



**Strengthening Oklahoma's Safety Net,
One Community At A Time**

Board Bulletin

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Select, Evaluate and Support the CEO

Health center boards have one employee - the CEO. The role of the CEO is to manage, direct and monitor health center operations and patient care functions in compliance with Federal and State requirements and the policies established by the board. Because the CEO translates board policy into action, the choice of the CEO is one of the board's most important responsibilities.

Selecting the CEO

The CHC Board should establish and conduct a careful search process in order to secure the best CEO for the center's development and effectiveness. Before beginning the process, the board should:

- Make a list of the center's "pluses" and "minuses" - what the center has to offer and its drawbacks
- Decide exactly what the board is looking for in a CEO (e.g., characteristics, skills, credentials) and formulate the interview process so you have a guide against which to measure each candidate
- Prepare a clear and concise position description with defined roles and responsibilities
- Provide a competitive compensation package that will attract well-qualified candidates
- Develop a written list of priorities for the incoming CEO with objectives for the first year of employment

Once the search process begins, the board should consider all qualified candidates to select the best 'fit' from candidates with a diverse range of expertise and perspectives. The *entire* board should review interview information, including references, just as the *entire* board should also select and hire the CEO.

Evaluating the CEO

The board should conduct an annual evaluation (performance review) of the CEO and should treat it with the same importance as the first time the board hired the CEO. Evaluations offer an opportunity to provide the employee with specific guidance on areas for improvement, and to discuss professional growth issues and training needs. The CEO's performance should be tied directly to the position description and overall roles and responsibilities in the areas of community relations, financial management, grants management, personnel administration and program development. Ongoing reports from the CEO to the board are recommended.

Supporting the CEO

It is important that open communication be maintained between the board and the CEO -- an essential element in a positive working relationship between the two parties. While the board should give the CEO clear guidance, the board should refrain from interfering in the daily operations of the health center and should trust the CEO's ability to manage. It is the board's responsibility to work with the CEO to identify other center staff whose skills complement those of the CEO, and identify areas for skill building.

If you have questions or want further information, please contact OPCA by phone or e-mail jgrant@okpca.org. The questions below are provided to help you review your policies/procedures for CEO selection/evaluation.

- _____ Does your board have a process in place for selection and/or evaluation of the CEO?
- _____ Do you receive monthly reports from the CEO at each board meeting?
- _____ Have you provided your CEO with the resources necessary to carry out board policy?

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