self-assessment and action planning tools
⊙ essential element 4

CLINICAL COMMUNICATION

This self-assessment and action planning tool will help you to identify gaps in current systems and plan the actions required to achieve *Essential element 4: Clinical communication*.

The tool is designed to help ensure that a whole facility, or individual wards or clinical areas identify:

- What systems are or are not in place, or what systems are in place but are not operating effectively

- The reasons why these systems may not be in place or operating effectively

- The actions that are needed to address system problems or barriers that are identified.

Achieving this essential element involves two tasks.

1. Develop agreed communication processes (written and verbal) to support recognition and response systems.

2. Develop systems for communicating with patients, families and carers about possible deterioration.

For each task there are five key questions to consider. These questions are specified for each task in the self-assessment tool.

1. Agreement – do health professionals agree on the basis for the task, the best way to perform the task, and who is responsible?

2. Process or policy – are processes in place, or do policies exist, to achieve the task?

3. Resources – does the facility, ward or clinical area have the necessary resources to achieve the task?

4. Knowledge – are clinical and non-clinical health professionals educated about the importance of the task?

5. Systems to support monitoring and evaluation – does the facility conduct audits, review or evaluations to ensure the task is performed properly?

Work through each question and record your answers, specifying the documents or data that prove the facility, ward or clinical area meets the criteria. This will help to identify any gaps and barriers to implementation in the facility or clinical area.

Follow the instructions in the tool to complete the action plan, which links the barriers with specific actions to address them.

The page numbers in the action plan act as navigational guides, directing you to the appropriate actions in the comprehensive *Guide to Support Implementation of the National Consensus Statement: Essential Elements for Recognising and Responding to Clinical Deterioration*. This is available for download from: **www.safetyandquality.gov.au**

Actions that are low cost, easy to implement and have high impact may be a useful starting point for implementation. Facilities may also prefer to prioritise tasks that are required to meet the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards.

about this tool

This tool is available as a Portable Document Format (PDF) file which can be saved to your desktop for direct electronic data entry or printed for use.

It has been designed for use in conjunction with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care publication *A Guide to Implementation of the National Consensus Statement: Essential Elements for Recognising and Responding to Clinical Deterioration* (2012).

This tool and further information about recognition and response systems can be downloaded from: **www.safetyandquality.gov.au**

further information

Further information about implementing recognition and response systems can be found on the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care web site.

The National Consensus Statement, the comprehensive implementation guide, a series of quick-start guides, and many other tools and resources are available for download from: **www.safetyandquality.gov.au**

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AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

recognising + responding TO CLINICAL DETERIORATION

NSQHS STANDARDS

self-assessment tool ▸ CLINICAL COMMUNICATION

NAME OF WARD OR AREA BEING ASSESSED:

⏱ **task 1** **Develop agreed communication processes (written and verbal) to support recognition and response systems**		**Data or documentation that proves the criteria have been met**		**Are these policies/processes/ resources operating as planned?** **Does your data demonstrate effective operation at all times?**
		Type of data or name of document	**Where is it kept?**	
AGREEMENT Is there agreement about when verbal and written communication associated with recognition and response systems is required?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of agreement' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
Is it clear how this communication should occur (e.g. face-to-face, phone)?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of agreement' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
PROCESS OR POLICY Are roles and responsibilities related to communication available and included in the escalation policy or similar document?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of process/ policy' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
RESOURCES Are tools for communication available (e.g. mnemonics, documentation templates)?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of resources' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
Do these tools include recent observations, assessments and patient wishes?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of resources' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
KNOWLEDGE Is training available for clinicians on communication processes?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of knowledge' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT MONITORING AND EVALUATION Are communication processes evaluated?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of monitoring and evaluation' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan

NAME OF WARD OR AREA BEING ASSESSED:

⊙ task 2 Develop systems for communicating with patients, families and carers about possible deterioration		Data or documentation that proves the criteria have been met		Are these policies/processes/resources operating as planned? Does your data demonstrate effective operation at all times?
		Type of data or name of document	Where is it kept?	
AGREEMENT Have you decided on opportunities for communicating with patients, families and carers about possible deterioration?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of agreement' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
PROCESS OR POLICY Have you developed agreed processes for this communication?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of process/policy' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
RESOURCES Are resources available for informing patients, families and carers of communication processes?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of resources' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
KNOWLEDGE Do clinicians receive training on patient, family and carer communication?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of knowledge' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan
SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT MONITORING AND EVALUATION Are patient, family and carer experiences evaluated?	☐ **YES** ▸ Fill in next two columns ☐ **NO** ▸ Tick 'Lack of monitoring and evaluation' in your action plan			☐ **YES** ▸ WELL DONE! Continue to monitor ☐ **NO** ▸ Why not? What are the barriers? Add these to your action plan

action plan ▸ CLINICAL COMMUNICATION

Use the information from the self-assessment tool to complete the action plan. The action plan links the barriers identified by the self-assessment tool with specific actions, tools and resources to address them.

NAME OF WARD OR AREA BEING ASSESSED:

what do you need to do?		how will you do it?		
Task not yet achieved	**Why has this task not been achieved (barriers)?** **What actions are needed?** (Page numbers in brackets below refer to resources within the *Guide to Implementation of the National Consensus Statement: Essential Elements for Recognising and Responding to Clinical Deterioration*)	**Go to the recommended section of this guide for information on tasks and actions. List the tools and resources from the guide to address this gap here. Also consider other resources that may be available to you to address this gap.**	**Who will be responsible?**	**When will this happen? Consider undertaking actions that are low cost, easy to implement and support meeting the *National safety and quality health service standards* first**
⊙ **task 1** Develop agreed communication processes (written and verbal) related to recognition and response systems	☐ Lack of agreement ▸ D E C I D E ▸ p197 ☐ Lack of process/policy ▸ D E V E L O P ▸ p198 ☐ Lack of resources ▸ R E S O U R C E ▸ p200 ☐ Lack of knowledge ▸ E D U C A T E ▸ p205 ☐ Lack of monitoring and evaluation ▸ E V A L U A T E ▸ p207			
OTHER POSSIBLE BARRIERS:				
⊙ **task 2** Develop systems for communicating with patients, families and carers about possible deterioration	☐ Lack of agreement ▸ D E C I D E ▸ p211 ☐ Lack of process/policy ▸ D E V E L O P ▸ p212 ☐ Lack of resources ▸ R E S O U R C E ▸ p214 ☐ Lack of knowledge ▸ E D U C A T E ▸ p215 ☐ Lack of monitoring and evaluation ▸ E V A L U A T E ▸ p216			
OTHER POSSIBLE BARRIERS:				

OTHER COMMENTS AND PLANS: