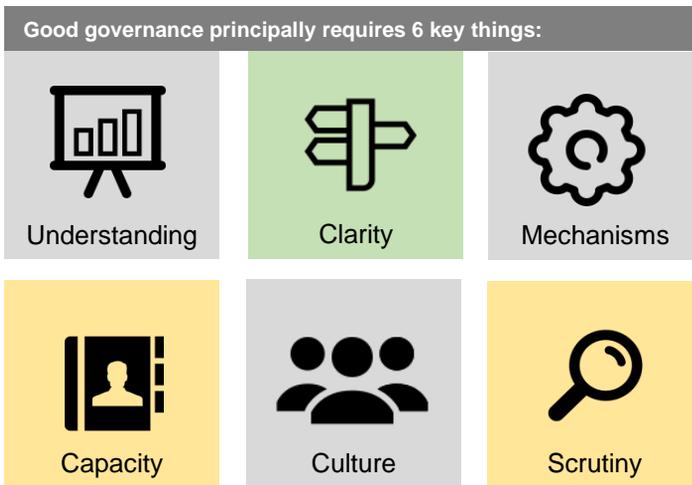


**Our *values-based* consultancy helps our clients to improve their systems and processes for governance, assurance and accountability**

**About good governance**

There is a lot of guidance about healthcare governance and this can be a term often used, but seldom applied to best effect. There are many different types of governance, and many different settings in which governance is used, for example, board governance, quality governance, project based governance, clinical governance and operational governance.

Governance is often seen in bureaucratic terms rather than as a tool for safety, effectiveness and efficiency – we firmly believe governance should be a ‘dynamic’ force which is enabling rather than a hindrance to the provision of good care. We think there are certain key ingredients involved in good governance:



- 1. an understanding of what it is you are governing** - Is it a project or are you trying to introduce a new clinical governance framework or accountability framework with your partners? All of these need a different focus and dare say it, a different skill set. You also need a deep understanding of the services and staff that are involved in the governance you are trying to address.
- 2. clarity on what you are trying to achieve** - You should always line up the governance behind a ‘plan’ whether that be a strategy and objective or an action. Outcome focus is crucial to ensuring action orientation and clarity on the goal is crucial.
- 3. clear, uncomplicated mechanisms for transacting** - The line from A to B to introduce the least possible blocks, alongside this information also needs to be intelligent. It should focus on the ‘point of learning’ or the ‘point of risk’ and these should be understood from the very top to the base.
- 4. the capacity and resource to implement change** - Vision, plans and insight are all meaningless without the capacity and resource to implement the change, whether this be sufficiently trained staff, dedicated resource or the right equipment to support new processes.
- 5. leadership and culture which is open, curious and committed** - Leaders should ensure that there is a culture which lives good governance as part of its DNA. This means that there is an open and compassionate environment for staff but most of all, that they are proud to work for an organisation which empowers them to be curious and to learn.
- 6. the openness and ability to challenge, check and scrutinise** - Developing a non-defensive culture which accepts scrutiny and always aims to learn and improve is crucial for good governance.

Where we regularly provide governance support to clients:

- **NHSI Well-led governance reviews and self-assessment support** – reduced cost, more concise and more value adding Well-led reviews.
- **CQC Well-led support** – preparing you for inspection or supporting you with adverse inspection findings.
- **Executive Team and Board development support** – we provide outstanding support to optimise executive team and Board performance.
- **Clinical and quality governance due diligence for mergers and transactions** – we have extensive experience in safely surfacing unknown risks.
- **Pathway and project based governance support** – we help your initiatives to gain traction through improved transactions.
- **Strategic support** – make sure that governance is future fit and that your strategic direction for quality is going to deliver results.
- **Partnership governance** – accountability frameworks between providers.

*“the work of this team has been transformational - Finally a consultancy that applies real-world principles to the approach”*

## Better support for organisations

We use a range of tools and techniques to support our clients with their challenges or to support them to optimise their governance. We understand the importance of ensuring that our work is undertaken without undue stress on services or existing resources and we are experienced in knowing where to look and how to understand challenges quickly. Importantly, our work is collaborative and our aim is to help teams to develop rather than critique individuals. We follow the principles set out below through all of our work:



### About Niche

Niche has 26 years' experience in flow-modelling, demand and capacity reviews and evaluation, as specialist health-economic advisors. For many years now, we have been delivering national investigations and reviews and are trusted by both NHSI and NHSE to deliver exceptional insights and recommendations for improvement around some of the most serious, high profile quality failures in the country.

With these valuable insights we have developed our governance and assurance practice to ensure that 'real-world' solutions are developed for our clients. We have worked with some of the largest healthcare providers in the country in support of their Well-led governance aims and we employ some of the most experienced subject matter experts in the country.

#### No other consultancy approaches the quality agenda in the same way as Niche.

Many others see governance, safety and efficiency as separate programmes to be addressed – we integrate our thinking to ensure that our clients are able to optimise patient safety in a cost efficient way within a framework of good governance. Importantly, we believe that governance should be a 'dynamic' force.

Best of all we are almost always the most cost-efficient option for organisations who are trying to access consultancy support whilst also offering even deeper expertise than some of the larger professional services firms.

Niche is proud to be a values driven consultancy and we always connect our work and outcomes to service-user experience.

### Case Study

This client is one of the largest, most prestigious teaching hospitals in the country, they asked for our support to unpick their governance and assurance framework which had developed over time into a dysfunctional and fragmented system. The Trust were also experiencing a number of serious patient safety issues and were failing to learn from their improvement practices.

#### What we did to support the client

We undertook a short diagnostic exercise in order to clarify the 'as-is' state of current governance systems and processes. To support this diagnostic we undertook a range of benchmarking activities with other similar sized trusts. We met with a range of stakeholders to understand some of their unique challenges and built a comprehensive 'map' of the Trust. We delivered a comprehensive and accessible report.

#### The outcomes of our work

The most important part of our review was to provide the Trust with a clear set of actionable insights. At Niche we are deeply concerned with the 'phase beyond' the review and we support our clients to develop the appropriate plans to respond to our recommendations. Our assurance-based action plans always help our clients to track and ensure that intended changes are made.



#### Kate Jury - Partner, Governance & Assurance

Kate is a governance specialist and has worked with well over 180 public and private sector organisations nationally in helping them to develop their governance and assurance systems. Kate has written national guidance on the subject of Board and quality governance and is regularly sought out for her extensive experience in this field.

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