



# Qmentum Program

STANDARDS

## **Governance**

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## Governance Standards

Accreditation Canada's Governance Standards help health organizations meet demands for excellence in governance practice. They are a response to system-wide changes in health care delivery structures and the increasing need for public accountability.

The Governance Standards are meant to be used by the governing body in conjunction with Accreditation Canada's Leadership Standards, used by the organization's leaders. The responsibility of the governing body to be engaged and involved in the activities of the organization is critical for the organization's success.

The Governance Standards are built on five key functions of governance, aligning with J.L. Denis et al.'s *Towards a Framework for the Analysis of Governance in Healthcare Organizations*. These five key functions are: developing the mission, vision, and values; collecting and using knowledge and information; developing the organization; building relationships with stakeholders; and demonstrating accountability.

The standards are grouped into four sections based on these functions:

**Functioning as an effective governing body:** Addresses the internal development of the governing body, including composition, structure, and roles and responsibilities including the division of responsibility with organization leaders.

**Developing a clear direction for the organization:** Addresses the process for defining the organization's mission and long-term vision, including broad organizational goals and values.

**Supporting the organization to achieve its mandate:** Addresses the governing body's role in the processes that support the organization's achievement of its strategic goals and objectives. It includes the recruitment and evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), relationships with the CEO and the organization's other leaders, and resource allocation.

**Being accountable and achieving sustainable results:** Addresses accountability and organizational performance, including quality improvement and risk management.

The approach a governing body takes to address these responsibilities will differ according to the organization's size, structure, mandate, and governance model. In some cases the organization's CEO and other leaders will be directly involved in many of the governance activities and responsibilities outlined here, while in other cases there will be a more distinct division of responsibilities.

In some jurisdictions, government may be involved in the operations of the organization's governing body, and will be responsible for certain activities outlined in these standards. When this is the case, the governing body should remain as involved as possible in the process.



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# Governance

## FUNCTIONING AS AN EFFECTIVE GOVERNING BODY

### 1.0 **The governing body operates according to defined roles and responsibilities, and meets its legal obligations in this regard.**



Effectiveness



- 1.1 The governing body defines and regularly reviews its roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities, where appropriate.

#### **Guideline**

The governing body defines what “regularly” means and adheres to that schedule.

As a rule, the governing body’s role is to support the organization to achieve its goals, consistent with its mandated objectives and its accountability to stakeholders. In carrying out this mandate, the governing body selects the CEO, approves major policies, makes decisions that impact the organization’s long-term sustainability, oversees the organization’s performance, and serves as an external advocate.

Applicable legislation is considered when defining or updating roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities.

Where there are several levels of governance, the roles and responsibilities are well defined and understood by each level, information flows smoothly and consistently between levels, and the governing body coordinates and integrates its work with each level.

Where the federal, provincial, or territorial government is closely involved in the oversight of the organization, the scope of authority and roles and responsibilities of the governing body and the government are well defined, either by government or by government working with the governing body.





Effectiveness



- 1.2 The governing body has written documentation that identifies its roles and responsibilities and how those roles and responsibilities are carried out.

**Guideline**

The documentation, which may include a charter, constitution, by-laws, or policy documents, clarifies the division of responsibility between the governing body and the organization's leaders. Division of responsibility between governing bodies and CEOs or other leaders varies according to particular governance models.

In general, the governing body's responsibilities are strategic and focused on decisions that affect the organization's long-term sustainability. For example, the governing body is usually responsible for overseeing its own membership; selecting and evaluating the CEO; overseeing the strategic planning process; approving the organization's capital and operating budgets and providing overall financial oversight; approving the organization's corporate policies and ensuring the policies are followed; working with the organization to identify and manage risks and identify strategic opportunities for improvement; monitoring the organization's performance including the achievement of the strategic goals and objectives; approving major transactions such as capital investments or major equipment purchases; ensuring the organization meets legal and regulatory requirements as well as reporting, monitoring, and accountability obligations; ensuring codes or frameworks for ethical behaviour are in place; ensuring appropriate communications plans and strategies are in place; and governing appropriately and effectively through regular meetings, sub-committees, task forces, and work groups.

In some cases the division of responsibility between the governing body and the organization's leaders is defined in provincial or territorial legislation.



Effectiveness



- 1.3 The governing body approves, adopts, and follows the ethics framework used by the organization.

**Guideline**

An ethics framework provides a standardized approach to working through ethical issues, addressing conflicts of interest, and making decisions. The framework can include codes of conduct, guidelines, processes, and values to help guide decision-making.

