



CLINICAL GOVERNANCE FOR MANAGERS AND CLINICIAN MANAGERS

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](#)

[Australian Open Disclosure Framework](#)

National Model Clinical Governance Framework

Clinical governance is a shared responsibility to ensure that all patients receive the best care. Managers and clinicians 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.

Optimising patient care requires that all managers actively take part in patient safety processes, including:

- Developing a policy framework that promotes patient safety
- Establishing structures and processes that support identifying, reporting and reducing patient safety risks
- Supporting open disclosure to patients and families
- Responding to patient safety concerns that have been identified, including through morbidity and mortality meetings
- Providing feedback to clinicians on actions taken to reduce identified patient safety risks
- Adjusting structures and processes to reduce patient safety risks.

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

- Setting up structures and processes that support multi-disciplinary comprehensive care
- Partnering with patients, consumers and clinicians to ensure that patients receive appropriate care
- Ensuring supervision of junior members of the workforce who provide patient care
- Using clinical outcome data to inform regular performance appraisal processes for clinicians

- Reviewing, analysing and monitoring actions arising from clinical outcome data and quality performance measures
- Identifying and acting on opportunities for improvement.

Managers have a responsibility to routinely inform the board or governing body about patterns and trends, and the resulting actions taken, and to escalate emerging issues, when required.

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, managers should maintain a dialogue with clinicians about issues that affect patient care, balancing the needs of individual patients with the needs of the broader community. Managers should also support clinicians to meet their professional responsibilities that enable them to optimise patient care.

Health service organisations deal with the business of patient care, and need to balance clinical risk management with the financial impact of decision-making. Clinical governance is as important as corporate governance, and the same rigour needs to be applied to clinical governance processes as to corporate governance processes.

Roles and responsibilities of managers and clinician managers for clinical governance

Governance, leadership and culture

Actively communicate the commitment of the health service organisation to the delivery of safe, high-quality care.

Create opportunities for the workforce to receive education in safety and quality theory and systems.

Model the safety and quality values of the health service organisation in all aspects of management.

Support clinicians who embrace clinical leadership roles.

Support the development of business plans, strategic plans and organisational policies and procedures that are relevant to safety and quality.

Patient safety and quality systems

Coordinate, and oversee the design of, systems for the delivery of clinical care.

Engage with clinicians on all system design issues.

Allocate appropriate resources to implement well-designed systems of care.

Respond to identified concerns about the design of systems.

Periodically, systematically review the design of systems for safety and quality.

Set up an operational policy and procedure framework, with the active engagement of clinicians.

Ensure availability of data and information to clinicians to support quality assurance and improvement.

Implement and resource effective systems of management of:

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

Systematically monitor performance across all safety and quality systems, and report the outcomes to the health service organisation and governing body.

Integrate safety and quality into organisational plans, policies and procedures.

Clinical performance and effectiveness

Maintain personal professional skills, competence and performance.

Set up an operational policy and procedure framework.

Implement and resource effective systems for management of:

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

Respond in a timely and effective way to indications of clinical underperformance.

Systematically monitor safety and quality performance across all clinical areas.

Report to the health service organisation and governing body.

Partnering with consumers

Understand the barriers for patients and consumers to understand and use health services, and develop strategies to improve the health literacy environment of the health service organisation.

Ensure that patients and consumers have access to high-quality, easy-to-understand information about health care.

Set up organisational systems to enable consumers to fully engage in:

- Planning, and sharing decisions about, their own health care
- Planning, design, review and evaluation of clinical systems, and systems for safety and quality of care.

Collect and review patient experience information as part of quality improvement processes.

Create opportunities for consumer involvement in relevant operational committees.

If appropriate, set up specific consumer advisory committees.

