

Responsible Officer and Appraisal Networks Information Sheet 25

Splitting the medical director and responsible officer functions – making it work

(v1.0, Jan 2019 – see also ROAN Information sheet 17: Appointing the medical director as responsible officer)

Recommendations:

Where a designated body nominates a responsible officer who is not the medical director it is essential to have a shared understanding and effective relationship between the two people in question. The higher level responsible officers recommend that:

1. Both medical director and responsible officer complete responsible officer training.
2. They meet regularly to discuss professional standards matters and associated organisational business. Good practice is a weekly meeting, with frequent informal contact as needed.

Background:

ROAN Information Sheet 17: *Nominating the medical director as responsible officer*, recommends combining the medical director and responsible officer roles in one person. Designated bodies should speak to the higher level responsible officer before deciding to nominate a responsible officer other than the medical director.

Medical Directors need to be aware of the statutory role the Responsible Officer has to the organisation's Board and the duties a responsible officer must carry out.

The higher level responsible officers encounter organisations where splitting the roles leads to difficulties, putting the designated body at risk, and some where it works well. It works best where the recommended steps, above, are taken. This benefits the medical director and responsible officer, and also the organisation, its doctors and patients.

See also: ROAN Information sheet 17: Appointing the medical director as responsible officer.

This information sheet is relevant to all designated bodies in England.

These information sheets are written on an ad hoc basis, on issues of relevance to responsible officers and their teams, medical appraisers and doctors.

The latest version of all ROAN Information Sheets is available online via our SharePoint site. Contact england.revalidation-pmo@nhs.net for access.