

# Recommendations



## Practical approach toolkit: Empowering self-managing teams

These recommendations draw on BelleVie Care's experience and wider sector best practice. They focus on how governance – or, as the organisation prefers to call it, 'stewardship' – can balance autonomy with accountability, enabling self-managing teams while maintaining quality and compliance. Each recommendation includes practical actions you can take, and we suggest referring to the relevant 'building block' for deeper context. The insights combine strategic, operational and cultural learning, and can be adapted by other providers seeking to strengthen governance in adult social care.

Governance is not a checklist of structures but a fundamental cultural shift from hierarchical control to shared stewardship of purpose. Before making any changes, understand your current governance culture, including how decisions are made, where power sits today and how well your structures support your purpose. These recommendations offer inspiration – not a blueprint – and should be adapted to your context. The shift to a decentralised model of self-managing teams is not about creating a flat structure where everyone is equally powerful, but about ensuring everyone is fully empowered and able to reach their potential.

At the end of this section, you'll find resources to support implementation.



Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Develop governance that enables stewardship rather than control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shift from traditional hierarchy to models that empower distributed leadership and shared responsibility.</li> <li>■ Position leaders as facilitators who protect purpose, enable others and create space for reflection and learning.</li> <li>■ Treat mistakes as opportunities for learning rather than for assigning blame.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Assess your current governance culture and what needs to change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reflect with colleagues on whether current structures help or hinder autonomy, wellbeing and purpose.</li> <li>■ Identify legacy habits (e.g. command-and-control tendencies) that may resurface during periods of pressure.</li> <li>■ Question whether all management roles are needed or do they exist in place of trusting the care workforce?</li> <li>■ Use this insight to shape a governance approach that fits your organisation rather than replicating another model.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Position the board as stewards who protect purpose, offer support and provide external perspective without compromising autonomy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Engage board members in problem solving and advocacy without undermining operational autonomy.</li> <li>■ Ensure board expertise covers finance, stewardship, governance and social impact to strengthen resilience during growth.</li> <li>■ Build trust through transparency and shared purpose, enabling constructive challenge without eroding empowerment.</li> <li>■ Encourage board members to meet care workers and learn about the wonderful, professional work they do.</li> </ul>			
<b>Action</b>			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use iterative planning cycles to remain responsive to changing needs and external pressures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Consider implementing quarterly objectives and key results (OKRs) to align goals with organisational vision while allowing flexibility.</li> <li>■ Encourage collaborative workshops for major decisions, involving front line voices where relevant.</li> <li>■ Support people to write their own job descriptions with input from those they work with, and use collaborative methods to assign responsibilities and maintain clarity. This supports distributed decision making for operational improvements.</li> </ul>			
<b>Action</b>			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Track progress using metrics that empower teams and reflect both financial and social impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Combine financial indicators (revenue, cash flow) with quality-of-life outcomes using tools like the Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT).</li> <li>■ Use Net Promoter Score (NPS) to benchmark family satisfaction against wider service standards.</li> <li>■ Co-design productivity measures with teams to ensure relevance and ownership.</li> </ul>			

Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Support leaders to adapt to non-hierarchical models and resist reverting to control under pressure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create peer support and reflective spaces for leaders to share challenges and solutions.</li> <li>■ Recognise that sustaining empowerment requires discipline and cultural reinforcement at every level.</li> <li>■ Recognise that within a servant leadership philosophy, leaders exist solely to serve others.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Ensure governance reflects organisational values and workforce voice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Explore models such as employee beneficiary, or ownership, trusts to give colleagues formal representation in decision-making.</li> <li>■ Maintain advisory networks for specialist input (e.g. clinical care, HR) alongside formal board structures.</li> <li>■ Align governance innovations with long-term sustainability and regulatory compliance.</li> </ul>			

**Action**

## Further support

- [Manager induction standards: Regulation and governance](#) – clarify governance roles and responsibilities to ensure compliance and accountability.
- [Manager induction standards: Making decisions](#) – support inclusive, evidence-based decision-making across teams.
- [Nominated individuals' handbook: a practical guide](#) – provide clarity on leadership responsibilities and regulatory expectations.