

# Cambridge Elements

Elements of Improving Quality and Safety in Healthcare

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## Governance and Leadership

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**Abstract:** Lessons from service and system failures describe the pivotal roles played by governance and leadership in delivering high-quality, safe care. This Element sets out what the terms governance and leadership mean and how thinking about them has developed over time. Using real-world examples, the authors analyse research evidence on the influence of governance and leadership on quality and safety in healthcare at different levels in the health system: macro level (what national health systems do), meso level (what organisations do), and micro level (what teams and individuals do). The authors describe behaviours that may help boards focus on improving quality and show how different leadership approaches may contribute to delivering major system change. The Element presents some critiques of governance and leadership, including some challenges that can arise and gaps in the evidence, and then draws out lessons for those seeking to strengthen governance and leadership for improvement. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

**Keywords:** leadership, governance, accountability, performance management, engagement

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Why Are Governance and Leadership Important to Healthcare Quality and Safety?	1
3	A Brief History	3
4	Approaches in Action	7
5	Critiques of Governance and Leadership	21
6	Conclusions	26
7	Further Reading	28
	Contributors	30
	References	32