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| Accreditation policy for Victorian publicly funded health services organisations  National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (Second edition) |

Department of Health

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# Purpose

The purpose of the Accreditation policy for *Victorian publicly funded health services* is to outline roles, responsibilities and regulatory requirements in relation to the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards, in Victoria.

The Accreditation policy for Victorian publicly funded health services applies (but is not limited to) to health services as defined in the Health Services Act 1988, Mental Health Act 2014, and Bush Nursing Centres. This includes:

• public health services – including metropolitan, regional, subregional, local and small rural and multi-purpose services (this includes specialist and denominational services)

• clinical mental health services provided by public health services (including Forensicare)

• public dental housed within health or community health services (including Dental Health Services Victoria)

• Bush Nursing Centres

The accreditation regulatory requirements for private health services are not covered in this document. Regulation of private health service accreditation is addressed in the Risk Based Regulatory Framework: Private Hospitals 2017. For more information on accreditation requirements for private health facilities visit https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/private-hospitals/professional-standards.

# The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards

The NSQHS Standards were developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) in consultation with states and territory health departments, health service organisations, consumers and the private sector.

The primary aim of the NSQHS Standards is to protect the public from harm and improve the quality of healthcare. The NSQHS Standards provide a nationally consistent expectation of the minimum level of care that should be provided by health service organisations and the systems that are needed to deliver such care.

The NSQHS Standards were released in 2011 and have been used to assess quality and safety systems in health service organisations since January 2013. The NSQHS Standards have been revised and the second edition was launched in late 2017 and assessment to this revised edition will commence in January 2019. The second edition of the NSQHS Standards embeds person-centred care and addresses the needs of people who may be a greater risk of harm. This includes people with mental health issues.

There are eight NSQHS Standards, including a new standard, Comprehensive Care. There are two overarching standards, Clinical Governance and Partnering with Consumers, and the actions in the NSQHS Standards are designed to be implemented as a whole. Embedded across the standards are a number of actions that will particularly support improvements in the delivery of health care to people with mental health issues.

Accreditation to the NSQHS Standards comes under the Australian Health Service Safety and Quality Accreditation Scheme (the AHSSQA Scheme). Under the AHSSQA Scheme, assessment against the NSQHS Standards is conducted by accrediting agencies approved by the Commission.

The department is the jurisdictional regulator for Victoria and is responsible for ensuring the accreditation of all eligible health services organisations in Victoria.

For more information on the NSQHS Standards and the AHSSQA Scheme, please visit the Commission’s website at <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/assessment-to-the-nsqhs-standards/>.

# Policy context

Accreditation is part of the regulatory framework that informs government and the community that systems are present in health services to protect the public from harm and improve the quality of health service provision. The department’s Policy and Funding Guidelines, outlines accreditation to the NSQHS Standards as a condition of funding for all health service organisations including small rural health services (SRHS), clinical mental health services, and public dental, housed within community health services.

For public health services in Victoria, including clinical mental health services, accreditation to the NSQHS Standards is also a key performance indicator in the health services’ Statements of Priorities, and therefore a requirement under the Health Services Act 1988 (or the Mental Health Act 2014 for Forensicare).2 Compliance by health services with this policy and the accreditation key performance indicator is monitored in accordance with the department’s Performance Monitoring Framework.

The Department of Health and Human Services (the department) has reviewed the analysis undertaken of the differences between the national mental health standards and the second edition of the NSQHS standards and concluded that the revised NSQHS standards include critical mental health indicators and will substantively meet the mental health standards.

From 1 January 2019, Victorian mental health services that meet the criteria as stated in Appendix 1: Accreditation regulatory business rules, must be accredited only against the second edition national standards.

Public dental services are funded by the department through Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV). Accreditation to the NSQHS Standards is a requirement in all service agreements between DHSV and dental services.

Accreditation to the NSQHS Standards will be included as a requirement in all service agreements between the department and Bush Nursing Centres, as Bush Nursing Centres transition to the NSQHS Standards accreditation from 1 January 2019.

