

Clinical governance

For managers and clinician managers in cancer care

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.

National Model Clinical Governance Framework

Clinical governance is a shared responsibility to ensure all patients receive the best care. Managers, clinician and other members of the treating team share the common goal of optimising patient care. Managers share accountability for the care delivered, the equitable use of resources and building a positive workplace culture.

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

- Reviewing the existing policy framework that promotes patient safety
- Reviewing structures and processes to identify, report and reduce patient safety risks
- Supporting open disclosure with patients, carers 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 patient safety risks and improve patient outcomes.

Optimising patient care requires the active participation of managers in cancer care for quality improvement, including:

- Setting up or reviewing structures and processes that support multidisciplinary comprehensive care
- Partnering with patients, consumers and clinicians to ensure that patients receive timely appropriate, safe care and information on their care

- Ensuring supervision of junior members of the workforce who provide patient care
- Using clinical outcome data or clinical audits to inform quality improvement activities and regular performance appraisal processes for clinicians
- Regularly reviewing, analysing and monitoring actions arising from clinical outcome data and quality performance measures
- Identifying and acting on opportunities for improvement
- Facilitating the escalation and investigation of any reported concerns, ensuring that they are appropriately addressed within a reasonable timeframe
- Ensuring robust processes for informed consent are used, including informed financial consent.

Managers in cancer care have a responsibility to routinely inform the board or governing body about the performance of the cancer service, patterns and trends, and improvement actions taken, and to escalate emerging safety and quality issues when required.

Managers should have regular discussion with clinicians about issues that affect patient care, balancing the needs of individual patients with the needs of other patients and the community. Managers should also support clinicians to meet their professional responsibilities for optimising patient care.

Health service organisations deal with the business of patient care, and need to balance clinical risk management and 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 in cancer care for clinical governance

1. Governance, leadership and culture

- a. Actively communicate the commitment of the health service organisation to the delivery of safe, evidence-based, high-quality care.
- b. Create opportunities for the workforce to receive education in safety and quality theory and systems.
- c. Model the safety and quality values of the health service organisation in all aspects of management.
- d. Support clinician leaders to form effective partnerships across clinical teams.
- e. Support the development of business plans, strategic plans and organisational policies and procedures that are relevant to safety and quality.
- f. Promote a reporting culture to identify concerns early and systems to resolve issues in partnership with clinicians.

2. Patient safety and quality systems

- a. Coordinate, and oversee the design of, systems for the delivery of clinical care.
- b. Engage with clinicians on all system design issues.
- c. Allocate appropriate resources to implement well-designed systems of care.
- d. Respond to identified concerns about the design of systems.
- e. Periodically and systematically review the design of systems for safety and quality.
- f. Set up an operational policy and procedure framework with the active engagement of clinicians.
- g. Ensure the availability of data and information to clinicians to support quality assurance and improvement.
- h. Implement and resource effective systems of management of:
 - Quality improvement and measurement
 - Risk management
 - Incident management
 - Open disclosure
 - Feedback and complaints management.
- i. Systematically monitor performance across all safety and quality systems, and report the outcomes to the health service organisation and governing body.
- j. Integrate safety and quality into organisational plans, policies and procedures.

3. Clinical performance and effectiveness

- a. Maintain personal professional skills, competence and performance.
- b. Set up an operational policy and procedure framework.
- c. 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.
- d. Respond in a timely and effective way to indications of clinical underperformance and unwarranted variation.
- e. Systematically monitor safety and quality performance across all clinical areas.
- f. Report to the health service organisation and governing body.

4. Safe environment for the delivery of care

- a. Coordinate and oversee planning and development of the health service environment to support safety and quality.
- b. Engage with clinicians on the clinical environment of the health service organisation.
- c. Allocate appropriate resources to ensure that the environment supports safety and quality.
- d. Respond to concerns raised about the environment.

5. Partnering with consumers

- a. Identify and remove barriers to patients and consumers use of the health services.
- b. Develop strategies to support effective partnerships with consumers using the service.
- c. Ensure that patients and consumers have access to high-quality, easy-to-understand information about health care.
- d. 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.
- e. Collect and review patient experience information as part of quality improvement processes.
- f. Create opportunities for consumer involvement in majority of the operational committees.

Resources

[National Model Clinical Governance Framework](#)
[NSQHS Standards User Guide for Medication Management in Cancer Care](#)

[Clinical governance framework monitoring tool: A self-audit for medication management in cancer care](#)