

FACT SHEET 7: GOVERNING BODY ATTESTATION STATEMENT

AHSSQA Scheme

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) is responsible under the National Health Reform Act 2011 for the formulation of standards relating to health care safety and quality matters and for formulating and coordinating the Australian Health Service Safety and Quality Accreditation (AHSSQA) Scheme (the Scheme).

The Commission has undertaken a comprehensive review of the Scheme and produced a series of fact sheets to outline the changes to accreditation processes for health service organisations.

NSQHS Standards (second edition)

The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards were developed by the Commission in collaboration with the Australian Government, states and territories, the private sector, clinical experts, patients and carers. The primary aims of the NSQHS Standards are to protect the public from harm and to improve the quality of health service provision. They provide a quality-assurance mechanism that tests whether relevant systems are in place to ensure expected standards of safety and quality are met.

Health service organisations will transition to the second edition of the NSQHS Standards from January 2019.

From January 2019, health service organisations will be required to submit an annual attestation statement to their accrediting agency

Attesting is a formal process. It involves authorised officers of a health service organisation attesting to practice. This is in the form of a written affirmation.

This process will increase awareness by a governing body of its accountability for safety and quality and clinical governance processes as set out within the NSQHS Standards.

The attestation statement relates to Actions 1.1 and 1.2 of the NSQHS Standards (2nd ed.), which explicitly set out key responsibilities for governing bodies.

Process for submitting attestation statements

Health service organisations are required to:

- Identify their governing body. This is the body or individual(s) within the organisation with ultimate responsibility and accountability for decision-making about safety and quality
- Nominate a member of the governing body to sign the attestation statement
- Specify who will counter-sign the attestation statement. This can be a group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or facility CEO. Where it is not feasible for a CEO to sign, an alternative officer may be nominated by the governing body and their position title specified on the attestation statement.
- Submit an attestation statement annually to their accrediting agency between 1 July and 30 September each year.
- Submit an attestation statement on the organisation's letter head.

Submissions should be made using the Commission template. A template attestation statement is at **Attachment 1**. A template attestation statement, with instructions is at **Attachment 2**.

Where a governing body is responsible for more than one health service organisation, a single attestation statement may be submitted along with a schedule listing the name and address of each health service organisation to be covered by the statement; or an attestation statement may be submitted for each health service organisation, or group of health services.

Organisations where Action 1.2 is not applicable

Some health service organisations can apply for Action 1.2 to be considered not applicable, see Advisory AS18/01. Where not applicable status is granted, point 2 of the attestation statement template can be crossed through and signed by the office holder responsible for the attestation.

Accrediting agencies are to review all attestation statement received which have point 2 crossed through to ensure that 'not applicable' status has been granted for that organisation.

Assessment of Actions 1.1 and 1.2

For health service organisations that have submitted an attestation statement, accrediting agencies are required to review evidence of compliance with Actions 1.1 and 1.2 at assessments before rating these actions.

For health service organisations that have not submitted all of the required attestation statements, or have submitted incomplete statements, accrediting agencies will:

- Rate Actions 1.1 and 1.2 as *not met* at assessment
- Notify the Commission in October each year of all health service organisations that have not submitted, or have submitted an incomplete attestation statement.

Requirements for transition in 2019

Transition arrangements will be in place to support health service organisation undertaking assessment to the second edition of the NSQHS Standards in 2019.

In 2019, particularly for organisations that are being assessed early in the year, Actions 1.1 and 1.2 can be assessed on site without an attestation statement being submitted.

Attestation statements should be submitted by all health service organisations by September 2019, but may be submitted this year only up until December 2019. Transition arrangements will cease on 31 December 2019.

Submitting an attestation statement

From January 2020, attestation statements must be submitted between July and September of that year and accrediting agencies are to notify the Commission if statements have not been received by October of that year.

Each statement covers the previous 12 month period. The date on the statement should correspond to the 1 July to 30 September period of the submission. All attestation statements must be signed off within 90 days of the date of Submission.

Requirements for health service organisations changing accrediting agency

At the time of transfer between accrediting agencies, a health service organisation is required to provide their receiving agency with a copy of the attestation statement submitted to their former agency in the previous year.

Requirements for health service organisations undergoing interim accreditation

Health service organisations undergoing interim accreditation are not required to submit an attestation statement. The first attestation statement that will be required is prior to the first assessment to the NSQHS Standards (second edition). Subsequent submissions will then be submitted annually during the usual reporting period of July to September.

Further information

The NSQHS Standards (2nd ed.) and supporting resources are available at nationalstandards.safetyandquality.gov.au

More information on the Commission is available from www.safetyandquality.gov.au

The Advice Centre provides support on implementing the NSQHS Standards for health service organisations, assessors and accrediting agencies.