The organization's leaders develop the ethics framework for the organization, but may receive input from the governing body.

The governing body's minutes reflect that the ethics framework is used as part of its regular activities.





Effectiveness



- 1.4 The governing body adopts a code of ethical conduct for its members.

**Guideline**

The code of ethical conduct addresses conflict of interest; the protection and appropriate use of the organization's assets; confidentiality of information obtained through one's role on the governing body; compliance with laws, rules, and regulations; and the obligation to report to the governing body any breach of the code of ethical conduct, or any illegal or unethical behaviour.



Effectiveness

- 1.5 The governing body has a process to develop by-laws and policies and update them regularly.

**Guideline**

The governing body defines what "regularly" means and adheres to that schedule.

Where the organization's governing body is appointed by government, developing and updating by-laws and policies may be the responsibility of government, but the governing body participates in the process.



Effectiveness



- 1.6 The governing body's by-laws and policies are consistent with its mandate, roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities.



## 2.0 The governing body has the appropriate membership to fulfill its role.



Worklife



- 2.1 The governing body identifies the mix of background, experience, and competencies needed in its membership to govern effectively.

### Guideline

Where the organization's governing body is appointed by government, identifying the required membership mix may be the responsibility of government, but the governing body may have input into the required competencies and background.

The governing body may use a competency matrix to identify competency gaps in the background, experience, and skills of its members, and recruits members to fill these gaps. The particular competencies sought may vary depending on an organization's mandate and the skills needed to complement its leadership team, and will change over time as the organization evolves in response to changes in its operating environment.

To optimize its engagement in quality and safety processes, the governing body recruits members who have competencies in quality and safety.

In addition to specific competencies, members possess appropriate personal attributes, including integrity and high ethical standards, sound judgment, strong interpersonal skills, and a high level of commitment to the organization and its success.



Effectiveness

- 2.2 The governing body follows a written process to elect or appoint its chair.

### Guideline

Where the organization's governing body is appointed by government, the election or appointment of the chair may be the responsibility of government.



Worklife



- 2.3 The roles and responsibilities of the chair are described in a position profile, terms of reference, or by-laws.

### Guideline

The chair of the governing body is responsible for managing governing body affairs, including setting meeting agendas, running meetings effectively, controlling discussions among members, managing dissent, and working toward consensus; evaluating the governing body, committees, and members; managing conflicts of interest; building and maintaining a sound working relationship with the CEO and government representatives; working with the organization's leaders; serving as the governing body's spokesperson; and establishing a culture of active involvement and engagement among members of the governing body.

When government is responsible for setting out the roles and responsibilities of the chair, the governing body remains aware of these roles and responsibilities.





Effectiveness

- 2.4 The governing body has written criteria and follows a defined process to recruit and select new members.

**Guideline**

Where the organization's governing body is appointed by government, recruitment and selection of members may be the responsibility of government.

Based on the board's current skills and those that are needed, the governing body takes a proactive role in identifying skill gaps in its membership and identifying potential members, and, in cases where it does not select its own members, making recommendations to the selecting body (e.g., government).



Worklife

- 2.5 New members of the governing body receive an orientation before attending their first meeting.

**Guideline**

The orientation includes, at minimum, information about the governing body's role and responsibilities; the formal governance structure; the governing body's constitution and by-laws; the organization's mission, vision, and values; the organization's operations and working environment; and the governing body's responsibilities for quality improvement, client and staff safety, and positive worklife.



Worklife



- 2.6 Each member of the governing body signs a statement acknowledging his or her role and responsibilities, including expectations of the position and legal duties.

**Guideline**

The statement covers fiduciary duty and duty of care to the organization; guidelines for behaviour including communication and interaction with other members and the organization's leaders, staff, and the community; attendance at and preparation for meetings; confidentiality; compliance with the organization's ethics framework, including disclosure of conflicts of interest; a commitment to being informed about the organization and representing the interests of the organization; a commitment to self-evaluation and evaluation of the governing body; and a commitment to orientation and ongoing education.





Worklife

- 2.7 Members of the governing body receive ongoing education to help them fulfill their individual roles and responsibilities and those of the governing body as a whole.

#### Guideline

The governing body provides ongoing education to its members to maintain or improve their skills and increase their understanding of the organization, its sector, and its governance practices. Education may take place as part of regular meetings, e.g., speakers or presentations from the organization's leaders; as part of an annual retreat, e.g., team building activities; or in separate educational sessions, e.g., conferences, courses, or certifications. Education may be targeted to individual members or to the governing body as a whole.

