



CLINICAL GOVERNANCE FOR NURSES AND MIDWIVES

Clinical governance ensures that everyone – from frontline clinicians to managers and members of governing bodies, such as boards – is accountable to patients and the community for assuring the delivery of health services that are safe, effective, high quality and continuously improving.

Resources

[National Model Clinical Governance Framework](#)

[National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards](#)

[Standards of practice](#)

- [Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia](#)
- [Code of Professional Conduct for Midwives in Australia](#)

State and territory, and organisational policies and procedures relating to conduct, risk, safety and open disclosure

National Model Clinical Governance Framework

Clinical governance is a shared responsibility to ensure that all patients receive the best care. Nurses, midwives and managers therefore share the common goal of optimising patient care. We share accountability for the care we deliver, the equitable use of resources and building a positive workplace culture.

Nurses and midwives are ideally placed and skilled to optimise patient care while minimising risks to patients, and to work within systems and with patients, carers and families to improve patient safety as a routine part of their role.

Optimising patient care requires that all nurses and midwives actively take part in patient safety processes, including:

- Participating in hospital processes that support patient safety
- Reporting incidents and near misses when they occur
- Using and improving systems within the organisation to support broad organisational and community priorities
- Following through with open disclosure to patients and families
- Analysing and addressing adverse events, including through morbidity and mortality meetings
- Appropriately escalating patient safety issues to managers.

Optimising patient care also requires active participation in quality improvement, including:

- Contributing to a multidisciplinary team to ensure that patients receive comprehensive care
- Partnering with patients, consumers, clinicians and managers to ensure that patients receive appropriate information and care

- Ensuring supervision of junior members of the workforce who provide patient care
- Taking part in regular performance appraisal
- Regularly reviewing patients' clinical outcomes to identify opportunities for improvement in delivering appropriate care
- Identifying and acting on opportunities for improvement.

Boards, managers and clinicians are together responsible for the provision of safe, high-quality care, and therefore all share a common goal: to optimise patient care.

To do this well, all nurses and midwives should maintain a dialogue with managers about issues that affect patient care. Managers equally have an obligation to manage identified risks, and support clinicians to meet their professional responsibilities that enable them to optimise patient care.

Fulfilling a role in clinical governance aligns with the obligations of nurses and midwives under their code of conduct.

Roles and responsibilities of nurses and midwives for clinical governance

Governance, leadership and culture

Actively take part in the development of an organisational culture that enables and prioritises patient safety and quality.

Actively communicate the profession's commitment to the delivery of safe, high-quality health care.

Model professional conduct that is consistent with a commitment to safety and quality at all times.

Embrace opportunities to learn about safety and quality theory and systems.

Embrace opportunities to take part in the management of clinical services.

Encourage, mentor and guide colleagues in the delivery of safe, high-quality care.

Take part in all aspects of the development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of governance processes.

Patient safety and quality systems

Contribute to the design of systems for the delivery of safe, high-quality clinical care.

Provide clinical care within the parameters of these systems.

Communicate with clinicians internally and in other health service organisations to support good clinical outcomes.

Ensure contemporary knowledge about safe system design.

Maintain vigilance for opportunities to improve systems.

Ensure that identified opportunities for improvement are raised and reported appropriately.

Educate junior clinicians about the importance of working within organisational systems for the delivery of clinical care.

Take part in the design and implementation of systems in the health service organisation for:

- Quality improvement and measurement
- Risk management
- Incident management
- Open disclosure
- Feedback and complaints management.

Comply with professional regulatory requirements and codes of conduct.

Clinical performance and effectiveness

Maintain personal professional skills, competence and performance.

Contribute to relevant organisational policies and procedures.

Comply with professional regulatory requirements and codes of conduct.

Monitor personal clinical performance.

Supervise, and manage the performance of, junior clinicians.

Ensure that specific performance concerns are reported appropriately.

Work constructively in clinical teams.

Take part in the design and implementation of the organisation's systems for:

- Credentialing and defining scope of clinical practice
- Clinical education and training
- Performance monitoring and management
- Clinical, and safety and quality education and training.

Safe environment for the delivery of care

Contribute to the planning and development of activities relating to the environment of the health service organisation.

Provide clinical care within the parameters of this environment.

Maintain vigilance for opportunities to improve the environment.

Ensure that identified opportunities for improvement are raised and reported appropriately.

Partnering with consumers

Understand the evidence on consumer engagement, and its contribution to healthcare safety and quality.

Understand how health literacy might affect the way a consumer gains access to, understands and uses health information.

Support patients to have access to, and use, high-quality, easy-to-understand information about health care.

Support patients to share decision-making about their own health care, to the extent that they choose.

Work with consumer representative groups to ensure that systems of care are designed to aid consumer engagement in decision-making.

Assist access of consumers to their own health information, as well as complaints and feedback systems.

Implement and fully take part in the organisation's open disclosure policy.

