AHA 2022 National Health Care Governance Survey Report

ABSTRACT

Since 2005, the American Hospital Association (AHA) has periodically surveyed the nation's hospitals and health systems to develop a comprehensive picture of the state of health care governance structures and practices in the United States. Consistent with trends in a health care field that continues to undergo substantial transformation, the AHA's 2022 National Governance Survey Report describes board structures, practices and focus areas that are continuing to evolve in the changing environment.

AHA collected survey data from 933 hospital and health system CEOs between November 2021 and March 2022. To provide a deeper longitudinal view, the survey gathered data on a variety of questions about board membership, structure and practices. Similar to the AHA's 2018 and 2014 surveys, the 2022 survey also examined findings across all respondents and by system, system subsidiary hospital and freestanding hospital boards.

New questions in the 2022 report delved into aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion as well as board practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To help boards and executives put the results into perspective, the 2022 report provides commentary on survey findings from an array of governance experts as well as sets of discussion questions to help boards reflect on survey findings in the context of their own structure and practices.

The AHA Governance report is divided into nine sections:

- **Survey Methodology**, which describes survey design and process.

- **Board Composition**, which addresses board size, member voting status, emeritus board members and outside board members.

- **Board Diversity**, which describes the make-up of boards across the dimensions of diversity including race/ethnicity, gender, age, among others.

- **Board Structure**, including term limits and term length, board compensation, board committees and board restructuring and support.

- **Board Selection**, which describes board member competencies, board member replacement and effort required to recruit board members.

- **Board Orientation and Education**, which addresses position descriptions, orientation and education practices.

- **Board Evaluation**, including assessment types and focus, use of assessment results and board member evaluation criteria.

- **Performance Oversight**, which focuses on executive oversight, accountability and organizational performance.

- **Board Culture**, which addresses board meetings, executive sessions and time commitment for board work.
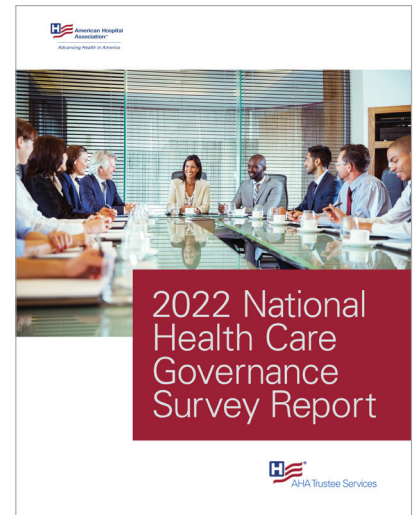
Key findings from the report

Positive trends indicated by report findings include:

- Some progress has been made in racial/ethnic diversity and gender diversity on boards.

- 91% of respondents said they are interested in identifying and engaging board candidates who represent diverse characteristics.

- Nearly 70% of all responding boards have engaged in restructuring efforts to improve their governance.

- The use of knowledge, skills and behavioral competencies to select board members has steadily increased in the past decade, considered a governance best practice.

- The use of a board portal, also considered a governance best practice, has become more prevalent.

However, there are opportunities for improvement:

- A third of respondents did not use term limits.

- Survey results indicated a growing number of older board members and a declining number of younger members.

- More than 75% of boards either did not replace members during their terms or continued to reappoint them when eligible during the past three years, resulting in low levels of board turnover.

- 61% said they do not have a board member continuing education requirement.

- More than a quarter of boards did not do any type of assessment in the past three years.

- About half of all boards do not hold the CEO accountable for diversity, equity and inclusion goals as part of their performance review.

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