

POLICY – DAY HOSPITAL AND PROCEDURE CENTRE GOVERNANCE FOR SAFETY RISK AND QUALITY

Governance within City Fertility incorporates a set of processes, policy directives, laws, regulations and conventions for best practice that affect the way City Fertility is directed, administered and controlled. Effective governance has eight characteristics. These are participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rules and laws in the relevant states and territory as well as accreditation bodies.

The clinical governance framework at City Fertility has the following main components:

- Governance, leadership and culture;
- leaders at all levels in the company set up and use clinical governance systems to improve the safety and quality of health care for patients.
- patient safety and quality improvement systems;
- safety and quality systems are integrated with governance processes to enable the company to actively manage and improve the safety and quality of health care for patients;
- clinical performance and effectiveness;
- employees and clinicians/accredited medical officers have the right qualifications, skills and supervision to provide safe, high-quality health care to patients;
- safe environment for the delivery of care;
- the environment promotes safe and high-quality health care for patients;
- partnering with consumers.

City Fertility Mission statement ‘*To provide compassionate and exceptional care*’ and has become synonymous with City Fertility and the way we operate our business. We recognise that we operate in an industry where ‘care’ is not just a value statement, but a critical part of the way we must go about our daily operations in order to meet the expectations of our customers – our patients.

City Fertility utilises the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards to provide the guidance on:

- The quality assurance system that tests if practices are in place to ensure minimum standard of safety and quality are met;
- a quality improvement system that allows City Fertility to realise developmental goals whilst protecting patients from harm and to improve the quality of service and care we provide.

City Fertility is committed to ongoing improvement of patient care and clinical practices in all areas. While we have an excellent record in delivering quality patient care and managing risks, City Fertility continues to focus on improvements that will keep us at the forefront of providing best practice clinical care. To this end, City Fertility prides itself on listening and responding to the needs of our patients. We continually evaluate and improve on all aspects of our performance through customer satisfaction surveys and formal feedback processes. The impact on patient safety and quality of care is considered in business decision making.

1.10.2 Policy - Governance for Safety, Risk and Quality	Issued: 21/02/2024	Version: 2	Page 1 of 6
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City Fertility has a strong commitment to patient safety and quality and this is reflected in our company-wide approach to:

- Reviewing and improving on a continuous basis the performance of our patient safety and quality systems;
- ensuring the incident management and investigation system provides adequate surveillance to recognise major safety failures or risks;
- implementing corrective action in response to identified patient safety risks and failures;
- maintaining and monitoring a complaint management system that is inclusive of clinicians/ accredited medical officers, patients and employees;
- implementing, maintaining and reviewing an open disclosure response consistent with national and local standards;
- ensuring that the management team understand not only their own roles and responsibilities but the roles and responsibilities of the board, executive and clinical teams and clinicians/ accredited medical officers in regards to clinical governance;
- assisting our healthcare professionals and visiting clinicians/ accredited medical officers to monitor the safety and quality of care they provide; and
- ensuring accountability for the safety and quality of care at all levels of our organisation from non- clinical employees right through to the City Fertility board.

The City Fertility Board and Audit & Risk Management Committee endeavour at all times to fulfil their governance responsibilities by demonstrating strong strategic leadership in safety and quality, supporting City Fertility staff and accredited medical practitioners in their efforts to provide safe, high quality care, and monitoring and responding to the performance of City Fertility's patient care systems while minimising business risk that would potentially impact on patients and staff.

City Fertility has developed a comprehensive clinical governance framework based on an integrated approach to clinical risk management and continuous quality improvement and reliability and quality of patient care as well as patient outcomes. The framework has been developed to support the health services administered by City Fertility clinics and can be used by employees as a source of tools and resources and by regulatory bodies as a demonstration of actions and that regulatory standards are met. This framework measures four major areas of organisational performance including:

1. Governance and Quality Improvement systems

There are integrated systems of clinical risk management and governance to actively manage patient safety and quality risks to ensure our services are safe and minimising risk of error including:

- The City Fertility culture promotes and encourages staff to report incidents, risks and near misses;
- Clinical risks are reported using RiskClear software that is available to all peri-operative staff at numerous computer stations throughout licenced facilities;
- Reporting of Safety Incidents and Hazards outlines the process for assessing and investigating incidents;
- Clinical Governance - Governing Body outlines the commitment of the City Fertility Global Board;
- City Fertility clinical policies and protocols are developed in accordance with evidence based best practice;
- Staff have ready access to the relevant policies, procedures and protocols with an Index log to ensure they are regularly and reliably updated and can respond to relevant regulatory changes, compliance issues and case law.
- Industry standard such as Standards Australia and Codes of Practice are identified and documented in POL-CO-17 (3.5.2) – HSQ Legal and Other Requirements Overview;
- Staff are supported to assist in the City Fertility safety and quality system;

- The maintenance and control of the compliance system is allocated to the National Safety & Quality Manager to facilitate its effective implementation and maintenance;
- Committees exist that assist senior management to maintain City Fertility policies, procedures and protocols. Committee structures are reviewed regularly to ensure continued relevance and utility. Committee Charters clearly define the role of each committee, its terms of reference, and whether it is an advisory or has delegated authority;
- All proposals for change or service development explicitly identify the implications for patient safety and quality. This includes clinical risks and how they will be managed.;
- Orientation and mandatory annual training programs are implemented to meet requirements of relevant standards;
- Clinical, risk and safety policies are reviewed on a regular basis and updated as required; and
- City Fertility has a strategy and policy for 'whistle blowers'.

2. Clinical Effectiveness (making sure that the clinical services we provide are effective)

- Quality and Safety Indicators are used to measure and monitor performance;
- Quality plans and projects are initiated when significant issues are flagged;
- Risk and Safety Indicators are benchmarked nationally;
- Serious clinical incidents are reported and investigated and used for trending;
- Clinicians/accredited medical officers are represented on the Risk Committee and expert clinical advisory panels;
- Clinicians/accredited medical officers and other health professionals who are not employees of City Fertility have clear designated roles and responsibilities with regard to safety, quality and clinical governance;
- High risk areas are audited on a regular basis;
- Quality performance and safety issues are reported to the City Fertility Board (executive level of governance);
- All Procedure Centres and Day Hospitals meet the standards for accreditation;
- Agreed and documented clinical guidelines and/or pathways are available to the clinical workforce;
- The use of agreed clinical guidelines is monitored;
- Mechanisms are in place to identify patients at increased risk of harm;
- Early action is taken to reduce the risks for at-risk patients;
- Systems exist to escalate the level of care when there is an unexpected deterioration in health status; and
- Clinical outcomes are defined and clear.
- Accurate, integrated and readily accessible patient records are available to the clinical staff at the point of care;
- The design of the patient clinical record system allows for systematic audit of contents against the requirements of the relevant Standards.

3. Performance Skills Management and Scope of Practice for Clinical Staff

- Facility rules are available to all existing and new medical and allied health personnel;
- City Fertility Health Care has a strict process for checking credentials, registration and scope of practice for all clinical disciplines and allied health professional;
- Valid and reliable performance review process including measurements and development of all staff members, including the clinical workforce;
- City Fertility has position descriptions and performance development policies that require all employees and clinicians/accredited medical officers to comply within their roles, contractual responsibilities, and accountabilities. Staff and clinicians/accredited medical officers are aware of their delegated safety and quality roles and responsibilities.
- Professional support is provided to individuals involved in incidents, adverse events and near misses, including patients and employees.

- Managers and the clinical staff have the right qualifications, skills and approach to provide safe, high-quality care;
- Medical directors are assessed quarterly on performance outcomes;
- City Fertility has targeted education and competency requirements in all clinical areas with a particular focus on high risk areas guided by current best practice;
- Systems are in place to define and review scope of practice for clinical staff and to monitor that they are working within the agreed scope of practice; and
- Staff are orientated and updated on quality and risk systems.

4. Patient Participation – Patient's rights and engagement (consumer advisory group)

City Fertility values the contribution patients and the community can make in improving health services, including service planning, designing care and service measuring and evaluation and are committed to strong patient and community engagement

- City Fertility has a charter of patient rights that is consistent with the current national charter of healthcare rights; [Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights](#)
- Patient feedback and outcomes are instrumental in our risk management and quality improvement activities;
- Patient complaints and feedback processes are managed in a timely way;
- Consumer feedback from City Fertility and Day Hospital Patient Satisfaction Surveys informs strategic and business planning; and
- Open disclosure between clinicians/accredited medical officers and consumers is actively promoted when things don't go to plan;
- Mechanisms are in place to enable partnership with patients in decisions about their treatment, including informed consents. This involves open communication between patients, clinicians/accredited medical officers and City Fertility clinical employees as it underpins the ethical framework for IVF treatment at City Fertility; the senior and executive management team monitors that the system is effective and working well for all participants; training is provided for clinical employees regarding legal, ethical and practical requirements for patient consent and understanding barriers for patients with a poor level of health literacy;
- System is in place to restrict inappropriate access and dissemination of patient clinical information.