Education to increase members' knowledge about quality and client safety in health care is of particular importance in assisting the governing body to fulfill its role. This could include how to interpret scorecards and identify risks to safety and quality, and national trends and best practices in quality improvement. Refer to the Canadian Patient Safety Institute and Canadian Health Services Research Foundation's Effective Governance for Quality and Patient Safety Toolkit, or other resources found in the references.



Effectiveness

- 2.8 The governing body's membership policies and/or by-laws address term lengths and limits, attendance requirements, and compensation.



Effectiveness



- 2.9 The governing body's renewal cycle supports the addition of new members while maintaining a balance of experienced members to support the continuity of corporate memory and decision-making.

#### Guideline

Where the organization's governing body is appointed by government, defining the membership renewal cycle may be the responsibility of government.

The governing body's renewal cycle is balanced between the need for new members and the need for members with corporate history and knowledge. Many governing bodies have established the position of past-chair to provide continuity.

The governing body plans for its members' terms to expire in an orderly fashion. Monitoring the renewal cycle includes succession planning as members near the end of their term.



### 3.0 The governing body has a defined and formal process for decision making.



Effectiveness



- 3.1 The governing body uses the ethics framework and evidence-informed criteria to guide decision making.

#### Guideline

Decision making is guided by the values and principles of the governing body and the organization, as well as by lessons learned from past decisions. Decisions are values- and evidence-informed and consistent with the organization's mission and vision.

Decision making can be aided by the use of checklists or criteria matrices that are aligned with the values and principles of the organization.



Effectiveness

- 3.2 The governing body identifies areas where decision making is shared with government, funding authorities, and other health organizations.

#### Guideline

Areas of shared decision making are often specified in legislation or policy. Whatever the degree of the governing body's decision-making autonomy, its accountability is strengthened by identifying areas of shared decision making to reduce ambiguities that could detract from its ability to govern effectively.



Efficiency

- 3.3 The governing body identifies and has access to the information it needs to support decision making.

#### Guideline

Strategic information to support decision making may include trends and changes in the environment; services offered by other organizations; service or program evaluation reports; research and best practice information; community health assessments; organizational performance measures and the impact of quality improvement initiatives; risk management reports; fiscal reports; utilization management reports; direction from government or other funding authorities; and feedback from clients, stakeholders, and the community.





Effectiveness



- 3.4 The governing body has processes in place to oversee the functions of audit and finance, quality and safety, and talent management.

**Guideline**

Depending on the size and organization of the governing body, these functions may be overseen by the governing body itself as a committee of the whole, or by separate sub-committees. In instances where separate sub-committees are required, the governing body defines terms of reference and reporting requirements for each committee.

The processes used by the governing body or its sub-committees to monitor these functions may include defining the number of meetings where audit and finance, quality and safety, and talent management will be discussed and setting regular opportunities to connect with the organization's leaders to get updates on the organization's activities.



Efficiency



- 3.5 The governing body receives required information and documentation in enough time to prepare for meetings and decision making.

**Guideline**

The governing body sets clear expectations about the amount of time it requires to review information prior to meetings.



Efficiency

- 3.6 The governing body reviews the type of information it receives to assess its appropriateness in helping the governing body to carry out its role.

**Guideline**

Information used by the governing body may include client safety data, finance and audit reports, enterprise risk management assessments, reports from the organization's ombudsperson, and client and staff satisfaction survey results.



## DEVELOPING A CLEAR DIRECTION FOR THE ORGANIZATION

### 4.0 The governing body works with the organization's leaders to develop the organization's mission statement.



Effectiveness



- 4.1 The governing body works in collaboration with the organization's leaders to develop the organization's mission statement.

#### Guideline

The mission statement, sometimes referred to as the statement of purpose, describes the organization's purpose and mandate, the populations it serves, and its scope of services.



Population  
Focus

- 4.2 When developing or updating the mission statement, the governing body and the organization's leaders seek input from organization staff and stakeholders, including partners and clients.

#### Guideline

The process to seek input differs from organization to organization. Input is often sought and compiled by the CEO and brought back to the governing body. In the case of public organizations, the process may include open consultation with the community.



Effectiveness

- 4.3 With the CEO, the governing body consults regularly with government or its shareholders to confirm the appropriateness of the organization's mandate and core services and to develop a common understanding about performance expectations.

