

Health Organisation Board Director Position Description

The role of a board is essentially to:

- Be accountable for the provision of high quality, safe clinical care
- Set the strategic direction and goals for the health service
- Be accountable for ensuring the organisation operates effectively and delivers its strategy
- Monitor and manage risk to the organisation
- Appoint and manage the performance of the Chief Executive Officer, and
- Provide accessible and engaged leadership to create and promote a healthy and just culture for the board and within the organisation.

Effective boards are inquisitive and undertake regular stakeholder engagement within and beyond the organisation. They actively seek and use information and intelligence to understand how well their services are meeting people's needs and to ensure they are utilising opportunities to improve quality, safety and efficiency.

About Public health services

Public health services deliver health, mental health and aged care services in metropolitan and rural and regional Victoria. They are integral parts of the Victorian health system which promotes and protects Victorians' health.

Public health service boards are accountable for the safety and quality of care delivered in their services. They must create an organisational culture and governance environment that places patients at the centre of everything the organisation does and promote continuous improvement.

About Public Hospitals

Public hospitals deliver health, mental health and aged care services in rural and regional Victoria and are integral parts of the Victorian health system which promotes and protects Victorians' health.

Public hospital boards have a responsibility to create a governance environment that drives performance in a way that places patients at the centre of everything the organisation does and to drive improvements to performance within a culture of safety and quality.

About MPS

Multi purpose services provide range of health and community services that best meet local community need. This may include public hospital services, health care services, aged care services, community care services.

As with public hospitals, multi purpose service boards have a responsibility to create a governance environment that drives performance in a way that places patients at the centre of everything the organisation does and to drive improvements to performance within a culture of safety and quality.

About Early Parenting Centres

Early Parenting Centres are state wide early intervention and prevention health services. Their purpose is to provide parenting support to families during pregnancy and with children from birth to school age. They are part of a broader range of early intervention services which include Child FIRST and Integrated Family Services and Cradle to Kinder and are accredited health services specialising in parenting, infant health and early childhood development.

Expectations of board directors

- Attend and actively participate in a minimum of 75 per cent of board meetings as well as any committee meetings they are involved in that are held during the year.
- Participate on a sub-committee of the board, and serve on one or more ad-hoc committees as necessary. Directors should be prepared to participate in Board Strategy Days, Open Access Board Meetings, AGMs and other nominated events which may be part of the board's calendar.
- Develop a full understanding of the organisation's finances, scope of service, strategic context and legal framework.
- Act in good faith in the best interests of the organisation at all times.
- Act with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable person might be expected to show in the role, and do not improperly use the position, or the information gained in the course of the role, to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else to the detriment of the organisation.
- Adhere to the Victorian Public Sector Commission's directors' code of conduct including bringing any actual or potential conflict of interest or any perceived conflict of interest to the attention of the chairperson of the board.
- Undertake identified and agreed training and development in order to fully discharge their responsibilities.

General attributes required of board directors

As public officials, board directors are expected to demonstrate:

- Commitment to the delivery of safe, high quality, person-centred care – a genuine interest in the fundamental purpose of the organisation and its role in the health care service system
- Ability to use and interpret complex information – understanding the need for information on which to base decisions and the ability to use it to get to the crux of the issue quickly
- Integrity and accountability – dedication to fulfilling a director's duties and responsibilities, putting the organisation's interests before personal interests and acting ethically
- Effective teamwork – the ability to work well in a group, listen well, be open to different views, be tactful but able to communicate a point of view frankly
- Confidence to provide constructive challenge and oversight - the curiosity to ask questions and the courage to persist in asking, and to challenge management and fellow board members where necessary

Minimum competencies required of all board directors

All board members are required to have:

- sufficient financial literacy to understand and interpret financial reports, in particular the audited financial statement in the organisation's Annual Report
- sufficient clinical governance awareness to ensure the delivery of safe, high quality services is always front of mind (and to undertake training on this regularly)
- sufficient legal literacy to understand the board's primary obligations under its constituting legislation and other major legal obligations (such as occupational health and safety)
- sufficient governance skills to understand the role of the board vis a vis the organisation's executive and the accountability mechanisms for the agency, including the board's ultimate accountability to the Minister for Health.

