

Public Hospital and Multi Purpose Service Boards 2020

Your community needs you!

Victoria's public hospitals, including multi purpose services and early parenting centres, are currently seeking non-executive directors to serve on their boards. Directors are expected to commence on 1 July for terms of up to three years.

Directors are appointed by the Minister of Health, under powers granted by the *Health Services Act 1988*.

What will I have to do?

With your fellow directors on the hospital's board, you will collectively set the "big picture" strategic goals for the organisation, and set up systems to ensure that performance against these goals, including safety and quality of care, can be monitored.

You won't be managing a whole hospital and its day to day activities! The hospital has a CEO and an executive team to do that.

As a director you will however, work alongside the CEO to ensure the organisation is operating in a safe and effective manner and achieving the goals the board has set for it. You need to ask the hard questions that test management, and speak up if things are off track. You will also need to:

- Act in good faith and in the best interests of the hospital; and
- Act with reasonable care and skill when making decisions and monitoring the hospital's activities and performance.

"I have become part of a new community of health care workers, consumers and fellow volunteers where innovation in public health is a priority and developing a broad range of external partnerships is helping us to succeed."

Janette McCabe

Rural Northwest Health Board member

Who are you looking for? Do I need special qualifications?

A board makes collective decisions, with individual directors bringing a unique skillset that will combine

to encompass all the skills and competencies that are needed on our Boards.

The **Department of Health and Human Services** has identified the following key skills for our boards:

Skills that must be on each board:

Audit and risk management	Clinical governance
Corporate governance	Financial management and accounting
Law	Patient (user) experience and consumer engagement
Registered clinician	Strategic leadership / Executive management

Other desirable skills

Asset management	Communications and stakeholder engagement
Community Services	Human resources management
ICT strategy and governance	

Some of these, such as law and registered clinician, do require formal qualifications. However most of you will have gained skills through your employment and personal experience and participation in other boards and committees.

What's in it for me?

The local public hospital is central to the community it serves. It will be a major employer. It is valued and looked to for help often when people are at their most vulnerable. Being on a hospital board is a way of genuinely improving the lives of the community and ensuring vital services are delivered safely.

As a director you will be doing far more than just contributing your time or advice. Being appointed to a public hospital board places you in a unique position of trust with a real voice in planning and identifying service needs. You will play an important role in providing leadership, direction and accountability across the organisation.

Benefits include:

- An opportunity to give back to your community, using the specific skills, talents and contacts you have;

- Networking opportunities with a range of people you may not usually meet;
- Professional development and training;
- An understanding of the health system;
- The gratitude of your local community.

How will I be supported?

Public hospital boards are supported by hospital administration, the department and **Victorian Public Sector Commission**. Frequently there will be partnerships with the regional public health service and metropolitan specialist public health services.

The Department and **Safer Care Victoria** run statewide training on corporate and clinical governance as well as providing locally based training for board members within each region (so that they don't have to travel to Melbourne). The **Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA)** also provide regional training on risk.

The **Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA)**, the peak body for Victoria's public hospitals, is available for board development and evaluation consulting services. For further information, visit www.vha.org.au.

"Fantastic board education is available from various sources and fellow board members welcome the opportunity to share their experience and insights."

Susan Lloyd FAICD

Former Kooweerup Regional Health Service Board member

How much time will it take?

Boards meet approx 11 times per year (often in the late afternoon or evening) and usually have an annual planning workshop. In addition, there are board committees which directors may also serve on. With preparation time, a director should plan to commit a minimum of 6 hours per month, and to attend at least 75 per cent of scheduled meetings.

In recognition of this commitment, board directors are remunerated. Refer to the department's publication Board remuneration - Guidance for public hospitals and multi-purpose services (www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policies-and-guidelines/board-remuneration-guidance-public-hospitals-multi-purpose-services)

Will I be covered by insurance?

All directors appointed by the Minister for Health are automatically covered for public liability, professional indemnity and personal accident insurance under a departmental insurance scheme provided by the VMIA.

How do I apply?

To apply, register with **Get on a Board** at <http://getonboard.vic.gov.au/> and then fill in the application.

For more information including how to apply, visit www.health.vic.gov.au/governance.

To learn more about your local hospital, visit www.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/public-hospitals-victoria.

Women on boards in Victoria

In 2019:

- 57% of hospital and health service directors are women (45% in 2015).
- 56% of public hospital directors in rural and regional Victoria are women (43% in 2015).
- There are more than 400 women on Victorian health boards.

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 03 9096 8566, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email Health Service Governance at board.appointments@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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Available at health.vic.gov.au/governance