

KEY ACTIONS
for health service
organisations

Clinical governance for allied health practitioners

National model clinical governance framework

Clinical governance is a shared responsibility to ensure that all patients receive the best care. Good clinical governance allows the community and health service organisations to be confident that systems are in place to deliver safe and high-quality health care, and continuously improve services.

Allied health practitioners including registered and non-registered professional groups, assistants, technicians, students and managers, work in multidisciplinary teams to optimise patient care by identifying and managing risks to patients, and working within safety and quality systems with patients, carers and families.

Optimising patient care requires allied health practitioners to actively take part in safety and quality processes that support patient safety, including:

1. Participating in safety and quality processes that support good patient care
2. Reporting incidents and near misses when they occur
3. Analysing and addressing adverse events, including through peer review and clinical audit processes
4. Following through with open disclosure to patients and families
5. Appropriately escalating patient safety issues to managers.

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

- Contributing to multidisciplinary teams to ensure that patients receive comprehensive care
- Partnering with patients, consumers, other allied health practitioners or clinicians and managers ensures that patients receive appropriate information and care

- Supervising junior members of the workforce who provide patient care
- Taking part in regular performance appraisals
- Participating in regular reviews of patients' clinical outcomes to improve the delivery of care
- Engaging in critical reflection
- Identifying opportunities and taking action to improve care.

Members of an organisation's governing body, its managers and allied health practitioners and other clinicians are together responsible for ensuring effective clinical governance in an organisation. Collectively, the governing body and the workforce share the common goal of optimising patient care.

To meet this goal, allied health practitioners should work together with members of the work force to identify and manage risks, and to meet their professional responsibilities related to optimising patient care.

Fulfilling a role in clinical governance aligns with the obligations of allied health practitioners under their codes of conduct.

Everyone – from frontline allied health practitioners to managers and members of governing bodies, such as boards – are accountable to patients and the community for ensuring an effective clinical governance framework is in place. This is important to deliver health services that are safe, effective, high quality and continuously improving.



Roles and responsibilities of allied health practitioners in providing 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.
- Comply with relevant organisational policies and procedures when visiting and providing care.
- Provide health care within the parameters of these systems.
- Communicate with allied health practitioners and other clinicians internally and in other health service organisations to support good patient outcomes.
- Ensure contemporary knowledge about safe system design.
- Be alert 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
 - Complying 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 performance and engage in critical reflection.
- Supervise and manage the performance of junior clinicians.
- Ensure that specific performance concerns are reported appropriately.
- Work constructively in clinical teams.
- Contribute to an environment of cultural safety and responsiveness.
- Take part in the design and implementation of the organisations' systems for:
 - Acknowledging and monitoring standards including through relationships with professional peers
 - Defining scope of clinical practice
 - Clinical education and training
 - Safety and quality education and training
 - Using evidence-based practice
 - Performance monitoring and management
 - Clinical review.

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.
- Be alert to and act on opportunities to improve the safety of the environment.
- Ensure that identified opportunities for improvement are raised and reported.



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.

Resources

[National Model Clinical Governance Framework](#)

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

[Standards of practice](#) for the relevant allied health profession

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

Questions?

For more information, please visit:

safetyandquality.gov.au/standards/nsqhs-standards

You can also email the NSQHS Standards Advice Centre at: accreditation@safetyandquality.gov.au or call 1800 304 056.