#### Guideline

To maintain and improve a common understanding about performance expectations, the outcome of these consultations and discussions are often recorded in performance or accountability agreements between the organization and its funding authority.

The governing body defines what "regularly" means and adheres to that schedule.





Effectiveness

- 4.4 The governing body, with the organization's leaders, reviews and revises the mission statement to reflect changes in the environment, scope of services, or mandate.

**Guideline**

It is not necessary to revise the mission statement on an annual basis. The governing body is aware of issues that may prompt a review and adjustment of the mission statement.

## 5.0 The governing body defines and models the organizational values.



Effectiveness



- 5.1 The governing body works with the organization's leaders to define or update the organization's values statement.

**Guideline**

Defining organizational values helps establish parameters for staff, service provider, student, and volunteer behaviour and acceptable relationships with other organizations. Values may include duty, respect, confidentiality, integrity, honesty and ethical behaviour, equity and fairness, safety, treating people as the organization's greatest asset, and workplace health.

The governing body is responsible for defining and updating the organization's values statement; however, depending on the organization's model of governance, the organization's leaders support the process by seeking input from organization staff and providing advice to the governing body.

Population  
Focus

- 5.2 The governing body works with the organization's leaders to seek input from staff, service providers, and clients and their families to define or update the organization's values statement.



Effectiveness

- 5.3 The governing body has a formal process to understand, identify, declare, and resolve conflicts of interest.

**Guideline**

A conflict of interest occurs when an individual has competing professional or personal interests that may make it difficult for them to fulfill their duties fairly. The governing body is aware of what constitutes a conflict of interest, the process for declaring conflicts of interest, and the steps that may be taken to resolve or mitigate the effects of the conflict of interest.



## 6.0 The governing body oversees a strategic planning process to develop the organization's vision and set the strategic plan, goals, and objectives.



Effectiveness



- 6.1 The governing body oversees the strategic planning process and provides guidance to the organization's leaders as they develop and update the organization's vision and strategic plan.

### Guideline

The process is used to identify the organization's long-term vision and strategy for achieving the vision. The frequency and formality of the strategic planning process may differ according to the size and type of organization.

In some jurisdictions development of the organization's vision and strategic plan may be the responsibility of government.



Effectiveness



- 6.2 The governing body, in consultation with the CEO, identifies timeframes and responsibility for achieving the strategic goals and objectives.

### Guideline

In some jurisdictions this process may be the responsibility of government.



Effectiveness



- 6.3 The governing body works with the organization's leaders to conduct an ongoing environmental scan to identify changes and new challenges, and ensures that the strategic plan, goals, and objectives are adjusted accordingly.

### Guideline

The governing body should review and understand the environmental scan and its potential impact on the organization.

Not every change in the environment requires changes to the organization's strategic plan, goals, and objectives. The governing body and organization's leaders set criteria to determine the conditions under which the plan should be changed, based on potential impact to the organization.



## SUPPORTING THE ORGANIZATION TO ACHIEVE ITS MANDATE

### 7.0 The governing body recruits, selects, supports, and evaluates the CEO and ensures an organizational talent management plan is in place.



Effectiveness



7.1 The governing body oversees the recruitment and selection of the CEO.

#### **Guideline**

The CEO may also be called the executive director, chief executive director, or administrator.

Where the CEO is appointed by an external body such as government or is specified in legislation, the governing body still plays a role in identifying potential candidates and in the screening, nomination, and selection process.



Efficiency

7.2 The governing body establishes and follows a policy on CEO compensation.



Worklife



7.3 The governing body develops and updates the position profile for the CEO.

#### **Guideline**

The position profile describes the CEO's duties and responsibilities, as well as the division of responsibility between the CEO and the governing body. The governing body should seek input from the current or outgoing CEO to develop or update the position profile.



Worklife

7.4 In partnership with the CEO, the governing body sets performance objectives for the CEO and reviews them annually.

#### **Guideline**

The performance objectives are tied to the organization's strategic goals and objectives, and quality and safety outcomes.





Worklife

- 7.5 The governing body supports and commits resources to the ongoing professional development of the CEO.

**Guideline**

The governing body supports the CEO's professional development by making suggestions for professional development opportunities, e.g., executive coaching, and includes periodic 360 degree reviews as part of the CEO's performance evaluation.



Effectiveness



- 7.6 The governing body has a mechanism to receive updates or reports from the CEO.

**Guideline**

Governing bodies may choose to have the CEO provide a written report, or present at the governing body's meetings.