This does not mean that every board member must be a clinician or an accountant or a lawyer, however, all must have these minimum competencies to discharge their duties as directors and to ensure delivery of high quality, safe clinical services.

Selection criteria

The following selection criteria are required to be addressed as part of the application submitted by interested candidates for public hospitals and multi purpose services:

- 1) In addition to the required core competencies outlined above, possession of demonstrable expertise or qualifications in relation to one or more of the following disciplines would be advantageous (see below for definitions and requirements for each discipline):
 - Clinical governance
 - Patient (user) experience and consumer engagement
 - Strategic leadership / Executive Management
 - Corporate governance
 - Audit and risk management
 - Financial management and accounting
 - Asset management
 - ICT strategy and governance
 - Communications and stakeholder engagement
 - Human resources management
 - Community Services
 - Law
 - Registered Clinician

It is not necessary to have experience in every discipline. Your application should address no more than three of these disciplines.

- 2) Continuing high levels of performance in your field of endeavour.
- 3) Appreciation or understanding of the broader policy context and issues surrounding the delivery and planning of public health and/or community services, including to those marginalised or disadvantaged in the community such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) families and people with a disability.

Please note every board needs to have at least one member in each of the following categories. If you fulfil one of these requirements, it would be helpful to highlight this in your application:

- A person with demonstrable user experience and patient engagement skills.
- A health professional with knowledge of contemporary clinical practice and experience in clinical governance and not employed in the hospital/health service concerned or where there is a conflict of interest that cannot be reasonably managed.
- A person with professional qualifications in either Finance or Audit and Risk.
- A qualified lawyer with expertise in corporate governance and/or the application and interpretation of law in the healthcare sector.

Definitions relating to the Selection Criteria

The definitions below provide guidance on the sort of skills, qualifications and/or experience required in order to meet the criteria. The definitions include a basic minimum standard as well as providing guidance on what a more highly skilled candidate would possess. Further, the definitions indicate the types of responsibilities the candidate might be required to undertake should they be selected as a director of a board.¹

Be prepared in your application and at interview to articulate your expertise in the areas you identify as your key skills / expertise and how it was obtained, for example: professional qualification, vocational experience and/or prior board experience.

Clinical governance

Understands and has experience in the application, design and evaluation of clinical governance systems to ensure the provision of safe clinical care and drive continuous improvement of patient outcomes. It requires transparent responsibility and accountability for maintaining standards and allows excellence in clinical care to flourish. Clinical governance systems encompass: leadership and culture, consumer partnerships, risk management, clinical practice and workforce. This requires the ability to critically analyse and interpret data to facilitate continuous evidence based quality improvement. An understanding of accreditation frameworks and processes is desirable. It is anticipated that most candidates with clinical governance skills would also be from a hospital-based clinical field, however, this is not a requirement to demonstrate clinical governance competence (for example an incident investigator at a hospital, medico-legal counsel and other similar sectors may also be able to demonstrate clinical governance capability).

All successful candidates with only minimal or no clinical governance skills will be required to undergo clinical governance training within their first year to ensure they meet minimum standards. This will require all directors to understand and be able to apply the Clinical Governance Framework.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including quality and safety, patient experience, research and ethics, public/population health and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

Patient experience and consumer engagement

Has extensive experience as a user of health services (or as carer/guardian of a person who is a frequent user) and is able to facilitate engagement with consumers, and use consumer feedback to drive hospital-wide improvements in patient centred care. The applicant should have had experience in spaces (such as consumer advisory committees or complaints management and response) that tap into the views of patients more generally to provide a broad and authentic perspective on behalf of patients. This is someone who has developed a unique understanding from their experience and can draw on this knowledge to improve patient experiences and outcomes, and facilitate consumer partnerships. This person will offer insight into how to promote shared decision making in patient care and consumer input into the particular entity's organisational design and operating model.

It is not merely a person who has attended a hospital for a few procedures. A person with user experience is expected to have been at some stage, or still is, a regular user of acute health services (or a carer/guardian of such a person). This includes people with conditions requiring extensive treatment programs (e.g. cancer treatment), people requiring ongoing support in a hospital setting with a persisting condition (such as a disability or chronic disease). Further to this, specific skills and experience in engaging with consumers, particularly in the health sphere or other public service delivery organization would be advantageous to enable directors to represent the views of health consumers (generally) at the board level.