5. Patient and Community Engagement

Partnering with consumers and the community can occur at a different scale and level of engagement. The four scales of engagement are: Individual, Service, Network & System.

Individual

Engagement and partnership occur with the individual receiving healthcare and focuses on engaging with the individual consumer and / or their family as partners in their own healthcare, support and treatment.

Service

Engagement and partnership occur at service and program delivery at a facility or company level and focuses on engaging with the patients and the community to have input into how programs, services or facilities are delivered, structured, evaluated and improved.

Network

Engagement and partnership occur at local health networks or non-government community services network, and focuses on how these health services organisations engage with patients and the community at the regional level.

System

Engagement and partnership occur at local, state or commonwealth government level and focuses on how patients and communities engage to influence and input on health policy, reform and legislation at the system level across local, state and commonwealth jurisdictions.

Performance across these areas by all City Fertility procedure centres and Day Hospitals are closely monitored by the Company's Risk Management Committee and the Board of Directors. These strategies help City Fertility optimise business potential and minimise business risk across all areas of the company. All clinics play a critical role in achieving City Fertility performance outcomes, through working in partnership with management, health services, other staff, patients and regulatory bodies. City Fertility acknowledges that accreditation is an important driver for safety, risk and quality improvement and actively participates and contributes to development of company standards by referencing and consultation with various relevant healthcare industry regulatory bodies and with various healthcare industry working parties. Through accreditation, City Fertility has been able to assess its level of performance in relation to established standards and implementation of continuous improvement.

City Fertility policy framework and tools include:

- Patient engagement;
- patient feedback and complaint management;
- credentialing;
- clear role guidelines for clinicians/accredited medical officers, managers, senior executives, non- clinical employees and contractors;
- safety and Quality policies and procedures for service standards;
- committees including – Audit and Risk Committee, Greenslopes Ethical Committee, RBWH Ethical Committee, Medical Advisory Committee (MAC), Clinical Practices Committee (CPC);
- patient incident management and open disclosure;
- incident root cause analysis and corrective & preventative action;
- safety alert system;
- compliance with relevant standards and accreditation for safety and quality in reproductive healthcare.

Definitions

Clinical Governance – a system through which City Fertility is accountable for continuously improving the quality of services and safeguarding high standards of care. Achieved by creating an environment in which there is transparent responsibility and accountability for maintaining standards and allowing excellence in clinical care to flourish.

Clinical Audit – a systematic process of improving the quality of patient care by looking at current practice and identifying areas for improvement and modification.

Clinical Indicators – measures or benchmarks that enable City Fertility to compare themselves against similar health providers.

Credentialing – the formal process used to verify qualifications, experience, professional standing and other relevant attributes of medical practitioners, counsellors and support services for the purpose of verifying their competence, performance and professional suitability to provide safe, high quality care services within their specific area of expertise.

Governance – the set of relationships and responsibilities established by City Fertility between its executive, employees and stakeholders (patients and prospective patients). Governance incorporates the set of policies, procedures, processes, laws and conventions. Governance arrangements provide structure through which the corporate objectives (fiscal, quality, safety, legal, human resources) are set and the means by which objectives are to be achieved. Effective governance provides a clear statement of individual accountabilities within City Fertility to help in aligning the roles, interests and actions of different participants to achieve the company goals.

Adverse event – an incident in which harm resulted to a patient receiving care.

Outputs – the results of safety and quality actions and processes.

Risk Management – the design and implementation of a program to identify and avoid or minimise risks to patients, employees, students, visitors and the company.

Incident – an event or circumstance that resulted, or could have resulted, in unintended and/ or unnecessary harm to a person and/ or a complaint, loss or damage.

References

National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards

Policies

POL-CH-94 Clinical Governance - Governing Body