

2021 Hospital Trustee Community Accountability Education Certification Program

A Process for Strengthening Trustee Leadership and Accountability



Overview

The Nebraska Hospital Association Research and Educational Foundation (NHAREF) has developed this special, voluntary trustee education certification to make a good board member great, and a committed board member an exceptional asset.

This education certification is a process of verifying an individual trustee's initiative to improve personal health care knowledge, leadership effectiveness and compliance with a variety of governance best practices. Certification is a viable way of assuring various stakeholders such as community members, lawmakers, regulators, physicians, employees and other businesses that Nebraska's hospitals hold themselves to high standards and are accountable for their governing performance.

Certification demonstrates that Nebraska hospitals:

- Understand and embrace the need for governance accountability.
- Govern according to a standard of excellence.
- Are willing to formally certify their adherence to governance best practices.
- Are committed to care management and coordination of resources.
- Embrace community accountability and transparency.
- Structure their community benefit and outreach programs to meet identified community needs.
- Utilize data from the NHIS (Nebraska Health Information System) to identify and address areas of need especially for the uninsured and underinsured.
- Utilize performance data to identify opportunities for improvement, and monitor progress to improve quality and safety.
- Integrate local health efforts with state programs.

This certification process has been designed for hospital trustees as part of a larger effort to hold Nebraska hospitals to a higher standard of accountability. By its use, participating hospitals are demonstrating a commitment to improving performance of their boards, encouraging trustees to pursue ongoing education and educating trustees about their responsibility in serving their community. It also provides trustees with an opportunity to move beyond the basics of governance to a forward thinking, strategic understanding of the health care environment and how to move their hospital's mission and vision to a new level.

What is Trustee Education Certification?

The Hospital Trustee Education Certification Program is a process of annually verifying:

- The individual trustee's participation in and/or support of initiatives to improve personal health care knowledge and leadership effectiveness.
- Board of trustees compliance with a variety of governance best practices.
- Participation in a Governance Assessment Program (GAP) to improve individual and entire board performance, such as the AHA's Center for Healthcare Governance GAP Program.
- Engagement in a community health care needs assessment and health improvement process.

Trustee Board Certification functions at two levels

1. Individual Trustee Education Certification

This certification includes a signed attestation by the board chair, the hospital CEO and the individual trustee that he/she has:

- Completed the program's required hours of education on health care and leadership topics.
- Met or exceeded the requirements of trustees as outlined in the hospital's bylaws and other relevant documents, such as a governance self-assessment tool.

2. Hospital Certification

This certification consists of a written statement submitted to the NHA that the entire organization's board has annually adhered to specific, predefined governance standards that exemplify community accountability and outreach, responsibility for quality and safety of care to address identified needs, and the characteristics of a high-performance board.

Why certification?

Experts contend voluntary implementation of the rules imposed as a result of increased scrutiny by government agencies and communities, as well as other "good governance" principles being imposed on investor-owned facilities, will benefit not-for-profit, freestanding and government-owned facilities. By ensuring ethical, independent and conflict-of-interest-free behavior, all hospitals will be able to provide the highest quality governance while simultaneously earning and reinforcing employee and community trust.

Certification is a viable way of assuring various stakeholders that Nebraska's hospitals hold themselves to high standards and are accountable to their communities for their governing performance.

Advantages to Trustee Certification

- Increasing knowledge and skill development of health care issues.
- Moving from a reactive to a proactive approach in regard to strategic planning.
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the board and the CEO.
- Increasing awareness of financial accountability and performance.
- Improving knowledge about effective governance best practices.
- Better understanding of public policy and the importance of trustee involvement in contacting their legislators and getting involved in advocacy and grassroots at their community level.

The NHA's role

The NHA will register trustees in the program and send brochures and marketing materials of approved upcoming educational programs directly to the enrolled trustees. The NHA will also track the trustee's progress in meeting the requirements and completing the required educational components.

How do I participate?

To participate in the 2021 calendar year program, complete the Trustee Education Certification Program Enrollment Form and return it to the NHA by August 31, 2021. Forms are provided or can be downloaded from the NHA website. There are **no fees** to participate.

***After the required number education hours have been met, enrolled trustees must fill out the Trustee Education Certification Program Certification Form, along with the documentation of the programs attended (a program agenda that includes the times), and return to the NHA by Dec. 31, 2021.** You will then be mailed a certificate stating you have achieved individual trustee education certification for 2021.

Trustee Education Certification program curriculum

New and experienced hospital trustees seeking NHA trustee education certification for the first time are required to complete 12 hours of approved course work to meet the requirements for the Trustee Education Certification Program. Eight of these hours may be from a trustee orientation program completed in a previous year. Second-year certified trustees are required to complete eight hours of continuing board education. Every two years, at least four of these hours must be at a face-to-face program.

Three or more year-certified trustees must also complete 8 hours of continuing board education, but they may count committee time as part of these hours. Qualifying committee meetings include hospital committees or another organization/community committee where they are representing the hospital or serving due to their role as hospital trustee.

Approved face-to-face education

Listed below are Nebraska Hospital Association and American Hospital Association (AHA) programs that are approved by the NHA Research and Educational Foundation board of directors to meet certification requirements:

- NHA Annual Convention (varies; approx. 8-12 hours)
- NHA Spring Forum (approx. 6 hours)
- NHA Advocacy Day (approx. 3 hours)
- American College of Health Care Executives (ACHE)
- The Governance Institute™
- AHA Center for Healthcare Governance Annual Meeting
- AHA Center for Healthcare Governance Trustee Community Accountability Program
- AHA Annual Membership Meeting
- AHA Annual Leadership Summit
- NHA trustee education-related webinars

Listed below are organizations that may offer educational sessions relevant to hospital trustees during 2020. If you have a program presented by one of these organizations that you would like to submit for approval, send the program brochure with agenda to the NHA prior to attending the program. Submit information to Brian Noonan, senior director of communications & education, bnoonan@nebraskahospitals.org, fax to (402) 742-8191 or mail to 3255 Salt Creek Circle, Suite 100, Lincoln, NE 68504.

- Baird Holm Law Forum
- Governance Institute
- Heartland Health Alliance
- Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA)–Nebraska Chapter
- Mid-America Hospital Alliance (MAHA)
- Nebraska Assisted Living Association
- Nebraska Association of County Officials
- Nebraska Center for Nursing
- Nebraska Health Care Association
- Nebraska Minority Public Health Association
- Nebraska Rural Health Association
- Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce
- Prairie Health Ventures
- Public Health Association of Nebraska
- State Association of County and City Health Officials
- Internal education sessions presented at the hospital

Look for this symbol for programs that are “pre-approved” NHA events that are eligible toward trustee education certification:

NHA Board-Certified hospital

Hospitals and health systems that want to take certification to the next level can become a “NHA Board-Certified Hospital” by submitting a letter from the CEO or board chair detailing how your hospital has complied with the following yearly requirements:

- Each board member has met the requirements for the NHA trustee education certification program.
- Hospital shows a commitment to trustee education certification with annual budget for trustee education.
- Demonstrate a commitment to care management and coordination of resources.
- Give examples of community accountability and transparency.
- Give examples of community benefit and outreach programs to meet identified needs.
- Integrate local health efforts with hospital programs.
- Include a report on quality and safety at each regular board meeting.



NHA Nebraska
Hospital
Association

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

3255 Salt Creek Circle, Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68504-4778
Phone: (402) 742-8140 • Fax: (402) 742-8191
Laura J. Redoutey, FACHE, President
nebraskahospitals.org