MHA Excellence in Governance Fellowship

An innovative program for healthcare boards

APPLICATION FOR THE 2026-2027 CLASS

In-person retreats are augmented by 90-minute virtual sessions to give board members the opportunity to fit this valuable learning into their busy schedules.

The Governance Bar Has Been Raised ...
Can You Reach It?

Healthcare organizations face financial pressures from cuts in federal and state funding, compounded by public concern over rising healthcare costs and a lack of transparency. To address these challenges, hospital and health system leaders are focusing on strengthening board competencies and enhancing leadership to ensure sustainability and growth in key healthcare services.

Hospitals and health systems must invest in their board members to ensure the highest level of competencies. An outstanding board member needs broad knowledge, strategic thinking and an ongoing commitment to leadership excellence.

> "THE MHA EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE FELLOWSHIP HAS GIVEN MY BOARD MEMBERS AN EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER."
>
> *– Sponsoring organization CEO*

The MHA designed this rigorous and comprehensive offering to provide educational opportunities in governance leadership through a powerful combination of expert faculty, specially designed curriculum and interaction. The MHA Excellence in Governance Fellowship is highly collaborative in nature, bringing fellows together in a variety of learning formats, including retreat-like interface, virtual communications and dialogue, and peer learning circles.

The MHA believes that the CEO and board member partnership is key to any successful healthcare organization. Because we are committed to fostering this partnership, CEOs of the selected fellows receive regular communication and information to support the fellow in his or her study.

"THE MHA FELLOWSHIP HAS TAUGHT ME TO ASK VALUABLE AND MORE INSIGHTFUL QUESTIONS DURING MEETINGS, TO SEEK MOMENTS WITH MY CEO AND PRESIDENT, TO BE BRAVE IN CURIOSITY AND IN MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY THAT I AM LEADING AND SERVING."

– Graduate Fellow

The Organizational Value

- Superior board capacity through the development of advanced governance knowledge and skills.
- Board members with highly developed leadership skills.
- Board members who know how to be relevant and engaged.
- Board members who are ambassadors and champions for the organization and the chief executive.
- Connected board members with a vast network of peers to help with challenging governance issues.
- Board members who are thoughtful — not reactionary — and understand the roles and responsibilities of the board and the CEO.
- Board members with broad competencies and a mission focus that translates into greater health and bottom-line results.

Individual Value

- An exceptional experience that provides the skills and knowledge to advance the mission and vision of the organization beyond the ordinary.
- An unparalleled opportunity to exchange ideas and explore challenges and solutions with trustees and healthcare experts.
- An opportunity to study trends in governance and healthcare and their significance to hospitals and the community.
- An understanding of pragmatic and practical ways to identify and implement board actions that enhance organizational effectiveness.
- A network of governing board colleagues to call on when challenges arise.
- A limited class size for maximum interaction, learning and peer-to-peer exchange.

Who Becomes a Fellow?

Fellows come from the governing boards of hospitals, health systems and other healthcare organizations. A minimum of one year of board experience is required for consideration to become a fellow. Many organizations use the fellowship as a platform to educate board members who are advancing to the chairman role.

In-person Retreats

1

Oct. 21 & 22, 2026

Effective Governance and the Board's Role in Quality and Patient Safety

Examine the principles and leadership skills needed to be an effective board, and develop skills to adequately assess and analyze the quality of care and patient safety in the organization. Fellows will explore in depth:

- The role of the governing board member in establishing and affirming mission.
- Financial, strategic and quality oversight, including accountability for both personal and organizational performance.
- Board and management roles and how to provide oversight — not interference.
- The appropriate systems to allow board members to measure and monitor quality and patient safety.
- How to measure quality improvement using a scorecard.
- How to choose and use the appropriate indicators.

2

March 10 & 11, 2027

Clinical Expertise and Community Connectedness

Explore and discover the importance of clinical leadership in safety, health improvement, financial performance and the value of partnership to the healthcare enterprise. Fellows will gain a better understanding of:

- How consolidation, incentives for hospital-physician alignment and changing reimbursement are affecting hospital-physician relationships.
- The interdependence of physician, executive and board leadership in improving health and patient experience and reducing health disparities.
- Providing access to needed healthcare services.
- Challenges in the workforce pipeline, strategies to attract future workers and development of career pathways.
- How clinical teams could function in the future and the importance of advanced practice professionals.

3

June 22 & 23, 2027

Personal Mastery and Accelerating Change

Investigate, analyze and learn how to develop personal capacity to lead and drive change at a pace that keeps the organization relevant. Fellows will learn to:

- Continuously build leadership muscle.
- Evaluate strategies by weighing risks and rewards and the impact on the health and quality of life in their community.
- Apply their new knowledge and skills to help create accountability, consistency and reliability.
- Appreciate the importance of inquiry, influence and consensus building.
- Build capacity of skilled, diverse professionals and cultivate resilience among caregivers.

RETREAT 3 BONUS EXPERIENCES:

- Two days of cutting-edge education and top-level networking at the MHA Annual Membership Meeting.
- Graduation of the MHA Excellence in Governance fellows!

Virtual 90-Minute Sessions

With smartphones, tablets and apps changing the face of modern life, it's only natural that these technologies would change educational opportunities too. Fellows will meet in 90-minute virtual sessions in the months they are not meeting in person. Fellows must have access to a computer with high-speed internet. The fellowship virtual sessions will be broadcast on Zoom, a platform compatible with Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS and Android.