The Accreditation policy for Victorian public health service organisations 2019 and associated appendices, consolidate and revise the previous Victorian policy and replaces the following documents:

• Accreditation Regulatory role, A guide for Department of Health Staff, 2017

• Accreditation Performance Monitoring and Regulatory Approach Business Rules, 2017

• Accreditation Regulatory Response: Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction Action Plan, 2017

2 *The Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health is established under the Mental Health Act 2014 operating under the name Forensicare. Forensicare is governed by a board of directors pursuant to provisions in the Mental Health Act 2014*

# Roles and responsibilities

In Victoria, **health service organisations** within the scope of this policy, are responsible for:

• ensuring that they are fully compliant with the NSQHS Standards

• raising safety and quality concerns with the department in a timely manner

• ensuring that assessments and reassessments are undertaken in accordance with the AHSSQA Scheme, and with the processes and regulatory requirements outlined in this policy

• responding to recommendations from assessments within timeframes specified under the AHSSQA Scheme

• adhering to the reporting and notification requirements and timeframes outlined in Appendix 3 of this policy, and as determined under the AHSSQA Scheme

• complying with increased performance monitoring and intervention from the department, including Office of the Chief Psychiatrist and Safer Care Victoria in the event of any non-compliance with the NSQHS Standards, the AHSSQA Scheme, or this policy, including possible action under the Health Services Act 1988, Mental health Act 2014 or terms of the Funding and Service Agreement (for Bush Nursing Centres)

In Victoria, **accrediting agencies** are responsible for:

• assessing health service organisations against the NSQHS Standards an conferring accreditation

• ensuring that assessments and reassessments are undertaken in accordance with the AHSSQA Scheme and with the processes and regulatory requirements outlined in this policy

• adhering to the reporting and notification requirements and timeframes outlined in Appendix 3 of this policy, and as determined under the AHSSQA Scheme.

In Victoria, the **Department of Health and Human Services** is responsible for:

• monitoring the accreditation status of health service organisations within the scope of this policy

• overseeing health service organisations to achieve and maintain compliance against the NSQHS Standards and to address and resolve issues, concerns, recommendations and instances of non-compliance

• monitoring compliance with the NSQHS Standards, the AHSSQA Scheme and the processes and regulatory requirements outlined in this policy

• responding to instances of non-compliance with the NSQHS Standards, the AHSSQA Scheme, or this policy, with increased performance monitoring and intervention, and including possible action under the Health Services Act 1988, Mental Health Act 2014 or terms of the Funding and Service Agreement (for Bush Nursing Centres)

• liaising with the Commission in relation to regulatory functions under the AHSSQA Scheme.

In Victoria, **Dental Health Services Victoria** is responsible for:

• supporting health service organisations to develop, implement, maintain and improve safety and quality systems in line with the NSQHS Standards for dental services

• supporting the department’s regulatory functions, performance monitoring and intervention within health service organisations’ dental services.

In Victoria, the **Office of the Chief Psychiatrist** is responsible for:

• supporting clinical mental health services to develop, implement, maintain and improve safety and quality systems in line with the NSQHS Standards

• monitoring and analysing system-wide performance, recommendations and instances of non-compliance against the NSQHS Standards, to identify themes and develop and lead improvement strategies for quality and safety systems in clinical health service services

• supporting the department’s regulatory functions, performance monitoring and intervention as required

• Developing and assisting mental health service providers to comply with standards, guidelines and practice directions.

• Providing clinical leadership through developing guidelines and undertaking clinical reviews, audits and investigations.

• liaising with the Commission, in relation to development of the NSQHS standards.

In Victoria, **Safer Care Victoria** is responsible for:

• supporting health service organisations to develop, implement, maintain and improve safety and quality systems in line with the NSQHS Standards

• monitoring and analysing system-wide performance, recommendations and instances of non-compliance against the NSQHS Standards, to identify themes and develop and lead improvement strategies for quality and safety systems in health service organisations

• supporting the department’s regulatory functions, performance monitoring and intervention as required

• liaising with the Commission in relation to the development and implementation of the NSQHS Standards, associated tools and resources disseminating best practice examples, NSQHS Standards updates, tools and resources.