Effectiveness

- 7.7 The governing body, with the input of the organization's leaders, evaluates the CEO's performance and achievements annually.

**Guideline**

The process to complete a comprehensive evaluation of the CEO includes seeking input from the organization's leaders as well as from stakeholders or partners.

Where the CEO reports to government rather than to the governing body, the governing body works closely with government officials to conduct the CEO evaluation.



Efficiency

- 7.8 The governing body has a succession plan for the CEO.





Worklife



- 7.9 The governing body oversees the development of the organization's talent management plan.

**Guideline**

In addition to facilitating succession planning, building leadership capacity throughout the organization contributes to a healthy work environment by empowering and engaging staff and service providers.

Leadership development should be continuous and ongoing, fostering a coaching or learning culture.

Strategies for developing leaders throughout the organization may include leadership workshops, coaching, mentoring, simulation activities, and leadership exchange programs. An important aspect of leadership is the development of skills such as motivational skills, interpersonal communication skills, conflict management, team management, and confidence building.

Information on fostering the development of leaders can be found in the resource document LEADS in a Caring Environment Leadership Capabilities Framework, specifically the "Lead Self" and "Engage Others" domains, which address how to build capabilities to effectively carry out leadership behaviours and processes.

**8.0 The governing body has an effective system of financial planning and control which supports achievement of the strategic goals and objectives.**



Efficiency



- 8.1 The governing body approves the organization's capital and operating budgets.

**Guideline**

The governing body reviews the annual capital and operating budgets and the impact of these budgets on the organization's mandate, the strategic goals and objectives, and health outcomes.



Efficiency



- 8.2 The governing body ensures the integrity of the organization's financial statements, internal controls, and financial information systems.





Efficiency



- 8.3 The governing body reviews the organization's financial performance in the context of the strategic plan and key performance areas such as utilization, risk, talent management, organizational learning and development, and safety.

**Guideline**

Reviewing the use of resources, i.e. utilization management, is an important part of a governing body's role in integrated quality management. As part of its review of financial performance, the governing body considers the way resources are used in the organization and seeks opportunities for efficiencies.



Efficiency



- 8.4 The governing body reviews and approves the organization's capital investments and major equipment purchases.

**Guideline**

The governing body reviews and approves major purchases taking into consideration risk management for the organization and alignment with the organization's strategic plan.



Efficiency



- 8.5 The governing body oversees the organization's resource allocation decisions as part of its regular planning cycle.



Efficiency



- 8.6 When reviewing and approving resource allocation decisions, the governing body assesses the risks and benefits to the organization.

**Guideline**

Risks may impact client or staff safety, the organization's reputation, cash-flow and the organization's overall financial position, and compliance with legislation. In for-profit organizations, risks may also include potential market share and competition.

Some amount of risk is to be expected and is desirable. The governing body will determine, with the participation of the organization's leaders, the acceptable level of risk.





Efficiency



- 8.7 When approving resource allocation decisions, the governing body evaluates the impact of the decision on quality and safety.

**Guideline**

Depending upon the organization's scope of services, resources may be distributed across populations, geographic regions served, and the continuum of service. Before approving budgets or making allocation decisions, the governing body assesses the costs and benefits of each decision and the impact on the ability to provide services according to the organization's mandate, while giving consideration to ethics, values, social costs and benefits, value for money, and sustainability.



Efficiency

- 8.8 The governing body anticipates the organization's financial needs and potential risks, and develops contingency plans to address them.

**Guideline**

Financial risks may include shifts or trends in funding, sudden increases in service needs, and insurance coverage. As part of its fiduciary responsibilities, the governing body may assess the organization's insurance needs and secure insurance as needed.

Contingency plans will vary depending on whether the organization is a publicly funded, private not-for-profit, or private for-profit organization. They may include exploring ways of sharing resources with other organizations, negotiating with the funding authority to obtain additional resources, identifying services that may be contracted or referred to other providers or organizations, approving plans to raise additional resources through fundraising or donors, or exploring the costs of its services and the impact of changing those costs to generate additional revenue.



Efficiency

- 8.9 The governing body addresses recommendations in financial reports and from the CEO and the organization's leaders.

**9.0 The governing body fosters and supports a culture of client safety throughout the organization.**



Safety



- 9.1 The governing body adopts client safety as a written strategic priority for the organization.

**Guideline**

Ensuring safety in the provision and delivery of services is among a governing body's primary responsibilities to clients, staff, and providers.





Safety



- 9.2 The governing body monitors organization-level measures of client safety.

