

Item 1.5.1a

THE INSIGHT PROGRAMME

Introduction

NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts are complex organisations operating within a tightly regulated sector. As most Trusts' turnover can be measured in £100s millions (some being over £1 billion), and as staff numbers are measured in 1,000s or 10,000, membership of an NHS Board brings significant responsibility, expectation and exposure for individual Non Executive Directors (NEDs). As Lord Rose's report¹ makes clear, improving leadership across is crucial to the NHS.

Identifying and then encouraging high quality candidates to become non executives on NHS boards is an increasingly challenging task. As the pressure on boards mounts the quality threshold for candidates rises and with this comes a greater need for a diverse range of backgrounds. Perceptions of the NHS, its culture and its bureaucracy can dissuade well qualified people from considering a non executive role. These perceptions are usually formed in the absence of first-hand NHS experience.

Candidates who lack previous NED experience are generally, though not universally, considered a higher risk appointment. Across the NHS this has the effect of favouring white male directors, as Roger Kline's 'Snowy White Peaks' report² into NHS senior management identified. A lack of NED experience has become something of a barrier to aspiring non executive directors with the impact being felt more among candidates who are from a black and minority ethnic background, female or disabled. With the introduction in 2016 of Workforce Race Equality Standard reporting, the diversity of Trust boards remains in the spotlight.

The challenge of encouraging more high quality candidates, including those from diverse backgrounds, has prompted GatenbySanderson³ to develop a programme in partnership with NHS organisations which aims to remove some of these barriers. The Insight Programme is a collaboration between GatenbySanderson, sponsoring Trusts, a network of NEDs, and aspiring NED candidates (the participants).

Aims of the Programme

Increase the pool of quality candidates from under-represented areas by:

- Identifying and selecting potential non executive candidates
- Providing a central induction event to introduce the NHS
- Giving participants the opportunity to experience 'life as a non executive director' in a mix of NHS Trusts by shadowing an existing NED

¹ Lord Rose. 2015. Better leadership for tomorrow - NHS Leadership Review

² Kline, Roger. 2014. The "snowy white peaks" of the NHS: a survey of discrimination in governance and leadership and the potential impact on patient care in London and England.

³ GatenbySanderson is the leading senior executive search firm operating within the NHS

- Mentoring and developing participants' skills with the support of experienced NEDs and Chairs
- Arming participants with guidance, networks and testimonials that support future applications

For potential non executive candidates, The Insight Programme provides unprecedented access to Trust boards; the experience they gain is intended to support future applications for non executive roles in the NHS. Candidates will be exposed to two Trusts within their region, wherever possible including both hospital and community-based healthcare providers. This will provide breadth to their experience.

How The Insight Programme will work

Overview

The Programme is administered by GatenbySanderson and it is supported by NHS organisations. Once selected onto the Programme, participants are attached to two Trusts in succession, in each case under the sponsorship of the Trust Chair. The Programme has been piloted in Yorkshire and the Midlands with 12 Trusts.

Participants conclude The Insight Programme having gained experience of how the NHS's governance operates; they also gain a strong NHS NED network, and testimonials from each of their sponsor Chairs.

Chairs, existing NEDs and GatenbySanderson give their time for free.

1. Process for Identifying and Selecting Participants

Sponsoring Chairs will work with GatenbySanderson to identify the backgrounds and skill sets most in demand in their health economy.

A website has been created to support the programme and through which applications are made.

To become a participant, an application will be required – a CV and a letter that explains an individual's interest in the role of a NED within the NHS and their potential contribution. GatenbySanderson will support the identification of individuals through networks and our own research, and will welcome suggestions from Trusts.

All applicants will be invited to attend a central induction event that will allow them to be introduced to the NHS and the demands of a NED role. The event will be organised and hosted by GatenbySanderson, and supported by the Good Governance Institute. We have found it helpful for an existing Chair and NED to contribute with their views on the role of the NED in an NHS Trust.

Once applications are received, they will be sifted by GatenbySanderson and circulated to the relevant Trusts for comment. Those candidates deemed most appropriate for the Programme will be selected by the Chairs, a process that is coordinated by GatenbySanderson.

2. Sponsor Trust involvement

Sponsoring Trusts will be asked to nominate a point of contact for Programme (ideally Trust Secretary or HR Director). Trusts are asked to:

- Provide access to board committees and other relevant areas of the Trust
- Sanction access to the CEO and other key staff and board members as appropriate
- Consider the use of a 'non-disclosure' agreement
- Note that Participants are not fulfilling a formal role within the Trust. Their status is not that of an Associate Non Executive Director; they are a visitor to your organisation.

Sponsor Chairs are asked to:

- Oversee the Participant's attachment to the Trust
- Provide 1-on-1 mentoring to the Programme Participant
- Nominate a NED to 'buddy' the Participant

On the conclusion of an attachment (probably circa 4 months) write a brief report to confirm a participant's level of involvement, and to identify their areas of strength and development as a potential NED. The format of the report will be provided by GatenbySanderson.

3. Participant involvement

- Undergo a selection process: initial application by CV and a brief statement; possibly followed by a screening interview by GatenbySanderson.
- Attend an induction event.
- Commit to the time required to shadow a NHS NED and receive 1-on-1 mentoring (approximately 12 days over a 6 month period).

4. GatenbySanderson's involvement

- Manage the microsite for managing the Programme (www.theinsightprogramme.com)
- Introduce a mechanism by which participants can register interest and detail relevant skills
- Identify sponsor Trusts
- Identify and screen participants
- Run the induction event
- Liaise with sponsor Chairs and buddy NEDs to ensure smooth running
- Review Programme with sponsor Chairs
- Review Programme impact with Participants

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