerns do you have about Harry's conduct?
2. How has Harry crossed the line between governance and management?
3. As Chair, how would you handle this?



## Case study part 3

### **Bullying accusation**

After Harry tells the Board this, you intervene firmly but respectfully. You tell Harry that the Board as a whole has a variety of factors to consider before making a decision.

You ask what he discussed with the local MP and refer Harry to the Code of Conduct/Conduct Charter, which the Board recently approved but Harry has not yet signed, in particular the sections about public statements and unity amongst Board members.

Harry tells you that you are bullying him by trying to humiliate him in front of his peers, and he demands a retraction and an apology.

1. How do you respond to Harry?
2. When does disagreement and criticism become bullying or a breach of the Directors' Code of Conduct or Conduct Charter?