**Guideline**

The governing body receives regular reports and updates on measures related to client safety, such as organization-wide infection rates, or data on client falls or medication reconciliation. The data are compiled at the organization level rather than at the program or team level, presenting a global picture of client safety in the organization, and play an integral part in the governing body's strategic planning process.



Safety

- 9.3 The governing body addresses recommendations made in the organization's quarterly client safety reports.

**Guideline**

The governing body is ultimately accountable for the quality and safety of the organization's services. It plays an important role in promoting an organizational culture that enhances client safety.

Organizations are more likely to make safety and quality improvement a central feature if the governing body is aware of client safety issues and leads the quality improvement efforts. Organizations with active governing body engagement in client safety are able to achieve improved outcomes and processes of care.



Safety



- 9.4 The governing body regularly reviews the frequency and severity of adverse events and near misses and uses this information to understand trends, client and staff safety issues in the organization, and opportunities for improvement.

**Guideline**

Information about adverse events and near misses is provided to the governing body in aggregate reports.

The governing body defines what "regularly" means and adheres to that schedule.



## BEING ACCOUNTABLE AND ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

### 10.0 The governing body strengthens relationships with stakeholders and the community.



Population  
Focus

- 10.1 The governing body works with the CEO to identify stakeholders and learn about their characteristics, priorities, interests, activities, and potential to influence the organization.

#### Guideline

This is a collaborative process between the governing body and the CEO. The CEO plays an important role in advising the governing body about stakeholders and their interests.

Stakeholders may include governments or other funding authorities, foundations, unions, clients and families, shareholders, partner or similar organizations, interest or volunteer groups, professional bodies and associations, contractors or contracting agencies, referral organizations, and the community as a whole. The governing body's network of stakeholders will vary depending on the organization's model of governance, the type of organization, whether the organization is private or public, and the organization's role in the social and political environment.



Population  
Focus

- 10.2 In consultation with the CEO, the governing body anticipates, assesses, and responds to stakeholders' interests and needs.

#### Guideline

The governing body has a mechanism to balance competing interests and priorities. It looks for ways to increase collaboration with stakeholders who share common objectives or who provide services to the same populations or client groups.

The governing body puts priority on accountability relationships, e.g., relationships with government.



Population  
Focus

- 10.3 The governing body works with the CEO to establish, implement, and evaluate a communication plan for the organization.

#### Guideline

The communication plan addresses what information is shared, how and with whom, and the goals and objectives of sharing information with stakeholders and the community.





Effectiveness

- 10.4 The communication plan includes strategies to communicate key messages to staff, stakeholders, and the community.

**Guideline**

With the CEO, the governing body communicates with staff, stakeholders, and the community about key areas, including the strategic plan, goals, and objectives; decisions that affect the day-to-day operations of the organization or how services are delivered; changes in the external environment that impact the organization's services or create risks or opportunities; and changes in its own membership, structure, or operations.

Although different communication strategies may be used to target different groups, messages are clear and consistent, and communication among the organization, its stakeholders, and the community is open and two-way.



Effectiveness

- 10.5 The governing body, with the CEO, promotes the organization and demonstrates the value of its services to stakeholders and the community.

**Guideline**

Advocacy is a shared responsibility among the governing body, the organization's leaders, and staff.

The governing body plays an important role in ensuring that the community and government are aware of the services delivered by the organization and the organization's role in the community. By advocating or encouraging support for the organization, the members of the governing body can increase the profile of and bring recognition to the organization.

In consultation with the CEO and the organization's leaders, the governing body determines its level of involvement and the scope of its advocacy activities. Activities may include participating in community events, e.g., fundraisers, campaigns; supporting healthy public policy to address the determinants of health, e.g., smoking bans in public places, environmental health legislation; communicating the results of quality improvement initiatives; demonstrating performance in key areas; and raising community awareness about issues.

Population  
Focus

- 10.6 The governing body regularly consults with and encourages feedback from stakeholders and the community about the organization and its services.

**Guideline**

The governing body defines what "regularly" means and adheres to that schedule.

The governing body may seek input from stakeholders and the community through public forums, consultation on new or changing services, or an annual general meeting.



## 11.0 The governing body works with the CEO to reduce risks to the organization and promote ongoing quality improvement.



Effectiveness



- 11.1 The governing body makes quality improvement a standing item on its meeting agendas.

### Guideline

Organizations have better quality outcomes when the governing body devotes at least 25 per cent of its time on quality issues.



