

Consultation and endorsement

Clinical Care Standards

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) develops clinical care standards for health conditions that would benefit from a national coordinated approach. The Commission seeks endorsement from key professional and consumer bodies in order to communicate their support for the quality of care described in a clinical care standard. The Commission undertakes an open and consultative approach in the development of clinical care standards as part of its approach to seeking endorsement.

This document provides an overview of the Commission's approach to consultation and endorsement when developing national clinical care standards.

Stakeholder involvement in the development process

The Commission develops [clinical care standards](#) based on the best available evidence and in consultation with key stakeholders including professional organisations, jurisdictional health departments, consumers, expert clinicians and researchers. Key stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input and shape the content of the standards through:

- Key informant interviews
- Stakeholder meetings during the development process
- Providing feedback on draft versions through public consultation.

Stakeholders from whom endorsement will be sought are identified early in the development of clinical care standards to maximise opportunities for their feedback and involvement.

The purpose of endorsement

Clinical care standards play an important role in delivering appropriate care and [reducing unwarranted variation](#) as they identify and define the care people should expect to be offered or receive, regardless of where they are treated. Clinical care standards are developed for clinical areas where it is known that many people are not receiving the best evidence-informed care. They are intended to support quality improvement, increase the consistency of care nationally, reduce harm and improve patient outcomes.

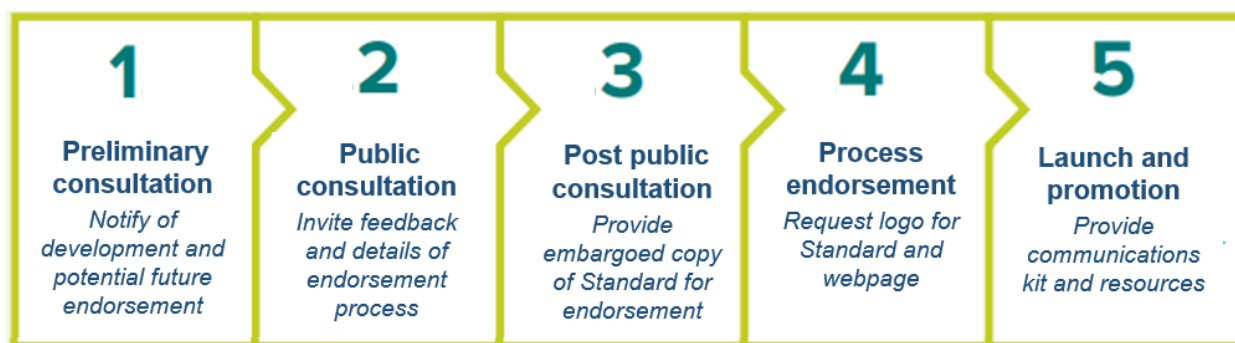
Endorsement by respected professional groups and promotion of use of the standards by these groups improves the care people receive and the outcomes they obtain from their health care.

The endorsement process

Consultation regarding endorsement begins at the outset of the project and continues through to the launch of the final standard and subsequent review. The Commission communicates with potential endorsing organisations at multiple points in the development process (see **Figure 1**).

Note: The endorsement process is free, voluntary, and in no way part of a commercial agreement with the endorsing organisation. The Commission will not pay a fee to organisations for administering endorsement and does not permit endorsement by commercial organisations.

Figure 1: The endorsement process for new clinical care standards



How organisations can promote use

By endorsing, the organisation acknowledges the clinical care standard has undergone rigorous review and outlines high standards of clinical care that it encourages its members to support.

Organisations who, for various reasons, support the standard but are not able to formally endorse, are invited to assist with dissemination and promotion as a 'supporting organisation'.

Organisations can further support implementation by:

- Actively raising awareness of the standard and promoting it via their member networks
- Incorporating the aspects of care described in the standard into related health and medical education, resources and continuing professional development
- Encouraging members to use the clinical care standards and indicators in their own quality improvement activities
- Presenting about the standards at scientific meetings and conferences.

The Commission develops resources to help with these activities, such as communication kits and presentations, and welcomes suggestions from endorsing organisations and other stakeholders about other forms of support that could be useful.

Reviews of clinical care standards

Clinical care standards are reviewed for currency and relevance 4-yearly, or upon significant changes in evidence. All endorsing organisations are invited to feedback on proposed substantial revisions as part of the formal review process; public consultation process is not usual for reviews.

Topic Working Groups

When developing a clinical care standard, a Topic Working Group (TWG) with appropriate clinical and consumer expertise is established to advise the Commission. The Commission identifies members from a variety of sources including through key organisations and based on individual expertise. Members are generally appointed as individuals not as representatives of any particular organisation.

The Commission aims to ensure the group is balanced in terms of multidisciplinary clinical and research expertise, consumer experience, diversity of locations and healthcare settings across Australia. Group numbers are limited to ensure a manageable size. Information on the membership of each TWG is published on the Commission website.

The Commission welcomes feedback from all stakeholders, regardless of the composition of the Topic Working Group.

Further information

You can contact the Clinical Care Standards team for further information about the endorsement process by emailing CCS@health.gov.au