Directive: compliance is mandatory
Clinical Handover Policy Directive

Objective file number: 2010 - 07073
Policy developed by: Safety and Quality, Public Health and Clinical Systems
Approved at Portfolio Executive on: 20 October 2010
Next review due: 31 December 2018

Summary
The Clinical Handover Policy Directive is in place to achieve timely, relevant, consistent and agreed processes to support clinical handover across the whole spectrum of health care providers. This policy will support patient safety by improving clinical handover, provide a consistent approach to handover across SA Health, ensure health services are accountable for improving handover practices and promote clinical handover within and across health.

Keywords
clinical handover, handover, team, ISBAR, patient safety, Directive

Policy history
Is this a new policy? N
Does this policy amend or update an existing policy? Y
Does this policy replace an existing policy? N
If so, which policies?

Applies to
All SA Health Portfolio
All Department for Health and Ageing Divisions
All Health Networks

Staff impact
All Staff

PDS reference
D0211

Version control and change history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date from</th>
<th>Date to</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>12/10/10</td>
<td>16/09/12</td>
<td>Original version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>17/09/12</td>
<td>06/06/13</td>
<td>Update to reflect the restructures within the portfolio and are not material in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>07/06/13</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Review and format changes only.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Policy statement

1.1 SA Health believes that effective clinical handover is an essential team process and a critical component for the delivery of safe quality health care to the patient across the whole spectrum of health care providers.

1.2 SA Health is committed to ensuring clinical handover processes are timely, relevant, structured and contribute to safe patient care. Clinical handover formalises the transfer of accountability and responsibility of some or all aspects of patient care.

1.3 SA Health is committed to implementing systems that ensure effective, consistent and agreed processes to support clinical handover. Key elements include:

   1.3.1 ensuring health services demonstrate the inclusion of patients and carers as central contributors or key participants in clinical handover processes as related to their care
   1.3.2 ensuring that health services demonstrate accurate timely clinical handover processes free from external disturbances, utilising an appropriate environment and systems designed to deliver continuous safe quality clinical care
   1.3.3 ensuring health services provide organisational governance and leadership for the process, implementation and evaluation of effective team based clinical handover
   1.3.4 SA Health services seek the engagement of all health service providers with whom they relate, in the establishment and improvement of processes to support effective clinical handover for patients across health care settings.

2 Scope

All SA Health employees or persons who provide health services on behalf of SA Health must adhere to this policy.

This policy is strongly recommended to all non public health providers interacting with SA Health.

3 Definition

3.1 Clinical handover: is the communication process that enables the “transfer of professional responsibility and accountability for some or all aspects of care for a patient, or group of patients, to another person or professional group on a temporary or permanent basis.” This is an all encompassing statement intended to include all interactions about the care of an individual patient.

3.2 ISBAR: A mnemonic aid for structuring clinical communication where “I” is Identify (establish the name and role of each person giving and receiving information and the correct identity of the patients), “S” is the clinical Situation, “B” is the Background, “A” is the clinical Assessment (including observations), and “R” is the Recommendation or proposed plan including identification of risks.

4 Policy rationale

4.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

   4.1.1 enhance patient safety by improving clinical handover
   4.1.2 ensure a consistent approach to clinical handover across SA Health
   4.1.3 ensure that health service organisations are accountable to improve and support clinical handover
   4.1.4 ensure processes and practices are in place to enable continuity of care to occur, within and across health services
   4.1.5 promote clinical handover across the entire health sector.
5 Standards

5.1 With the implementation of this policy, SA Health will ensure the following standards are met:

5.1.1 evidence of organisational leadership and governance around implementing, monitoring and evaluating the clinical handover process

5.1.2 demonstration of participation in clinical handover by all relevant staff

5.1.3 demonstration of the opportunity for patients and carers to participate in clinical handover

5.1.4 demonstration of a documented procedure/protocol for clinical handover by all health service organisations and departments, that includes handover timing, environment, participants and process

5.1.5 In addition to clinician to clinician handover, shift to shift clinical handover is a mandatory event

5.1.6 clinical handover processes and procedures are supported by appropriate documentation (clinical notes, x-rays etc).