Effectiveness



- 11.2 The governing body works with the CEO and the organization's leaders to develop an integrated quality improvement plan.

### Guideline

An integrated quality improvement plan incorporates risk and utilization management; performance measurement, including monitoring of strategic goals and objectives; client safety; and quality improvement. It recognizes that these activities are interrelated and therefore need to be coordinated.

As part of the integrated quality improvement plan, organizations may use a balanced scorecard, which allows alignment of performance measurement and quality improvement with strategic goals and objectives. Involving relevant departments and leaders at all levels in achieving the strategic goals and objectives is important. The scorecard is adaptable to the organization's goals and objectives. It may address financial issues; client, staff, and service provider experience; and internal systems or process performance information.

Organizations can share performance information with the governing body, where appropriate; generate dashboards or scorecards for specific programs, units or teams; generate client or staff experience reports; and generate information related to other system-wide indicators.

Lean is a methodology for analysis and improvement of processes and overall quality in an organization. Lean focuses on increasing efficiency, minimizing waste, and increasing quality. There are many resources for applying Lean in health care quality improvement (e.g., the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, the Lean Enterprise Institute).

Another approach for improving quality and minimizing variability is Six Sigma, which uses data and statistical analysis to identify where errors are occurring and make improvements.

Both the British Columbia Patient Safety and Quality Council and Health Quality Ontario offer quality improvement and patient safety educational programs and tools online.





Effectiveness



- 11.3 The governing body ensures that an integrated risk management approach and contingency plans are in place.

**Guideline**

The organization's leaders inform the governing body about real or potential risks facing the organization and work with it to incorporate risk management approaches into the strategic plan.



Continuity of Services

- 11.4 The governing body monitors and provides input into the organization's strategies to address client flow and variations in service demands.

**Guideline**

Strategies to address client flow may be across a health region, a network of health care institutions, or within an individual health care organization. Once barriers to client flow and their causes are identified, improving client flow may include addressing inefficient or unsafe activities or processes that contribute to the inefficient flow of clients through the organization.



Effectiveness

- 11.5 The governing body promotes learning from results, making decisions that are informed by research and evidence, and ongoing quality improvement for the organization and the governing body.

**Guideline**

Learning from results includes learning from positive as well as negative or surprising results. This process may include ensuring support and teaching skills needed to learn from results, providing mechanisms for collective feedback and reflection such as briefings, and balancing between learning from results and focusing on end results.



Worklife

- 11.6 The governing body demonstrates a commitment to recognizing staff, service providers, volunteers, and students for their quality improvement work.

**Guideline**

Recognition may be formal, e.g., annual service awards, or informal. Even brief, informal recognition can have a significant impact.



## 12.0 The governing body regularly monitors and evaluates the organization's performance against agreed-upon goals and objectives.



Effectiveness



- 12.1 The governing body identifies the data and information it needs to monitor the organization's performance.



Effectiveness

- 12.2 The governing body monitors data to assess the organization's performance and the achievement of the strategic plan.

### Guideline

The performance data monitored by the governing body are directly linked to the strategic goals and objectives, are balanced across a number of priority areas rather than focused on one particular performance area, and are measured against agreed-upon goals and objectives.

Commonly-used performance measures include measures of talent management and worklife, e.g., rates of injury, absenteeism, turnover, vacancy, training and development, overtime, and staff satisfaction; financial outcomes; and service quality, e.g., client outcomes, access, safety, client satisfaction, and population health.



Effectiveness

- 12.3 The governing body identifies opportunities for improvement and monitors the actions taken to address them.



## 13.0 The governing body regularly evaluates the performance of individual board members and its performance as a whole.



Effectiveness



- 13.1 The governing body publicly discloses information about its governance processes, decision-making, and performance.

### Guideline

Expectations for public disclosure apply particularly to public sector organizations.

While these expectations continue to evolve, most governing bodies are expected to disclose information about membership and processes for identifying new members; scope of authority and roles and responsibilities; any sub-committees, including terms of reference and membership; the roles and responsibilities of the chair; the roles and responsibilities of individual members and the process to assess their performance, their attendance, and remuneration if applicable; the position profile of the CEO and process for evaluating the CEO's performance; the ethics framework and the process to disclose conflicts of interest; the approach to the orientation and education of its members; and the communication plan and practices of public disclosure.



Effectiveness



- 13.2 The governing body's activities and decisions are recorded and archived.

### Guideline

Keeping records of activities and decisions maintains continuity and builds corporate memory.

