

Glossary to accompany Clinical Governance Annual Report & Development Plan

CHAI: See ‘The Healthcare Commission’

CHI: The Commission for Health Improvement was, until April 2004, the independent, inspection body for the NHS. Its functions were transferred to the Healthcare Commission.

Clinical audit: a quality improvement process that seeks to improve patient care and outcomes through systematic review of care against explicit criteria and the implementation of change. Aspects of the structure, processes, and outcomes of care are selected and systematically evaluated against specific criteria. Where indicated, changes are implemented at an individual, team, or service level and further monitoring is used to confirm improvement in health care delivery.

Clinical Effectiveness: Involves obtaining, critically appraising and disseminating information on evidence based practice. It is about doing the right thing in the right way and at the right time for the right patient.

Clinical governance: a system through which NHS organisations are accountable for continuously improving the quality of their services and safeguarding high standards of care, by creating an environment in which clinical excellence will flourish.

Clinical Guideline: Guidelines are also known as protocols and are put into place in clinical areas to ensure that correct procedures/best practice are used at all times. These guidelines can be set locally or nationally, and can be built into ICPs.

Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST): An external assessment for NHS Trusts to determine their ability to manage clinical risk. CNST is also an insurance scheme in which pays out if a clinical negligence case is proved.

Clinical network: connections across disciplines which provide integrated care across institutional and professional boundaries, raising clinical quality and improving the patient experience.

Clinical Risk Management: working towards reducing the level of risk involved in patient care. It involves assessing risks, and learning from incidents and events where things have gone wrong.

Clinician: professionally qualified staff providing clinical care to patients.

Controls assurance standards: The Controls Assurance scheme initiative has now been superseded, but it involved adhering to national standards covering buildings, land, plant and non-medical equipment; catering and food hygiene; decontamination of re-usable medical devices; emergency planning; environmental management; financial management; fire safety; fleet and transport management; governance; health and safety management; human resources; infection control;

information management and technology; management of purchasing and supply; medical devices management; medicines management; professional conduct and liability; records management; risk management; security management and waste management.

Criteria: criteria devised and published by the Healthcare Commission, and approved by the Secretary of State, with reference to which the Healthcare Commission must, each financial year, conduct a review of the provision of health care by and for each English NHS body, and each cross-border SHA.

English NHS body: a Primary Care Trust, Strategic Health Authority or NHS Trust, all or most of whose hospitals, establishments and facilities are situated in England, or an NHS Foundation Trust or special health authority performing functions only or mainly in respect of England.

Foundation Trust: a public benefit corporation established by the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 which is authorised to provide goods and services for the purpose of the health service.

Governance: a mechanism to provide accountability for the way an organisation manages itself.

Healthcare Commission: the acknowledged name of the originally titled 'Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection'. This was established in April 2004 as the independent body encompassing the work of the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI). It will inspect health care provision in accordance with national standards and other service priorities and will report directly to Parliament on the state of health care in England and Wales.

Health care organisation: English NHS bodies, cross-border SHAs and other organisations and individuals, including the independent and voluntary sectors, which provide or commission health care for individual patients and the public.

Health care professional: a person who is a member of a profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002.

Health care: services provided for, or in connection with, the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness, and the promotion and protection of public health.

Health care associated infection: all infections acquired as a direct or indirect result of health care.

Health inequalities: differences in people's health between geographical areas and between different groups of people.

Health promotion: includes the provision of information on healthier lifestyles for patients, and how to make the best use of health services, with the intention of enabling people to make rational health choices and of ensuring awareness of the factors determining the health of the community.

Integrated Care Pathway (ICP): Provides guidance on the timing and correct sequencing of appropriate investigations and treatments, based on evidence. They relate to a specific episode of care in a hospital, primary or community setting.

Local Strategic Partnerships: non-statutory bodies intended to bring together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors at a local level. Their purpose is to improve the delivery of services and quality of life locally.

Medical devices: all products, except medicines, used in health care for diagnosis, prevention, monitoring or treatment. The range of products is very wide: it includes contact lenses and condoms; heart valves and hospital beds; resuscitators and radiotherapy machines; surgical instruments and syringes; wheelchairs and walking frames.

National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA): An independent body set up to establish and run a national reporting system to record adverse events and near misses in health care. The NPSA also issues alerts about national issues of concern.

National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE): there is a special health authority for England and Wales. Its role is to provide patients, health professionals and the public with authoritative, robust and reliable guidance on current “best practice”. The guidance covers both individual health technologies (including medicines, medical devices, diagnostic techniques, and procedures) and the clinical management of specific conditions.

NICE guidance: guidance covering three areas of health:

- **Clinical guidelines** cover the appropriate treatment and care of patients with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales.
- **Technology appraisals** cover the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales.
- **Interventional procedures** cover the safety and efficacy of interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment.

Primary care: first-contact health services directly accessible to the public.

Primary Care Trust: a local health organisation responsible for managing local health services. PCTs work with Local Authorities and other agencies that provide health and social care locally to make sure the community’s needs are being met.

Public health: Public health is concerned with improving the health of the population, rather than treating the diseases of individual patients. Public health functions include:

- Health surveillance, monitoring and analysis
- Investigation of disease outbreaks, epidemics and risk to health
- Establishing, designing and managing health promotion and disease prevention programmes
- Enabling and empowering communities to promote health and reduce inequalities
- Creating and sustaining cross-Government and inter-sectoral partnerships to improve health and reduce inequalities
- Ensuring compliance with regulations and laws to protect and promote health
- Developing and maintaining a well educated and trained, multi-disciplinary public health workforce
- Ensuring the effective performance of NHS services to meet goals in improving health, preventing disease and reducing inequalities
- Research, development, evaluation and innovation

National Service Frameworks (NSF): Documents that set national standards and identify key interventions for a defined service or care group. The NSFs published to date cover:

- Mental health
- Cancer
- Coronary heart disease
- Older people
- Diabetes

NSFs on children, renal services and long-term conditions (focusing on neurological conditions) are in preparation.

Quality assurance: a systematic process of verifying that a product or service being developed is meeting specified requirements.

Research governance framework: defines the broad principles of good research governance and is key to ensuring that health and social care research is conducted to high scientific and ethical standards and applies to all research undertaken within the remit of the Secretary of State for Health.

Risk management: covers all the processes involved in identifying, assessing and judging risks, assigning ownership, taking actions to mitigate or anticipate them, and monitoring and reviewing progress.

Risk Pooling Scheme for Trusts (RPST): An external assessment for NHS Trusts to determine their ability to manage risk. RPST is also an insurance scheme in which pays out if a (non-clinical) case is proved.

Service user: an individual who uses a health care service, including those who are not in need of treatment, such as blood donors, carers or those using screening services.

Star rating: the Healthcare Commission's performance ratings system places NHS Trusts in England into one of four categories:

- Trusts with the highest levels of performance are awarded a performance rating of three stars
- Trusts that are performing well overall, but have not quite reached the same consistently high standards, are awarded a performance rating of two stars
- Trusts where there is some cause for concern regarding particular areas of performance are awarded a performance rating of one star
- Trusts that have shown the poorest levels of performance against the indicators or little progress in implementing clinical governance are awarded a performance rating of zero stars.

Strategic Health Authority: a health body that is responsible for:

- developing plans for improving health services in its local area;
- making sure local health services are of a high quality and are performing well;
- increasing the capacity of local health services so they can provide more services;
- making sure national priorities are integrated into local health service plans