
Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Enable the workforce to deliver holistic, person-centred aged care that aligns with the individual needs, goals, and preferences of clients.
- Promote clients' physical and mental well-being by providing safe, high-quality clinical care and services.
- Integrate clinical governance into relevant aspects of Local Guardians' operations, including care delivery, risk management, workforce development, and policies.
- Strengthen risk management practices to proactively identify and address clinical risks; thereby, enhancing care outcomes.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement, transparency, and adherence to safety, and quality standards.

Scope

As detailed in the Clinical Governance Framework (AD11.1), all employees are responsible for adhering to this policy and contributing to the effective implementation of clinical governance and client care assurance practices. The Local Guardians governing body and management are accountable for approving and integrating this policy into operational systems, workforce training, and performance evaluations, risk management activities, quality audits, and the development of improvement initiatives.

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all Local Guardians employees, including clinical and non-clinical staff, management, and governing body members. Local Guardians is committed to:

- Upholding the Aged Care Quality Standards by fostering a safe, accountable, and learning-focused culture.
- Delivering client-centred care in line with the Quality of Care Principles 2014, respecting individual goals, preferences, and the dignity of risk.
- Actively engaging clients and their representatives in care planning and decision-making.
- Implementing systems and processes that support risk management, quality improvement, and transparent reporting.
- Ensuring all employees understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining clinical governance and client care assurance.

The following core elements guide this policy:

- A. Effective governance, leadership and culture: demonstrating a common organisational language in safety, quality and clinical governance, fostering an accountable and learning culture that is blame-free.

- B. Client partnerships: client involvement that places clients and their loved ones at the centre of care being provided.
- C. Organisational systems: systems in place that promote client safety and quality improvement where opportunities for improvement are identified, and system improvements are made to increase safety and quality of care.
- D. Monitoring and reporting: effective risk management systems in place with a commitment to the delivery of safe, excellent quality care with agreements, contracts, plans including care plans and budgets, risk and quality assurance monitoring systems, strategies and policies supporting safety and quality care.
- E. Effective workforce: managers, clinical and non-clinical staff are trained and educated, building expertise about the clinical impact of decision making and systems in place that encourage professional development.
- F. Communication and relationships: robust open disclosure processes in place. Effective documentation systems in place to provide good record keeping. Documentation and communication procedures between health practitioners, the workforce, clients and representatives are supported through effective structured processes, tools and templates that supports clinical quality and safety.

Definitions

Care and Services	Face to face support, direct care and wellbeing support, 1:1 communication and other communication, care management, direct and remote care, and wellbeing monitoring
Clinical Care	Health care provided by doctors, nurses, pharmacists, allied health professionals and other regulated health practitioners, in the context of best practice prevention, treatment, and management of illness, as well as the maintenance of psychosocial, mental, and physical wellbeing.
Clinical Governance	Clinical governance is an integrated set of leadership behaviours, policies, procedures, responsibilities, relationships, planning, monitoring and improvement mechanisms that are implemented to support safe, quality clinical care, and good clinical outcomes for each client.
Clinical Risk Management	The processes concerned with improving the quality and safety of care services, first by identifying the likelihood and consequence of client risks, and then acting to prevent and control the risk.
Consequence	The outcome of an event.
Continuous Improvement	Continuous improvement is a systematic, ongoing effort to improve care and services. It considers the needs of people receiving aged care and may involve them in improvement activities. To be effective, continuous improvement must be: • a provider's central focus • understood at all levels • accepted by all management and staff.
Dignity of Risk	Care recipients have the right to live the life they choose, even if their choices involve some risk. This is part of person-centred care. Client independence, dignity and choice are endorsed by the Aged Care Quality Standards.

Incident Management System	An incident management system comprises the policies, procedures and processes that support the identification, management and resolution of incidents that can occur during the course of delivering care and services to clients.
Likelihood	The probability or frequency of an event.
Mitigation	Measures taken to reduce the harmful effects of hazards that directly cause a risk or potential risk, or to manage harmful incidents that have already occurred.
Risk	Anything that has the potential to impact the overriding goal of a home care package in keeping a client safe and well living at home for as long as possible.
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of identifying and analysing risk, including risk evaluation.
Risk Management	Applying Risk Management policies, procedures, and practices to establish the context of risk by way of assessing, identifying, treating, monitoring and evaluating risk.
Person-centred Approach	Person-centred approach to care is widely recognised as a foundation to safe, high-quality health care. It is care that respects and responds to the preferences, needs, and values of clients.

References

- <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/clinical-governance/national-model-clinical-governance-framework>
- [Quality of Care Principles 2014 https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2014L00830/latest/text](https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2014L00830/latest/text)

Version number	Summary of change	Approved by	Effective date
1	Creation of policy to outline the scope of assuring client care and clinical governance	Board	9-Dec-2024