

## Docs on Board

Hospital boards and trustees are paying special attention to their relationships with doctors. "If there is an adversarial relationship, the patient is ultimately the one who is going to suffer, punctuating the need to have a strong, positive relationship with your medical staff," says High Point Regional Hospital (HPRH) President and CEO Jeff Miller. **The hospital embarked upon a comprehensive effort to facilitate doctor trust and support by improving transparency, communication and connection with physicians.** A key challenge to such a campaign lies in a healthcare system's structure, which traditionally has the board, administrators and doctors in separate corners in a triangular shape, hospital consultants say. A 2004 survey revealed physician unhappiness in a handful of critical areas at HPRH, including hospital administration, responsiveness, communication and strategic planning. The hospital hired a corporate compliance officer and chief medical officer, Greg Taylor, to brainstorm strategies for improving relationships with medical staff. After surveying physicians about their preferred modes of communication, Taylor formed a communication "toolbox" with e-mails, faxes and CDs to ensure that every physician receives a quarterly strategic plan status report. These reports include relevant information discussed in meetings between medical staff and medical administrators.

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