It is important to remember that a 'user experience' board member is still a director of the board and thus must not have a conflict of interest, nor can they act as a representative of any one constituency nor lobby in respect of any single issue. The board will also be advised by a consumer/user advisory committee or similar. It is critical to the role of the board in discharging its duties that all board directors actively facilitate the effective engagement and participation of consumers in their (the consumer's) own care and in the broader operation of the health service's systems and protocols. It is not the role of this board director to replace such a user/consumer committee or represent the specific views of the specific users of this service.

¹ Note: the board has the power to set its own procedures and does not have to appoint a person to one of these committees simply because they have that skill nor does not possessing the skill preclude the board from appointing a director to a particular committee.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including quality and safety; patient experience and consumer engagement; organisational design; complaints response/management and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

Strategic leadership

Ability to identify and critically assess strategic opportunities and threats to an organisation, and develop objectives and strategies in the context of organisational policies. Demonstrates strategic thinking, planning and leadership skills, and experience of high-level decision-making. This would usually require strong board level experience as an executive or non-executive director; and/or strong experience in an executive role reporting to a board; and/or experience as a manager, or facilitator/consultant in development of strategic plans and aligning these with delivery of outcomes by an entity. Experience in strategic leadership with a focus on ensuring quality and safety of clinical care is highly regarded.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including remuneration, strategy, audit, finance, research and ethics and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee. A member of an audit committee has minimum qualifications as defined by the 'Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*'. This includes financial literacy; reasonable understanding of the organisation's risks and controls; independence of judgement; and additional time commitments.

Corporate governance

In addition to the basic governance knowledge expected as a core competency, candidates who indicate corporate governance as one of their three areas of expertise should possess a good working knowledge and understanding of accountability relationships and corporate governance, including the separation of governance and management, and the roles, duties and obligations of non-executive directors. Corporate governance is the framework of rules, relationships, systems and processes within and by which authority is exercised and controlled in organisations. This includes familiarity with the fiduciary duties of a director and the Victorian Public Sector Commission's Director's Duties. In this context, the candidate would also need to understand the direct accountability to the Minister for Health.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including remuneration, strategy, audit, finance, research and ethics and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee. A member of an audit committee has minimum qualifications as defined by the 'Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*'. This includes basic financial and legal literacy; reasonable understanding of the organisation's risks and controls; independence of judgement; and additional time commitments.

Audit and risk management

Has professional expertise and or qualifications in examining financial reports and forming a view on whether the information presented, taken as a whole, reflects the financial position of the organisation. Knowledge of legal and regulatory requirements, especially those pertaining to the health sector, and experience of monitoring compliance. Can apply this to broader risk frameworks and risk mitigation, in addition to codes of practice to comply with the range of internal controls required of a major entity.

And/or

Has professional expertise and or qualifications in identifying, assessing and responding to strategic, financial, operational and reputational risks so as to mitigate their impact or maximize the realisation of opportunities. It would be advantageous if candidate can demonstrate experience in performing / evaluating financial and/or non-financial (performance) audits or similar program/policy evaluations.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including audit, finance, research and ethics and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee. A member of an audit committee has to meet minimum qualification requirements as defined by the 'Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*'. This includes financial literacy; reasonable understanding of the organisation's risks and controls; independence of judgement; and additional time commitments.

Financial management and accounting

Has professional expertise adequate to meet the requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994* and the accompanying Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance. **The candidate would need to demonstrate, via qualifications and/or experience, sufficient financial literacy to read and understand financial statements (including income statement; balance sheet; statement of recognised income and expense; and, cash flow statement) and understand generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).** This would include expertise and experience in the efficient and effective management of finances to accomplish the objectives of an organisation, including analysing statements, assessing financial viability, overseeing financial planning and funding arrangements. This would usually involve having had oversight or advisory responsibility for preparing and reporting on substantial budgets.

Professional qualifications in accounting and professional recognition is highly regarded (particularly CA, CPA or equivalent) and in some cases will be required as a minimum due to the size and complexity of the organisation. Experience in financial oversight; preparation and delivery of budgets; and, interpreting a chart of accounts of a large entity will also be an advantage.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including remuneration, audit, finance, research and ethics and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee. A member of an audit committee has to meet minimum qualification requirements as defined by the 'Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*'. This includes financial literacy; reasonable understanding of the organisation's risks and controls; independence of judgement; and additional time commitments.

