



Effective Governance



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and
Safety Commission



Flip Guides have been designed as supplementary supports for the learning modules. The Guides include key messages and insights for your continued reflection.

Need to Know: Effective Governance

Governing bodies and executive leaders are responsible for effectively leading the aged care provider through the reforms to improve outcomes for consumers. Implementing reforms requires a unique set of knowledge, skills, and experience to support effective oversight and decision making with high-quality, consumer-centred care at its core.



To support changes through the reforms and emerging risks in the aged care landscape governing bodies will require diverse skillsets. Providers should understand what these skill sets are and where they might currently have gaps.



The composition of an aged care provider governing body is ultimately driven by the provider's enabling legislation. This legislation articulates whether the governing body should comprise independent or non-executive members – in other words, members who have no executive role or ownership in the aged care provider. Your governing body must have a majority of independent non-executive members and at least one member with experience in providing clinical care.

Structuring the Governing Body

The skills required for a governing body will vary considerably across organisations, depending on the size, structure, services delivered and location in which the aged care provider operates, alongside its vision and strategy.

Nonetheless, there remain a range of core skills and behaviours that governing body members must cultivate to bring the required levels of oversight, insight, foresight, and hindsight as the sector reforms.

The skills required are technical and professional as well as interpersonal including:

- Adaptability
- Conflict management and resolution
- Curiosity
- Self-reflection - the ability to self-reflect and put the needs of consumers ahead of your own
- Selflessness – putting the needs of consumers ahead of our own
- Effective communication and;
- Agility.









Tips for ensuring you have the right governing body size and composition

→ Read through the steps below for practical guidance on preparing for change.

STEP 1

Begin by identifying the core skills needed to deliver on strategic objectives in the context of a suite of changes coming across the sector. Consider:

-  How will the new regulations impact on how services are delivered?
-  How are consumer expectations changing, and how might we prepare for this?
-  How will the aged care services change?
-  What can we learn from governing bodies in other sectors?
-  How will changes in funding impact on the models of care provided?
-  What specialist skills will be required to support the reforms for example clinical knowledge, consumer advocacy, government relations?

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Tips for ensuring you have the right governing body size and composition

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

Develop a governing body “skills matrix” outlining the “must have” skills, knowledge and behaviours required of individual governing body members and executive leaders in the context of strategic outcomes that will evolve with the changing aged care landscape.

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Tips for ensuring you have the right governing body size and composi-

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STEP 1

Consider the balance of technical skills, interpersonal skills, and governance fundamentals.

- A good understanding of how the aged care sector operates
- Basic financial literacy
- A good understanding of the aged care sector regulatory and policy environment
- A good level of clinical knowledge and skills
- A good understanding of aged care funding mechanisms
- A clear understanding of the difference between governance and management roles, and the obligations and duties associated with being a governing body member

STEP 2

STEP 3



- Clinical knowledge and experience (requirement for a minimum of one member)
- Consumer advocacy
- Governance and risk
- Government relations
- Community representation
- Technology and digital systems
- Innovation
- Adaptive models of care
- Experience working in an environment of regulatory reform

- Adaptability
- Conflict resolution
- Curiosity
- Self-reflection
- Selflessness – putting the needs of consumers ahead of our own
- Agility

Top Tips for bridging skills gaps

It may not always be possible to access individuals with the requisite skills through appointment and recruitment.

→ *Read through the tips below to see some ideas on bridging skills gaps.*

Outsourcing governance functions such as legal, accounting or communication tasks to professionals.

Implementing mechanisms to support the development and training of governing body members and leaders through formal training programs aligned to a skills matrix and individual levels of skill/knowledge.

Periodically engage in horizon and environmental scanning of the aged care landscape.

Use governing body committees (including community members, consumers with specialist skills from outside the organisation and consumers) to bring in skills and support succession planning. Committees might include:

- Finance, audit and risk
- Work, health and safety
- Community engagement
- Minimisation of restraint.

There are also new requirements to establish a **quality care advisory body** and a **consumer advisory body**.

View the **Advisory Bodies** section of the Strengthening provider governance page for more information.

Regularly reviewing the skills matrix, in line with the strategic priorities. Adapt and change if needed – i.e. bring in specialists; targeted training on new developments and reform items; regular updates from management and external sources.

Utilise educational resources via the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and other reliable aged care authorities.

Outsourcing other skills where needed (short term) such as change management consultants to support changes made in line with the sector reform agenda.

Invite guest speakers to governing body meetings on a rotational basis to provide further insights into current and emerging trends.



Additional Resources

