

Strategic Plan 2009-2012

INTRODUCTION

The Commission is committed to providing effective complaint handling services to the public of New South Wales and to improving confidence in the provision of health services.

Our Strategic Plan shows how we aim to meet our stakeholders' needs/expectations with quality services, using highly performing people and with good governance and management practices. It also describes our overall planning processes.

“protecting the health and safety of the public by resolving, investigating, and prosecuting complaints about health care”

THE PLAN COVERS THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- Our Vision & Mission
- Our Role
- Our Values
- Our External Environment
- How we deliver our services
- Our Key Result Areas and Objectives/Strategies
- How we will Measure our Performance

OUR VISION

Reliable and safe health care

OUR OBJECTIVE

Health Care Complaints Commission acts in the public interest by resolving, investigating and prosecuting complaints about health care to protect the health and safety of the public

OUR ROLE

The Commission, working in conjunction with the relevant Registration Boards, has been established to resolve, investigate and prosecute complaints about health care to protect the health and safety of the public.

The rights of clients in the NSW health system are promoted by the provision of clear and easily accessible mechanisms for the resolution of complaints.

The rights of health providers are protected by the opportunity to respond to criticisms raised and procedural fairness in the conduct of investigations.

The Commission endeavours to resolve complaints of poor health care through informal complaint resolution processes and formal independent conciliations. The more serious cases of poor health care are thoroughly investigated to determine whether the matter should proceed to prosecution or disciplinary action or recommendations should be made to improve health care services.

OUR VALUES

We are committed to certain fundamental values in all our interactions with the public, health care providers and our staff. Our values are to:

- promote public health and safety
- act ethically and with integrity
- be fair, impartial and accountable
- strive for excellence
- act professionally in pursuing our aim
- respect each other and work collaboratively
- provide clear, consistent and timely information
- awareness of the multicultural and linguistic diversity of our clients
- promote and comply with our Code of Practice

OUR EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

In recent years the Commission has focused its attention on improving the quality and efficiency of its core business of complaint handling, investigations and prosecutions and restoring public expectations of the Commission as a credible and trusted investigator of health care complaints.

The Commission has also been re-building positive and constructive relationships with health practitioners and health organisations to promote quality assurance practices in patient care and be a positive change agent for improving the standard of health care.

The Commission's key stakeholders will continue to require more detailed and timely performance and outcome information and reporting into the future.

New and more diverse health care services and a broader range/category of health providers will demand more sophisticated approaches to the investigation of complaints.

HOW WE DELIVER OUR SERVICES

The delivery of our services is achieved within four divisions: Assessments & Resolution, Investigations, Legal Services, and Corporate Services.

Assessment & Resolution through:

- Complaint registration, analysis and assessment and attempting to achieve early resolution during the assessment process;
- Responsive, community based informal and formal complaint resolution and conciliation services
- Communicating outcomes of assessments and resolutions processes in an understandable and timely manner

Investigations by:

- Thoroughly investigating serious complaints;
- Making sound evidenced based decisions to refer matters for consideration of disciplinary action;
- Making practical recommendations to improve health care systems and monitoring their implementation.

Legal Services by:

- Making sound determinations in relation to appropriate disciplinary action;
- Preparation of comprehensive briefs of evidence and timely prosecution of cases before disciplinary bodies.

Executive and Corporate Services by:

- Provision of quality corporate services and strategic advice
- Promotion and education on quality improvements to health care service delivery through the analysis of incidents of health care complaints

OUR KEY RESULT AREAS AND STRATEGIES

1. Comprehensive & Responsive Complaint Handling and Analysis

Strategies

- a. efficient and timely processing, assessment and resolution of complaints and review processes;
- b. promoting the Commission's services to people of New South Wales
- c. analysing and providing information on health care incidents to health service providers to promote improvement in the quality of health care service delivery.

2. Investigate Serious Complaints

Strategies

- a. Ensuring a best practice approach for the conduct of all investigations
- b. Improving health care systems through recommendations arising from investigations

3. Prosecute Serious Complaints

Strategies

- a. Independent and timely determinations to prosecute
- b. Professional and competent prosecutions of serious complaints in the public interest

4. Accountability

Strategies

- a. Providing timely, accurate and relevant reporting to the Minister and the Parliamentary Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission.
- b. Reporting publicly about the work of the Commission.

5. Organisation Development and Performance

Strategies

- a. Further development as a learning organisation that embraces a culture of continuous improvement, sharing of knowledge and promotes a productive, safe and satisfying workplace.
- b. Monitoring our performance to ensure work quality, organisation development, good governance and effective resource management

HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR PERFORMANCE

The performance of the Commission is monitored and reported on in a number of ways. These include:

- Reporting on performance to the Minister for Health
- Oversight by the Parliamentary Committee on the Commission.
- Annual reports.
- The Commission website.

We report the following information in our Annual Report

Comprehensive and responsive complaint handling

- Number of complaints received and assessed by the Commission
- Percentage of assessment determinations subject to a request for a review
- Percentage of complaints assessed within 60 days
- Number of complaint resolution clients assisted by complaint resolution service
- Percentage of clients satisfied with complaint resolution service
- Percentage of matters formally conciliated where agreement or partial agreement reached

Investigating serious complaints

- Number of complaints referred for investigation
- Percentage of investigations completed within 12 months
- Implementation of recommendations to improve health services arising from investigation cases
- Percentage of investigations referred for determination by the Director of Proceedings

Prosecuting serious complaints

- Number of disciplinary or appeal cases completed
- Percentage of prosecutions proved or upheld

Accountability

- Information and advice accepted by the Minister for Health
- Public hearings before the Parliamentary Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission
- Consultation with the Consumer Consultative Committee

Our organisation

- Performance agreements in place and linked to corporate objectives with a high percentage of staff rated fully competent or better
- Deliver a staff development program that addresses technical, professional and management learning needs