

Suggested content for clinical handover policy

Who	All staff participating in clinical handover and those with responsibility for the delivery of patient care.
Definition	<p><i>Clinical handover refers to the effective transfer of information from one health care provider to another when:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>a patient has a change of location of care, and / or</i> • <i>when the care of a patient shifts from one provider to another (either individual staff member or institution).</i> <p style="text-align: right;">Adapted from The Australian Council for Safety and Quality in Health Care – May 2005</p>
Expected outcomes	<p>That clinical handover is performed in an effective manner, with appropriate communication of information, delivering safe patient care.</p> <p>That (<i>insert name of health service</i>) recognises the importance of clinical handover in safe patient care, providing support, monitoring effectiveness and responding to outcomes.</p>
Why	Effective clinical handover is vital in maintaining patient safety. Evidence for this can be found in Sentinel Event Program annual reports, outcomes of health service inquiries, Coroners' recommendations and international literature.
Policy	<p>Health service XX:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the importance of clinical handover in the delivery of safe, quality care. • Supports a culture where the importance of clinical handover is acknowledged and high expectations are clearly specified by individual units. • Recognises that clinical handover is an essential component of clinical care and will improve practice by providing relevant resources and training. • Includes clinical handover as an integral part of orientation/induction for relevant staff. • Has established Key Performance Indicators that are evaluated, reported to the Board Quality on a (<i>insert time frame</i>) basis, and responded to as necessary. • Includes clinical handover as a responsibility for all clinical staff, including senior staff, in position descriptions. • Uses a minimum data set as the basis for all clinical handover situations. • Has developed a process for documentation of clinical handover. This should be XXXXXXXX. • Recognises the importance of multidisciplinary participation in clinical

	<p>handover and encourages this approach wherever feasible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises that clinical handover requires effective communication, including an opportunity to clarify information. For this reason health service XX provides funded handover time for both medical and nursing staff.
Responsibility	<p><i>Governance</i></p> <p>Board and Chief Executive (on behalf of XX health service) are responsible for ensuring that an effective clinical handover system is established and maintained.</p> <p><i>Operational</i></p> <p>Unit heads/Department managers (<i>insert appropriate terms</i>) are responsible for ensuring that clinical handover is conducted in accordance with XX health service clinical handover policy and protocol.</p> <p>Clinical staff are responsible for complying with the standards established by XX health service and supported by unit heads.</p>
Links	<p>Refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Handover Protocol Organisational Risk Management Policy Attachment – Clinical Handover template http://www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/