Virtual sessions allow fellows to explore critical issues and approaches to challenges. Content experts and experienced leaders will address topics like:

- Building resilience and reducing burnout.
- Integrating physical and behavioral health.
- AI, technology and cybersecurity.
- Effectively advocating for change.

Investment and Returns

Faculty

The success and value of the MHA Excellence in Governance Fellowship is embodied in the committed and highly qualified faculty involved in the program. The fellowship uses expert faculty in the areas of healthcare delivery, governance, legal issues, quality and patient safety, and leadership.

Time Investment

Fellows are expected to invest the time and energy needed to complete all of the activities planned for the fellowship. This learning experience is designed so that significant peer-to-peer learning will occur. Therefore, fellows should plan to attend all in-person and virtual meetings throughout the fellowship. Homework assignments will require a small amount of additional time.

Team Incentives for Multiple Registrations and Repeat Supporters

Many hospitals use the fellowship to develop board members and, in particular, those moving into officer positions. We think that is a rousing endorsement! Multiple board members from the same organization are invited to apply to become fellows. Tuition is discounted for more than one board member enrolling from the same organization. Your organization wins both financially and through the ongoing development of skilled board members — that's just one more solid reason to nominate board members for this outstanding program!

Tuition

Governing board member from an MHA-member organization..... $7,200 per person

Two or more board members from the same MHA-member organization..... $6,000 per person

For organizations that are not members of the MHA, contact Erin Steward at esteward@mha.org for fees.

Tuition covers the three in-person retreats, all virtual sessions and the registration fee for the 2027 MHA Annual Membership Meeting (a $1,000 value). Individual travel, lodging and other related expenses are not included in the tuition. **Tuition is due no later than Sept. 1, 2027.**

All cancellations and withdrawals must be submitted in writing. For cancellations and withdrawals on or before July 31, 2026, tuition will be returned, less a processing fee of 25%. Alternates may be accepted following review.

Dates to Remember

In-person retreats 1 and 2 will be held at the MHA headquarters, 2112 University Park Dr., Okemos, MI. If needed, hotel accommodations can be made at the Courtyard by Marriott Okemos, 3545 Meridian Crossing Drive, Okemos; or the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Okemos, 2350 Jolly Oak Rd., Okemos.

Retreat 1: Oct. 21 & 22, 2026
Retreat 2: March 10 & 11, 2027
Retreat 3: June 22 & 23, 2027

Retreat 3 and Graduation

Fellowship concludes and graduation occurs during the 2027 MHA Annual Membership Meeting at the Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island.

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– Graduate Fellow

Class XXIII/2026-2027 Application

Thank you for your interest in applying for the MHA Excellence in Governance Fellowship. If you need assistance as you complete this application, please contact Erin Steward at esteward@mha.org or (517) 282-5639.

SECTION I: APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant name: _____

Name preferred in informal setting: _____

Board on which the applicant serves: _____

_____

Hospital/healthcare organization: _____

_____

Address: _____

_____

City/ZIP: _____

Chief executive officer of the
board on which the applicant serves: _____

CEO phone: _____

CEO email: _____

Name of CEO assistant: _____

CEO assistant email: _____

Tuition invoice should be sent to: _____

Applicant Personal Data

Professional (work) title: _____

Employer: _____

Please use my ☐ personal or ☐ work address: _____

_____

_____

Best phone number to contact: _____

Best email to contact: _____
(Please use the email address where you will want all fellowship correspondence to be delivered.)

Spouse/partner name: (if applicable) _____

COMPLETED APPLICATION INFORMATION

A completed application includes:
1. Your answers to sections I - II of this application.
2. A signed letter of support from your hospital chief executive officer.

SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

Please submit all completed applications and required materials by **June 26, 2026,** to:
MHA Excellence in Governance Fellowship
Michigan Health & Hospital Association
2112 University Park Dr., Okemos, MI 48864

Applications can also be **emailed** to Erin Steward at esteward@mha.org.

SECTION II: EXPERIENCE

1. Please submit a current resume or curriculum vitae.
2. Board experience
   Number of years on current hospital/healthcare organization board: _____
   Hospital/healthcare organization board committees on which you have served or are now serving:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____
3. Other civic/government board activities

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

SECTION III: LETTER OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

You are required to submit a letter of support from the healthcare organization's chief executive officer indicating organizational support and commitment (time and resources) for your participation in the fellowship program.

The **MHA Health Foundation** is the nonprofit section of the Michigan Health & Hospital Association, established to support hospitals and their community partners in improving the health of individuals and communities throughout Michigan.

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MHA
Michigan Health &
Hospital Association
2112 University Park Drive
Okemos, MI 48864

The Fellowship program energizes, excites, engages and inspires!

"THE FELLOWSHIP HELPED ME EFFECTIVELY ASK QUESTIONS DURING A BOARD MEETING, UNDERSTAND MY PERSONAL SKILLS, AND DEVELOPED ME AS A LEADER. THIS FELLOWSHIP CHANGED HOW I OPERATE AND FUNCTION AS A LEADER AND AS AN INDIVIDUAL. "

– Graduate Fellow

MHA
Excellence in Governance
Fellowship

For more information on the fellowship, contact Erin Steward at esteward@mha.org or
2112 University Park Dr. • Okemos, MI 48864 • (517) 282-5639

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