

Standards for members of NHS boards and Clinical Commissioning Group governing bodies in England

November 2013

All members of NHS boards and CCG governing bodies should understand and be committed to the practice of good governance and to the legal and regulatory frameworks in which they operate. As individuals they must understand both the extent and limitations of their personal responsibilities.

To justify the trust placed in me by patients, service users, and the public, I will abide by these Standards at all times when at the service of the NHS.

I understand that care, compassion and respect for others are central to quality in healthcare; and that the purpose of the NHS is to improve the health and well-being of patients and service users, supporting them to keep mentally and physically well, to get better when they are ill and, when they cannot fully recover, to stay as well as they can to the end of their lives.

I understand that I must act in the interests of patients, service users, and the community I serve, and that I must uphold the law and be fair and honest in all my dealings.

Personal behaviour

1. As a Member¹ I commit to:

The values of the NHS Constitution

Promoting equality

Promoting human rights

in the treatment of patients and service users, their families and carers, the community, colleagues and staff, and in the design and delivery of services for which I am responsible.

2. I will apply the following values in my work and relationships with others:

- **Responsibility:** I will be fully accountable for my work and the decisions that I make, for the work and decisions of the board², including delegated responsibilities, and for the staff and services for which I am responsible
- **Honesty:** I will act with honesty in all my actions, transactions, communications, behaviours and decision-making, and will resolve any conflicts arising from personal, professional or financial interests that could influence or be thought to influence my decisions as a board member
- **Openness:** I will be open about the reasoning, reasons, and processes underpinning my actions, transactions, communications, behaviours, and decision-making and about any conflicts of interest
- **Respect:** I will treat patients and service users, their families and carers, the community, colleagues and staff with dignity and respect at all times
- **Professionalism:** I will take responsibility for ensuring that I have the relevant knowledge and skills to perform as a board member and that I reflect on and identify any gaps in my knowledge and skills, and will participate constructively in appraisal of myself and others. I will adhere to any professional or other codes by which I am bound
- **Leadership:** I will lead by example in upholding and promoting these Standards, and use them to create a culture in which their values can be adopted by all
- **Integrity:** I will act consistently and fairly by applying these values in all my actions, transactions, communications, behaviours, and decision-making, and always raise concerns if I see harmful behaviour or misconduct by others.

1 The term 'Member' is used throughout this document to refer to members of NHS boards and CCG governing bodies in England.

2 The term 'board' is used throughout this document to refer collectively to NHS boards and CCG governing bodies in England.

Technical competence

3. As a Member, for myself, my organisation, and the NHS, I will seek:

Excellence in clinical care, patient safety, patient experience, and the accessibility of services

To make sound decisions individually and collectively

Long term financial stability and the best value for the benefit of patients, service users, and the community.

4. I will do this by:

- Always putting the safety of patients and service users, the quality of care, and patient experience first, and enabling colleagues to do the same
- Demonstrating the skills, competencies, and judgement necessary to fulfil my role, and engaging in training, learning, and continuing professional development
- Having a clear understanding of the business and financial aspects of my organisation's work and of the business, financial, and legal contexts in which it operates
- Making the best use of my expertise and that of my colleagues while working within the limits of my competence and knowledge
- Understanding my role and powers, the legal, regulatory, and accountability frameworks and guidance within which I operate, and the boundaries between the executive and the non-executive
- Working collaboratively and constructively with others, contributing to discussions, challenging decisions, and raising concerns effectively
- Publicly upholding all decisions taken by the board under due process for as long as I am a member of the board
- Thinking strategically and developmentally
- Confidently and competently using data and other forms of intelligence, including patient complaints and feedback, to improve the quality of care
- Understanding the health needs of the population I serve
- Reflecting on personal, board, and organisational performance, and on how my behaviour affects those around me; and supporting colleagues to do the same
- Looking for the impact of decisions on the services we and others provide, on the people who use them, and on staff
- Listening to patients and service users, their families and carers, the community, colleagues, and staff, and making sure people are involved in decisions that affect them
- Communicating clearly, consistently and honestly with patients and service users, their families and carers, the community, colleagues, and staff, and ensuring that messages have been understood.

Business practices

5. As a Member, for myself and my organisation, I will seek:

To ensure my organisation is fit to serve its patients and service users, and the community

To be fair, transparent, measured, and thorough in decision-making and in the management of public money

To be ready to be held publicly to account for my organisation's decisions and for its use of public money.

6. I will do this by:

- Declaring any personal, professional, or financial interests and ensuring that they do not interfere with my actions, transactions, communications, behaviours, or decision-making, and removing myself from decision-making when they might be perceived to do so
- Taking responsibility for ensuring that any harmful behaviour, misconduct, or systems weaknesses are addressed and learnt from, and taking action to raise any such concerns that I identify
- Ensuring that effective incident reporting, disclosure, complaints, and whistleblowing procedures are in place and in use
- Condemning any practices that could inhibit or prohibit the reporting of concerns by members of the public, staff, or board members about standards of care or conduct
- Ensuring that staff provide high quality care in a listening, supportive, learning environment
- Ensuring that patients and service users and their families have clear and accessible information about the choices available to them so that they can make their own decisions
- Respecting patients' rights to consent, privacy and confidentiality, and access to information, while enabling the legitimate sharing of information between care teams and professionals for the purposes of a patient's direct care
- Being open about the evidence, reasoning, and reasons behind decisions about budget, resource, and contract allocation
- Seeking assurance that my organisation's financial, operational, and risk management frameworks are sound, effective, and properly used, and that the values in these Standards are put into action in the design and delivery of services
- Ensuring that my organisation's contractual and commercial relationships are honest, legal, regularly monitored, and compliant with best practice in the management of public money
- Working in partnership and co-operating with local and national bodies to support the delivery of safe, high quality care
- Ensuring that my organisation's dealings are made public, unless there is a justifiable and properly documented reason for not doing so.