


Building system competence: the Queensland Health experience

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Queensland the Smart State 

Queensland-The Sunshine State

Salient facts:

- Population: 4.3 million
- 2400 km from Brisbane to Cape York
- Queensland Health: 60,000 staff
- Difficult to recruit Australian graduates to rural and regional centres





The Context

- Patel scandal
 - 1st complaint within 8 weeks of appointment
 - 22 complaints in 24 months
- 2 reviews
- Minister, Departmental executive sacked

How to Shape Health Systems

- Culture, norms and mores
- Financial incentives and markets
- Organizational structures and legal or organizational regulatory processes

➤ Based (loosely) on Tuohy, C.H. (1999) *Accidental logics: the dynamics of change in the health care arena in the United States, Britain and Canada*. NY: Oxford UP

'the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture'

Schein, E.H. (1992) *Organizational culture and leadership*, Jossey Bass, San Francisco.

The Queensland Health *clinical governance framework* is the web of policies, processes and accountabilities which are directed at improving patient safety and the quality and effectiveness of Queensland Health services.



QUEENSLAND HEALTH CLINICAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Clinical governance policy:
Safeguarding and improving the safety and quality of patient care is the first priority of Queensland Health and will inform all aspects of the work and decisions of constituent units.
Process values: Transparency, accountability, participation

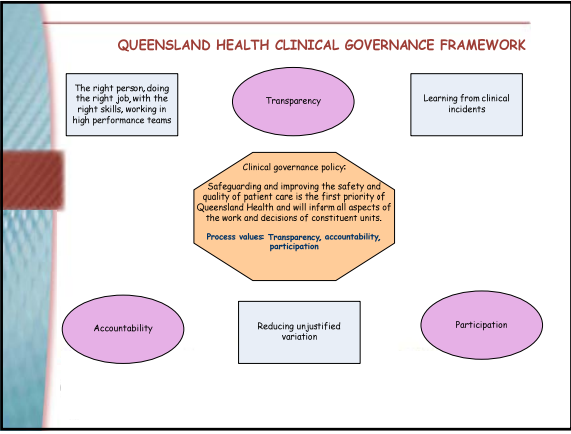
QUEENSLAND HEALTH CLINICAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Transparency

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Accountability

Participation



Accountability

Emphasising that responsibility for clinical governance is vested in line management and that managers should be held to account for performance relating to clinical governance issues.

- Supports for Accountability**
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities including 'Implementation Standards'.
 - Clinician Performance Support Services to support conduct of performance appraisal of clinical staff.
 - Independent Health Quality and Complaints Commission.
 - Statistical process control ('VLADs') to monitor variation in outcomes of care including hierarchical system of reporting and closing the loop....

Supports for Accountability

- A state-wide system of clinical incident reporting.
- Workplace Culture Surveys.
 - Action plans to be developed by districts responding to issues identified in the surveys.
- Programs to up-skill managers.
 - Largest leadership development program in Australia

Issues with Accountability


- Significantly enhanced monitoring and reporting creates an additional local workload.
- Balancing of the importance of safety and quality and other organisational imperatives.
- Tension between meeting budget targets, meeting activity or access targets and meeting clinical governance requirements, is not an easy one to manage.

Transparency

A principle that allows those affected by administrative decisions, business transactions or charitable work to know not only the basic facts and figures but also the mechanisms and processes. It is the duty of civil servants, managers and trustees to act visibly, predictably and understandably.

Source: Transparency International:
<http://www.transparency.org/faqs/faq-corruption.html#faqcorr1>

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Transparency

- Mandated public reporting
 - Incidents and state-wide reporting system
 - VLAD reasons
 - Waiting times etc.
- 'HEAPS' training (assertiveness)

Transparency Tensions

- Media -tabloids especially
- "Report Cards"

Participation

- Clinical Networks
 - Arnstein's ladder of participation
- Patient Safety and Quality Board
- Clinical Senate
- Health Consumers Queensland
- Health Community Councils

- Still work in progress when I left

Further information

Duckett, S.J. (2009) "Accountability, transparency and participation: process values underpinning the new approach to governance of patient safety in Queensland Health" in Judith Healy & Paul Dugdale (eds) *Patient Safety First: Strategies for Regulating Health Care*, Allen and Unwin

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