EMAIL: accreditation@safetyandquality.gov.au

PHONE: 1800 304 056

Attachment 1

Affix your organisational logo or letter head here

This attestation statement
is made by

Name of officeholder/member of Governing Body

Holding the position/office
on the Governing Body

Title of officeholder/member of Governing Body

for and on behalf of the
governing body titled

Governing body's title (the Governing Body)

Health service organisation name (the Organisation)

1. The Governing Body has fully complied with, and acquitted, any Actions in the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards, or parts thereof, relating to the responsibilities of governing bodies generally for Governance, Leadership and Culture. In particular I attest that during the past 12 months the Governing Body:
 - a. has provided leadership to develop a culture of safety and quality improvement within the Organisation, and has satisfied itself that such a culture exists within the Organisation
 - b. has provided leadership to ensure partnering by the Organisation with patients, carers and consumers
 - c. has set priorities and strategic directions for safe and high-quality clinical care, and ensured that these are communicated effectively to the Organisation's workforce and the community
 - d. has endorsed the Organisation's current clinical governance framework
 - e. has ensured that roles and responsibilities for safety and quality in health care provided for and on behalf of the Organisation, or within its facilities and/or services, are clearly defined for the Governing Body and workforce, including management and clinicians

- f. has monitored the action taken as a result of analyses of clinical incidents occurring within the Organisation's facilities and/or services
 - g. has routinely and regularly reviewed reports relating to, and monitored the Organisation's progress on, safety and quality performance in health care.
- 2. The Governing Body has, ensured that the Organisation's safety and quality priorities address the specific health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 3. I have the full authority of the Governing Body to make this statement.
- 4. All other members of the Governing Body support the making of this attestation statement on its behalf *(delete if there is only one member/director of the governing body)*.

I understand and acknowledge, for and on behalf of the Governing Body, that:

- submission of this attestation statement is a pre-requisite to accreditation of the Organisation using NSQHS Standards under the Scheme
- specific Actions in the NSQHS Standards concerning Governance, Leadership and Culture will be further reviewed at any onsite accreditation visit/s.

Signed

Position

Date

Counter signed by the Health Service Organisation's Chief Executive Officer (however titled)

Signed

Position

Name

Date

Affix your organisational logo or letter head here

Template with instructions: Governing Body's Attestation Statement under the AHSSQA Scheme

This attestation statement
is made by

Name of officeholder/member of Governing Body

Holding the position/office
on the Governing Body

Title of officeholder/member of Governing Body

for and on behalf of the
governing body titled

Governing body's title (the Governing Body)

Health service organisation name (the Organisation)

*Note: Where a governing body is responsible for more than one health service organisation, a schedule of all organisations to be covered by this attestation statement may be attached and this section annotated: "**See Schedule attached**".*

1. The Governing Body has fully complied with, and acquitted, any Actions in the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards, or parts thereof, relating to the responsibilities of governing bodies generally for Governance, Leadership and Culture. In particular I attest that during the past 12 months the Governing Body:
 - a. has provided leadership to develop a culture of safety and quality improvement within the Organisation, and has satisfied itself that such a culture exists within the Organisation
 - b. has provided leadership to ensure partnering by the Organisation with patients, carers and consumers

- c. has set priorities and strategic directions for safe and high-quality clinical care, and ensured that these are communicated effectively to the Organisation's workforce and the community
- d. has endorsed the Organisation's current clinical governance framework
- e. has ensured that roles and responsibilities for safety and quality in health care provided for and on behalf of the Organisation, or within its facilities and/or services, are clearly defined for the Governing Body and workforce, including management and clinicians
- f. has monitored the action taken as a result of analyses of clinical incidents occurring within the Organisation's facilities and/or services
- g. has routinely and regularly reviewed reports relating to, and monitored the Organisation's progress on, safety and quality performance in health care.

2. The Governing Body has, ensured that the Organisation's safety and quality priorities address the specific health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Note: Some organisations can apply for Action 1.2 to be considered not applicable, see Advisory AS18/01. Where not applicable status is granted for Action 1.2, point 2 above can be crossed through and initialled by the office holder who signs this attestation statement.

3. I have the full authority of the Governing Body to make this statement.

4. All other members of the Governing Body support the making of this attestation statement on its behalf.

Note: Where there is only one member / director of the governing body. Point 4 above can be crossed through and initialled by the office holder who signs this attestation statement.

I understand and acknowledge, for and on behalf of the Governing Body, that:

- submission of this attestation statement is a pre-requisite to accreditation of the Organisation using NSQHS Standards under the Scheme
- specific Actions in the NSQHS Standards concerning Governance, Leadership and Culture will be further reviewed at any onsite accreditation visit/s.

Signed

Position

Date

Counter signed by the Health Service Organisation’s Chief Executive Officer (however titled)

Note: The signature can be a group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or facility CEO. This should be specified under “Position title”. Obtaining a CEO signature may not always be feasible so an alternative officer may be nominated by the Governing Body and their position title specified in the signature block.

Signed

Position

Name

Date

Schedule of health service organisations covered by this attestation statement

Name of the health service organisation	Address

Note: Add as many lines as necessary to cover all of the facilities covered by this attestation statement.