ACCOUNTABILITY FOR QUALITY

*For the Governance Standards.*

The governing body demonstrates accountability for the quality of care provided by the organization.

**GUIDELINES**

Governing bodies are accountable for the quality of care provided by their organizations. When governing bodies are engaged in overseeing quality, their organizations have better quality performance (better care, better client outcomes, better worklife, and reduced costs).

The members of the governing body need to be aware of key quality and safety principles if they are to effectively understand, monitor, and oversee the quality performance of the organization. Knowledge gaps among the membership can be addressed through targeted recruitment for specific competencies (e.g., quality assurance, risk management, quality improvement, and safety) from health care or other sectors (e.g., education or industry) or by providing education through workshops, modules, retreats, virtual networks, or conferences.

The governing body can demonstrate a clear commitment to quality when it is a standing agenda item at each meeting. Often the governing body overestimates the quality performance of an organization, so discussions need to be supported with indicator data and feedback from clients and families. A small number of easily understood performance indicators that measure quality at the system level (i.e., ‘big-dot’ indicators) such as number of clients who died or were harmed by patient safety incidents, quality of worklife, number of complaints, and client experience results will help answer the question “are the services we provide getting better?”

Quality performance indicators need to be directly linked to strategic goals and objectives and balanced across a number of priority areas. Knowledge gained from the review of quality performance indicators can be used to set the agenda, inform strategic planning, and develop an integrated quality improvement plan. It can also be used to set quality performance objectives for senior leadership and to determine whether they have met their quality performance objectives.

**TESTS FOR COMPLIANCE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>The governing body is knowledgeable about quality and safety principles, by recruiting members with this knowledge or providing access to education.</td>
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<td>Major</td>
<td>Quality is a standing agenda item at all regular meetings of the governing body.</td>
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<td>Major</td>
<td>The key system-level indicators that will be used to monitor the quality performance of the organization are identified.</td>
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<td>Major</td>
<td>At least quarterly, the quality performance of the organization is monitored and evaluated against agreed-upon goals and objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Information about the quality performance of the organization is used to make resource allocation decisions and set priorities and expectations.</td>
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<td>Major</td>
<td>As part of their performance evaluation, senior leaders who report to the governing body (e.g., the CEO, Executive Director, Chief of Staff) are held accountable for the quality performance of the organization.</td>
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REFERENCE MATERIALS