5.1.7 the polices of confidentiality, privacy, patient identification and medical records should be appropriately applied to clinical handover (as listed in item 8 of this Policy)

5.1.8 clinical handover should occur in an optimal environment and wherever possible clinical handover processes should not be interrupted

5.1.9 tools used to facilitate clinical handover must demonstrate that they comply with this policy

5.1.10 there must be an acknowledged transfer of clinical accountability and responsibility

5.1.11 the standard mnemonic (ISBAR) should be used in a manner that suits the clinical context

5.1.12 an accessible training program on clinical handover must be provided to SA Health clinical care staff and staff that manage and provide support to the care process. Wherever possible, it should be available to external health care providers that provide patient care services for or have patients transferred to or from SA Health

5.1.13 the fundamentals of effective teamwork and communication are demonstrated in the process of clinical handover.

6 Responsibilities

6.1 Chief Executive – SA Health is responsible for:

6.1.1 ensuring the management of clinical handover across SA Health is in accordance with this policy.

6.2 Director of Safety and Quality – Public Health and Clinical Systems will:

6.2.1 establish, maintain and periodically review the effectiveness of the SA Health Clinical Handover Policy and Guidelines.

6.2.2 monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Clinical Handover Policy and Guideline

6.2.3 review reports provided by the health services about clinical handover issues, conducting trend analysis and developing state-wide strategies for system improvement

6.2.4 disseminate lessons learned from the management of clinical handover issues

6.2.5 provide advice to health services in response to specific queries about clinical handover

6.2.6 provide ongoing SA Health teamwork and communication training.
6.3 Local Health Network and SAAS Chief Executive Officers will:

6.3.1 ensure the health services within their area of control have systems in place to make sure that effective and consistent agreed processes for clinical handover are applied whenever accountability and responsibility for patient care is transferred

6.3.2 ensure sufficient resources are in place to enable effective clinical handover, staff training in clinical handover, and on-going evaluation of the effectiveness of clinical handover to occur

6.3.3 clearly articulate organisational and individual accountabilities for clinical handover

6.3.4 ensure that incidents relating to clinical handover are reported, investigated and outcomes actioned in accordance with the SA Health Incident Management Policy and Guideline

6.3.5 ensure the day-to-day responsibility for establishing and monitoring the implementation of this policy is delegated to the relevant senior managers.

6.4 General Managers, Executive Directors, Directors, Heads of Service/Departments and other Senior Managers will:

6.4.1 provide organisational governance and leadership in relation to effective clinical handover

6.4.2 develop, implement and monitor local processes that support employees and other persons providing health services on behalf of SA Health, to achieve effective clinical handover. These processes should include training in clinical handover

6.4.3 demonstrate systems are in place for standardised clinical handover process

6.4.4 establish mechanisms to include patients and carers in clinical handover processes related to their care

6.4.5 demonstrate local processes for the review of clinical handover in collaboration with clinicians, patients and carers

6.4.6 ensure that any learnings gained from a review of clinical handover processes are fully implemented and monitored.

6.5 All SA Health employees will:

6.5.1 adhere to the principles and aims of this policy and ensure they operate in accordance with its associated guideline

6.5.2 ensure their timely participation in the handover process

6.5.3 contribute to a culture which values clinical handover

6.5.4 ensure that any incidents relating to clinical handover are reported via the appropriate process

6.5.5 acknowledge that there is a duty of care for all health care providers to provide effective clinical handover.

7 Relevant legislation

> Health Care Act 2008
> Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
> State Records Act 1997
> Carer Recognition Act 2005
8 Relevant SA Health policies, procedures and guidelines

> SA Health A Framework for active partnership with consumers and the community (ref no D0306)
> SA Health Guide for engaging with consumers and the community (ref no G0126)
> SA Public Hospitals Retention Disposal Schedule (2000/0012)
> Carer Participation – Position Statement (ref no G0085)
> SA Patient ID Policy and Guideline (ref no D0228/G0103)
> Guide to maintaining confidentiality in the public health system (2008, Department of Health)
> Medical Record Documentation and Data Capture Standards (August 2000, Department of Human Services)
> Code of Fair Information Practice (ref no D0067)
> SA Health Open Disclosure Policy (ref no D0247)
> SA Health Charter of Health and Community Services Rights Policy

9 Other relevant documentation

> Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare September 2012, National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards
> AS2828 Australian Standard for Paper-based Record
> Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights
> Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, 2009 The Ossie Guide to Clinical Handover Improvement, Sydney
> Australian Healthcare & Hospitals Association 2009 Issues Paper: Clinical Handover: system change, leadership and principles
> Charter of Health and Community Services Rights (the HCSCC Charter)

References