The records include a summary of discussions, rulings by the chair, motions, minutes, results of votes, and lists of documents referenced during meetings.



Effectiveness



- 13.3 The governing body shares the records of its activities and decisions with the organization.

### Guideline

The governing body may share the records with the organization via the CEO, who will communicate them with others in the organization as applicable.





Effectiveness



- 13.4 The governing body follows a process to regularly evaluate its performance and effectiveness.

**Guideline**

The process to evaluate performance may include using defined standards for evaluation; seeking feedback from its members or the CEO; evaluating processes to make sure they make the best use of members' time and skills; and reviewing achievements and results relative to the strategic plan, goals, and objectives.

An assessment of the governing body's effectiveness includes whether the governing body has fulfilled its responsibilities relative to key functions such as strategic planning; budgeting; CEO evaluation; risk management; the adequacy of governing body operations and decision-making processes; monitoring the governing body's culture; and the effectiveness of the governing body's communications with the organization.

The process may also include mechanisms to review research and leading practices in governance and to compare itself with the governing bodies of other similar organizations, i.e., benchmarking.

The governing body defines what "regularly" means and adheres to that schedule.



Effectiveness



- 13.5 The governing body conducts or participates in an assessment of its structure, including size and committee structure.

**Guideline**

The governing body's structure should suit its roles and responsibilities, areas of decision making, and the organization's strategic plan, goals, and objectives.

Where the organization's governing body is appointed by government, assessing the governing body's structure may be the responsibility of government. The governing body participates in this process and provides input on the assessment of the structure and how the structure contributes to the governing body's overall effectiveness.



Effectiveness



- 13.6 The governing body regularly evaluates the performance of the board chair based on established criteria.

**Guideline**

The governing body defines what "regularly" means and adheres to that schedule.

The performance of the board chair can be evaluated in part against his or her achievement of roles and responsibilities, adherence to the values and ethics framework of the organization and governing body, and contribution to meetings.





Worklife



- 13.7 The governing body regularly reviews the contribution of individual members and provides feedback to them.

**Guideline**

The governing body defines what “regularly” means and adheres to that schedule.

The review includes whether the member attends, is prepared for, and actively participates in meetings; the member’s knowledge about the organization, its strategic direction, and its operational environment; adherence to the values and ethics framework of the organization and governing body; and whether the member follows through on obligations between meetings, e.g. participation in committee work.



Effectiveness



- 13.8 ACCREDITATION CANADA REQUIRED INSTRUMENT: The governing body regularly assesses its own functioning using the Governance Functioning Tool.

**Guideline**

The governing body is responsible for assessing its own functioning as part of the overall evaluation of its performance. The Governance Functioning Tool addresses the governing body’s structure, membership, roles and responsibilities, meetings and decision-making processes, and process of evaluation.

Instrument Information

- 13.8.1 The governing body monitors its team functioning by administering the Governance Functioning Tool at least once every three years.
- 13.8.2 The governing body has taken action based on its most recent Governance Functioning Tool results.



Effectiveness

- 13.9 The governing body prepares an annual report of its achievements.

**Guideline**

The statement of the governing body’s achievements can be included within the organization’s annual report or as a separate report from the governing body.

The governing body shares its statement of achievements at minimum with the organization’s leaders, and may also choose to share it with staff, government, and the community.





Effectiveness



13.10 The governing body identifies and addresses opportunities for improvement in how it functions.

**Guideline**

Opportunities for improvement include developing procedures to ensure smooth functioning such as monitoring the length of meetings, managing agendas to reduce time on reporting items, and improving the way the governing body operates as a team.



## Legend:

### Dimensions:



**Population Focus**

Working with communities to anticipate and meet needs



**Accessibility**

Providing timely and equitable services



**Safety**

Keeping people safe



**Worklife**

Supporting wellness in the work environment



**Client-centred Services**

Putting clients and families first



**Continuity of Services**

Experiencing coordinated and seamless services



**Effectiveness**

Doing the right thing to achieve the best possible results



**Efficiency**

Making the best use of resources

### Criterion Types



**Required Organizational Practices**

Required Organizational Practices (ROPs) are essential practices that an organization must have in place to enhance client safety and minimize risk.



**Performance Measures**

Performance measures are evidence-based instruments and indicators that are used to measure and evaluate the degree to which an organization has achieved its goals, objectives, and program activities.

### Priority



**High Priority**

High priority criteria are criteria related to safety, ethics, risk management, and quality improvement. They are identified in the standards.

