

VQC update

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Message from the Chair



Term two of the Victorian Quality Council is now well underway. Three meetings, including a Strategic Planning workshop, have been held and the Minister has

endorsed the 2005 – 2008 Strategic Plan, which will determine the direction of the Council over the next three years. As with term one Council, second term Council members are not representative of organisations, but come to the table as individuals with skills and commitment relevant to Council's role in assisting health services to improve safety and quality.

As the Ministerial Advisory Council on safety and quality in Victoria, Council's responsibility in its second term will be to continue to work strategically and practically to assist health services to improve the safety and quality of Victorian healthcare. The Strategic Plan builds on the significant body of work achieved in term one as well as introducing new areas that reflect advances in the rapidly changing safety & quality arena. The focus on working collaboratively with health services, consumers and other stakeholders will continue, and the work of Council will be applied to a broader range of healthcare. Some projects will focus on

safety and quality issues that occur in a specific type of health service, due to the high risk or high rate of occurrence of the issue. The majority of projects, although piloted in a particular setting, will achieve outcomes that are applicable across a number of settings and, where possible, Council will attempt to pursue work in areas that result in gains for as wide a range of health services as possible.

The potential scope of Council's work is enormous and it is important that clear boundaries be set to ensure resources and attention are focused on activities that best assist health services to improve safety and quality in key leverage areas. With this in mind, the 2005-2008 Strategic Plan was developed through a multi-stage process:

- a broad environmental scan of national and international safety and quality research and initiatives, to ensure VQC builds on a solid foundation of work in areas where there is evidence that change leads to improvement;
- a two day strategic planning workshop involving Council members, where past work and future directions were discussed and areas of priority identified;
- further refinement of the plan via follow up planning sessions, informed by key national and international initiatives, to ensure that the plan addresses areas of need that are feasible to address.

Six strategic goals have been developed across two key result areas:

- (1) Enhance Leadership in Healthcare Quality and Safety; and
- (2) Reduce Harm in Healthcare.

Details on goals, objectives and proposed actions can be found in the strategic plan and on the VQC website (see over).

The plan will be distributed widely to health services, professional groups and the community. Council will seek active involvement of all stakeholders in its implementation and evaluation.

Strategic goals will be pursued through Council Working Groups comprising Council members and co-opted associate members where additional expertise and knowledge are required. Council will continue to report on progress through meeting minutes, regular project progress updates, and completed tools, all available on the VQC website.

I look forward to working with all of you to continue to improve the safety and quality of our healthcare services.

Christine Kilpatrick
Chair, VQC

Education News

The VQC Education Working Group has conducted a targeted request for quotation for the development of a safety and quality short course curriculum. The short course will be developed

by The University of Sydney Centre for Innovation in Professional Health Education, and will comprise the curriculum development and piloting of a short course over the second half

of 2005. The course will ultimately be made widely available to enable a broad range of staff to access basic safety and quality education.

Project Progress: Review 2002–2005, Preview 2005–2008

VQC activities 2002 - 2005 are driven by the five key strategic areas described in the VQC term one strategic plan:

1. Establish a safety and quality framework
2. Provide improved access to better data
3. Involve consumers in improving safety and quality
4. Educate on safety and quality
5. Respond to known problems and risks

1. Establish a **safety and quality improvement framework**. The four supplementary papers to the VQC safety and quality framework are now completed: The Healthcare Board's role in clinical governance; Enabling the consumer role in clinical governance; Developing the clinical leadership role in clinical governance; and Leading clinical governance in health services. These have been distributed to all health services and further copies are available from VQC or can be downloaded from the website. The issue of leadership in safety and quality will continue to be addressed in Goal 1 of the 2005–2008 strategic plan.

An evaluation of the safety and quality framework with quality managers has been conducted and the results are available on the VQC website. Thank you to all Quality Managers who responded, this information is invaluable in assisting us to review and build on the work of term one as we move into Council's second term.

2. Improving Access to Better Data.

This will continue to play a central role in Council's activities with Council committing to developing a recommended minimum dataset of quality and safety performance indicators in the first year of its 2005–2008 strategic plan.

3. Involving Consumers also continues to be a key area of activity for Council with this being covered in 2005 – 2008 by Goal 1.

The Cochrane Communicating with Consumers project is nearing completion and a report highlighting the lessons learned from applying best evidence to consumer and provider communication issues in health services will be available shortly.

4. Educate on safety and quality.

The development of the safety and quality short course will continue as part of term two's work under Goal 1.

5. Responding to known areas of risk in hospitals:

Infection control

The hand hygiene improvement pilot is nearing completion with a report due in September. Council will consider the next steps for this area once that report and the associated evaluation of the project has been received. Workshops will be held in the second half of 2005 to disseminate lessons learned from the pilot.

Falls Prevention

The statewide education on the VQC Falls prevention guidelines pack has been completed and an in-depth evaluation of the implementation of the guidelines is currently in process.

Pressure Ulcers

PUPPS 2 is complete and the statewide and individual health service reports have been distributed to all health services. Every health service in Victoria participated, and the Department of Human Services will now mainstream this as a departmental program area with the next PUPPS survey to be run in November-December 2005. The mattress replacement program is nearing completion with 5000 pressure relieving mattresses distributed across the state.

Appropriateness of Care

A report on case studies and a literature review related to adverse events due to delays in communicating test results has been distributed to all health services. It is likely that this area will be further developed and progressed under Goal 5 of the term two strategic plan.

Acute Pain Management

The development of the acute pain management toolkit is nearing completion and a report on this project will be available shortly.

The next edition of the newsletter will reflect the new strategic goal and activities of Council as well as reporting on ongoing activities from term one.

We welcome your comments and queries. Further information on any of the above projects is available from the Victorian Quality Council.