Asset management

Has experience of overseeing the planning, management and renewal of major assets, including buildings and other infrastructure. Qualifications in engineering, planning, land management, architecture, surveying or similar would be an advantage. An applicant should be able to demonstrate experience in using best practice systems to monitor and maintain things of value to an entity or group. This would include tangible (for example, buildings, equipment and vehicles) and intangible (for example, good will and intellectual property) assets. Experience in conducting fabric surveys and/or structural due diligence-type assessments and/or asset depreciation management will be highly regarded

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including specific projects and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

ICT strategy and governance

Has expertise in managing information and communications technology, particularly oversight of substantial IT programmes, and knowledge of IT governance, including privacy, data management and security. It would be advantageous to have overseen or been involved in the oversight, development, rollout and/or maintenance of enterprise systems (for example relating to records management), digital strategies, and security infrastructure.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters including specific projects (particularly if relating to ICT) and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

Communications and stakeholder engagement

Has a good understanding of the key elements of communications and effective stakeholder engagement in the context of providing a public service, and the importance of transparency and public reporting. This would include experience of ensuring effective insight into and response to the views and expectations of key stakeholders within and outside the organisation.

Qualifications and/or experience in corporate communications, marketing, facilitation, stakeholder engagement, event management, media/public relations, and/or journalism would be advantageous.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters such as consumer engagement, organisational culture and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

Human resources management

Has professional expertise in key aspects of managing an organisation's workforce, such as investing in leadership development and culture, ensuring compliance with employment and labour laws, managing industrial relations, and overseeing organisational change. It would be advantageous to have qualifications and/or experience in organisational change management, cultural awareness and/or occupational health and safety.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters such as remuneration, CEO recruitment and performance management and organisational culture. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

Community Services (of particular interest for early parenting centre candidates)

Has professional expertise and experience in the delivery of social services to members of the community particularly for users who may come from disadvantaged backgrounds or are vulnerable at the time of seeking that service. This might include experience working in senior management, the executive or on the board of a not-for-profit community service agency and/or working directly with clients of such services.

Experience advocating for people with a lived experience of disability or mental illness is an advantage and/or experience providing assistance to disadvantaged and/or vulnerable members of the community (such as people impacted by family violence). This is particularly the case where the experience enables the candidate to have a better understanding of how this might impact patient experience in health settings. A qualification or strong experience in social work, youth work, disability care, advocacy, counselling or similar social service roles is an advantage.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters such as patient/user experience, consumer engagement, organisational culture and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

Law

At a minimum, the candidate would need to have a relevant legal qualification (for example, LLB, Juris Doctor or equivalent). Furthermore, the candidate would need to demonstrate capacity and/or experience of interpreting and applying legislation, in particular that related to the health system (e.g. *Health Services Act 1988*).

It would be advantageous if the candidate has been admitted to the Supreme Court of Victoria and a further advantage if the candidate practices law within the fields of health law; mental health law; industrial relations; corporations/governance law; and/or administrative law. An understanding of accreditation frameworks and processes is desirable.

A candidate with these skillsets should be prepared to sit on relevant sub-committees of the board that deal with matters such as clinical governance, remuneration, specific projects, research and ethics and risk. If the candidate also has sufficient governance experience they may be asked to chair such a committee.

Registered Clinician

At a minimum, the candidate must possess appropriate qualifications in a relevant clinical field and current registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) or other recognised State or National Registry. Experience working as a clinician in a hospital environment is a significant advantage, particularly if this experience provides clinical governance capability also. A registered clinician should be able to demonstrate an understanding of contemporary clinical practice, have a broad understanding of public/population health and the social determinants of health and the importance of and mechanisms for patient centered care.

Preferred relevant clinical fields include: Dental; Medical (including general practitioners and specialisations); Nursing and Midwifery; Physiotherapy; Allied health practiced within a hospital environment; medical radiation practice; optometry*; ophthalmology*; pharmacy; psychology**; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice; paramedical***.

*Included in preferred relevant clinical field list for The Royal Eye and Ear Hospital

**Included in preferred relevant clinical field list for Forensicare.

*** Included in preferred relevant clinical field list for Ambulance Victoria.