



Through the Audit Committee Lens

Data Quality-Board Performance
Reporting

January 2024

Through the Audit Committee Lens: Data Quality - Board Performance Reporting

1. Introduction & Background

High quality data is important to the NHS as it helps to identify trends and patterns, draw comparisons and predict future events and outcomes. Quality data underpins effective decision making, and its use can lead to improvements in patient care and patient safety.

Performance reports should provide the Board with the information and analysis necessary to carry out its role and make effective decisions, through data which enables them to understand and challenge how the organisation is performing. This not only relies upon the quality of data collected, but also the indicators that are reported and the way in which they are presented.

The Covid pandemic placed enormous strain on the NHS, with organisations facing unprecedented pressure to tackle performance, owing to increasing demand on services and financial constraints.

Operational pressures could lead to a risk that the strive to ensure that there is a robust Performance Management Framework in place loses momentum.

During 2021, MIAA produced an Insight publication *CQC Inspections through an Audit Committee Lens* which provided information to support audit committees in reviewing their operation through the lens of the CQC's regulatory regime. This Insight included the following question:

- Does the audit committee receive and discuss information covering quality, operations and finance to support the committee in meeting the requirements of its Terms of Reference?

This latest *Through the Audit Committee Lens* briefing can be used to inform

assessment against the question posed in 2021 briefing.

2. The Audit Committee's Role and Board Performance Reporting

The Audit Committee is responsible for providing assurance to the Board on the organisation's systems and processes of internal control and should have oversight and challenge of the processes within the organisation to ensure that performance reporting meets the six key data quality domains (accuracy, completeness, consistency, timeliness, validity and uniqueness).

The following prompts will help the Audit Committee to collate evidence to provide assurance to the Board.

Quality

- Do all indicators undergo robust validation processes before being included in the organisation's Integrated Performance Report and these processes are defined and documented?
- Where relevant, is the data being reported valid according to national definitions?
- Is the data which supports performance reporting complete, with no significant gaps, and does it contain the latest validated position?
- Is data subject to a robust sign-off process prior to reporting?

- Do appropriate sub-committees have sight of performance reports before they are presented to Board, and is discussion focussed on key achievements and critical areas of performance?
- Are the figures being reported to Board consistent with those being reported to sub-committees?
- Does the data being presented fit with what you would expect to see?
- Do relevant groups/committees and the Board dedicate time on their agenda to discuss data quality issues?

- Can performance be analysed in comparison to data from similar organisations? Is benchmarking utilised as a driver to identify best practice and means of performance improvement?
- Do performance reports make use of 'Kite Marks' to indicate the level of confidence in the data quality of each indicator, and is this defined on at least an annual basis?

Design

- Are the right performance metrics in place to ensure the organisation understands how it is performing against nationally set targets and the delivery of its objectives and strategy. Do metrics define:
 - Purpose, demonstrating alignment with objectives.
 - Responsibility (e.g. owner, meeting, division)
 - Frequency of reporting in line with requirements?
- Have rules for each key operating standard been developed to support identification of early warning signs and triggers for escalation?
- Does the report provide trends and cumulative comparative data? How does performance look compared to the historic picture?

Find out more: If you have any queries or feedback on this briefing, please contact: Sarah Dowbekin, Head of R&D, QA & Professional Standards at MIAA.
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