

COMPREHENSIVE GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT AND REDESIGN PROCESS

Sometimes called a “governance audit,” a comprehensive assessment and redesign process offers a board the opportunity to take a fresh look at its roles, structures, policies and practices, with the help and perspective of an independent governance expert. Bader & Associates has facilitated comprehensive governance assessments for community-based, faith-based and academic health systems. Assessment processes may be initiated for a variety reasons:

- Health system has evolved over 5-10 years but governance has not changed
- Check-up to ensure the board is following recommended practices for oversight, ethics, and other aspects of institutional integrity and board effectiveness
- Desire to increase strategic alignment of system and subsidiary governance in order to fully achieve the potential benefits of a system
- Need to implement or improve a health system’s shared governance model
- Need to resolve confusion over the roles and responsibilities of governance and management
- Desire to develop individual director evaluation mechanism
- Need to assess or change board size, number of boards, or meeting frequency
- Need to update the committee structure and committee charters
- Excessive time spent on routine business rather than strategy and policy work
- Need to develop a systematic approach to succession planning for board members and board leaders, without endangering relationships with long serving trustees and constituencies.

Every consulting engagement is individualized, but in general, a governance assessment process includes the following:

- A Governance Committee or task force defines aims and oversees the effort.
- We review current governance documents (reports, minutes, policies, etc.) and may observe meetings.
- We gather insights through interviews and surveys.
- We compare your governance to nationally recommended practices.
- We identify strengths, problems, and opportunities to improve.
- We educate the board in effective governance practices.
- We develop recommendations, build consensus for change, and facilitate agreement to implement recommendations for governance enhancement.

A comprehensive assessment process normally takes 4-6 months. For further information, contact Barry S. Bader at 301-340-0903 or on the web at bbader@GreatBoards.org.