New WittKieffer Report Offers Framework for High-Impact Healthcare Governance

The report identifies four dimensions of governance excellence and offers a framework for boards seeking to strengthen performance and long-term impact.

OAK BROOK, IL, UNITED STATES, September 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- WittKieffer, the premier executive search and leadership advisory firm serving organizations that improve quality of life, today released Creating a High-Impact Board, a new report examining the governance practices that distinguish effective healthcare boards and offering a framework for improving board performance.

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> *Andrew Chastain, President and CEO, WittKieffer*

Hospitals, health systems, and other healthcare-focused organizations face mounting strategic, financial, and operational challenges. The report argues that boards must move beyond traditional oversight and adopt a more intentional, future-focused approach to governance. Drawing on WittKieffer's decades of experience advising healthcare boards and leadership teams, Creating a High-Impact Board offers a practical framework for building the governance capacity needed to lead through both stability and change.

"Governance should never be static," said Andrew P. Chastain, President and CEO of WittKieffer and one of the report's authors. "Healthcare organizations are navigating intense financial constraints, workforce shortages, technological change, and evolving community expectations. Boards cannot rely on yesterday's approaches to meet tomorrow's challenges. High-impact boards continuously invest in their own growth and effectiveness so they are prepared to lead when critical decisions arise."

The report cites a persistent gap between boards' potential and perceived performance. It highlights that effective boards treat governance as a long-term investment rather than a compliance exercise. The authors introduce the concept of "deposits of impact," ongoing investments boards make in trust, structure, process, composition, and relationships. Over time, these investments build the governance reserves needed to respond decisively during CEO transitions, financial disruptions, strategic transformations, and other defining moments.

The report identifies four interconnected dimensions of healthcare board effectiveness and governance excellence:

- Purpose and Priorities (The Why): Establishing strategic clarity and alignment around mission, priorities, and future direction
- Structure and Process (The What): Designing governance systems, committee structures, and decision-making processes that improve effectiveness
- Composition and Succession (The Who): Building skilled, future-ready boards through intentional recruitment, development, and succession planning
- Relationships and Culture (The How): Fostering trust, engagement, transparency, and productive board-management partnerships that support effective governance

"Organizations rarely rise above the quality of their governance," said Laura Orr, Global Board Advisory Leader for WittKieffer and another of the report's authors. "The boards that create lasting value are those that strengthen their capacity before pivotal moments arrive. This report provides a framework for boards seeking to increase their impact and better serve their patients, employees, and communities."

The report concludes that high-impact board governance is not a static checklist, but an ongoing discipline. Sustainable impact emerges when purpose, process, people, and culture work together and evolve over time.

Creating a High-Impact Board is available at: https://wittkieffer.com/insights/creating-a-high-impact-board.

About WittKieffer
WittKieffer is the premier executive search and leadership advisory firm developing impactful leadership teams for organizations that improve quality of life. We work exclusively with organizations in healthcare, life sciences, and education – the “Quality of Life Ecosystem.” Leveraging our unwavering focus on this complex ecosystem, we help clients solve challenging problems through executive search, interim leadership, and leadership advisory services. We strengthen organizations that make the world better. Visit wittkieffer.com to learn more.

Paul Thomas
WittKieffer
pthomas@wittkieffer.com

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