

Public hospital and Multi purpose Service Boards

Ever considered serving on a public hospital board?

Our public hospitals (including multi purpose services and early parenting centres) are currently seeking (non-executive) directors with terms of office commencing from 1 July 2016.

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.

"Becoming a Board member of a small rural health service has expanded my horizons into a world of business and strategy, government and governance. More importantly 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. It is a team effort to improve community health and well-being and immensely satisfying to belong to that team."

Janette McCabe
Rural Northwest Health Board member

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.

What will I have to do?

Being a board director doesn't mean managing a whole hospital! The hospital has a CEO and an executive team to do that.

Victorian hospital boards are ultimately responsible for setting the "big picture" strategic goals for their organisation, and setting up systems to ensure that performance against these goals, including safety and quality of care, can be monitored.

You will work alongside the CEO to ensure the organisation is operating in a safe and effective manner and achieving the goals you have set for it. You need to ask the hard questions, and speak up if things are off track.

Your qualifications, experience and community connections will contribute to the governance, monitoring and strategic development of your hospital.

Requirements of directors

- Active participation in at least 75 per cent of all annual board meetings.
- To act in good faith and in the best interests of the hospital.
- To act with reasonable care and skill when making decisions and monitoring the hospital's activities and performance.

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Do I need special qualifications?

We know people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people living with disability, people living in remote areas and older people are more likely to use our public health services. These people and many others need a voice in the governance and future directions of our health system.

"I would recommend people consider applying to health service and hospital board positions as the diversity of experience, age, gender and cultural background is essential in enhancing the service and its understanding of its community. Being a board member of a regional and rural health service enables me to develop my understanding of the complexity, importance and demands of health and community service provision for and with the community. Fantastic board education is available from various sources and fellow board members welcome the opportunity to share their experience and insights."

Susan Lloyd FAICD
Kooweerup Regional Health Service Board member

Research shows us the more diverse the board, the better the outcomes. Our hospitals need strong, smart, diverse boards that represent their community. This includes appropriate representation of women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians, young Victorians, Victorians living with a disability and Victoria's culturally diverse community.

There are also some key skills that are needed for our Boards. These include an understanding of clinical governance; financial or legal qualifications; human resources; stakeholder management or communications experience. However, specific skills like these are not a requirement for each and every director.

How will I be supported?

Directors of public hospitals are not remunerated, however, all reasonable expenses incurred are able to be reimbursed. Public hospital boards are supported by the larger regional public health service and the Department of Health and Human Services. The Department runs statewide training 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 Healthcare Association can help

The Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA) is the peak body for Victoria's public hospitals and has a key role in providing leadership and support in improving our healthcare system. The VHA is available to support hospital boards and executives strengthen the quality and governance of their health service through board development and evaluation consulting services. For further information, visit www.vha.org.au.

Where do I sign up?

Applications for board positions open 30 January 2016 and close on 12 February 2016.

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.