

OFFICIAL

SA Health

Policy

Policy Governance

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Government
of South Australia

SA Health

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1. Name of policy

Policy Governance Policy.

2. Policy statement

This policy mandates the approach to be taken in the development and management of system-wide policies and guidelines across SA Health, via the application of the [SA Health Policy Framework](#) (the Policy Framework). The Policy Framework provides a structured and consistent approach to ensure the development and implementation of appropriate, high quality system-wide policies and guidelines, supported by effective governance and accountability. Compliance with this policy is mandatory.

3. Applicability

This policy applies to all employees and contracted staff of SA Health; that is all employees and contracted staff of the Department for Health and Wellbeing, Local Health Networks (including state-wide services aligned with those Networks¹) and SA Ambulance Service.

Wellbeing SA and the Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health have also agreed to adopt this policy, as relevant and applicable.

In this document any reference to 'SA Health' includes Attached Offices to the extent that they continue to exist and adopt this policy.

4. Policy principles

SA Health's approach to the development and management of policies and guidelines is underpinned by the following principles:

- > We avoid policy proliferation and the development of policy when more appropriate mechanisms exist to achieve an outcome.
- > We take a principles-based approach to the development of policy that sets out the fundamental obligations to be met and focuses on the policy outcome rather than prescribing how the policy must be met.
- > We develop policy expressed in clear and concise language to support ease of understanding, strengthen compliance and support local implementation across SA Health.
- > We establish transparent and accountable governance to support decision-making in the development and management of policy, which strikes a balance between rigour and agility.
- > We structure and organise policies in a way that makes them easy to find and accessible for local adoption and implementation across SA Health.
- > We underpin our approach to policy development with appropriate system-wide engagement and consultation to foster policy that balances centralised direction and local decision-making.

5. Policy requirements

- > All SA Health employees and contractors:

¹ 'Statewide services' includes Statewide Clinical Support Services, Prison Health, SA Dental Service, BreastScreen SA and any other state-wide services that fall under the governance of the Local Health Networks

- Must comply with the [SA Health Policy Framework](#) in relation to the development and management of SA Health policies and guidelines.
- Must comply with all SA Health policies which apply to them, that are approved and released in accordance with the Policy Framework.
- Are encouraged to adapt or adopt guidelines approved and released in connection with an approved SA Health policy.
- > **All Department for Health and Wellbeing and Women's and Children's Health Network employees and contractors involved in the development and management of SA Health policies and guidelines² must:**
 - Use official approved SA Health templates to create SA Health policies and guidelines.
 - Develop policies and guidelines in accordance with the SA Health Policy Lifecycle, as outlined in the Policy Framework.
 - When developing, amending or rescinding a system-wide policy or guideline, consult and engage early and inclusively across the SA Health system and with external stakeholders as appropriate to the subject matter of the policy or guideline in question.
 - Seek approval to develop, amend or rescind a policy or guideline using approved SA Health policy/guideline approval forms, and consistent with the requirements of the Policy Framework governance structure and approval process.

Publication and notification of policies and guidelines

- > All approved SA Health policies and guidelines must be published on the SA Health intranet and the SA Health website, except in instances where a policy or guideline contains sensitive or contentious information that is not for public disclosure, and approval is given for it to be published on the intranet only.
- > All SA Health staff must be notified via a Policy Update of:
 - New system-wide policies and guidelines and their commencement date.
 - Significant amendments to existing policies and guidelines.
 - Policies and guidelines that have been rescinded.

Governance and approval processes

- > The Executive Director, Corporate Affairs, (as Executive Sponsor of the Policy Framework) must ensure and support the consistent and effective implementation and operation of the Policy Framework.
- > The Executive Director, Corporate Affairs, nominated Domain Custodians, Executive Leads and the Policy Advisory Panel (where relevant) must ensure the policy governance roles and responsibilities, and approval processes set out in the Policy Framework are adhered to.
- > The [Policy Governance Guideline](#) supports the practical implementation of this Policy and is underpinned by best practice. It is recommended the Guideline is adopted or adapted to suit local requirements.

6. Mandatory related documents

The following documents must be complied with under this Policy, to the extent that they are relevant:

² SA Health policies and guidelines are developed by the Department for Health and Wellbeing, with the exception of specific policies relating to children which are developed by the Women and Children's Health Network.

- > [SA Health Policy Framework](#)
- > [SA Health Policy Framework standard templates and forms](#) (for SA Health internal use only)

7. Supporting information

- > [Policy Governance Guideline](#)

8. Definitions

- > **Domain Custodian:** means the Department for Health and Wellbeing Executive Team Member who is accountable for the day-to-day management and oversight of policies and guidelines within a nominated Policy Domain.
- > **Executive Lead:** means the position(s) within the Department with ultimate decision making responsibility for any policy-related matter referred by a Domain Custodian (refer to Policy Framework for further detail). The Executive Lead is the Executive position to whom the Domain Custodian reports.
- > **Guideline:** means a best practice exemplar document that supports the implementation of a policy. Compliance with a guideline is not mandatory, however as a best practice policy implementation exemplar, adaption or adoption of a guidelines is encouraged.
- > **Policy:** means a document that directs conduct and decision-making across SA Health and is aligned with the organisation's legislative imperatives and strategic objectives. Includes clinical and corporate policies. Compliance with a policy is mandatory.
- > **Policy Advisory Panel:** means the governance group that provides strategic advice, leadership and assurance over policy development and management and the effective system-wide operation of the Policy Framework.

9. Compliance

This policy is binding on those to whom it applies or relates. Implementation at a local level may be subject to audit/assessment. The Domain Custodian must work towards the establishment of systems which demonstrate compliance with this policy, in accordance with the requirements of the [System-wide Integrated Compliance Policy](#).

Any instance of non-compliance with this policy should be reported to the Domain Custodian for the Legal and Corporate Governance Policy Domain and the Domain Custodian for the Risk, Compliance and Audit Policy Domain.

10. Document ownership

Policy owner: Executive Director, Corporate Affairs as Domain Custodian for the Legal and Corporate Governance Policy Domain

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Contact for enquiries: Health.PolicyFramework@sa.gov.au

11. Document history

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Amendment notes
1.0	01/02/2021	Executive Director, Corporate Affairs	N/A
2.0	04/05/2021	Executive Director Corporate Affairs	Updated to align with revised Policy template.
3.0	26/8/2021	Executive Director Corporate Affairs	Updated to align with revised wording for 'Applicability' and 'Compliance' sections. Other minor amendments incorporated to streamline policy content.

12. Appendices

Nil.