



Employee Development Policy

1. Background

WA Country Health Service (WACHS) is committed to managing and developing our employees to deliver on our commitment to healthier, longer and better quality lives for all country Western Australians. WACHS recognises that supporting quality employee development and team performance is an essential contributing factor to employee performance, organisational success, overall employee satisfaction and retention.

2. Policy Statement

All employees will have regular and ongoing scheduled development discussions with their line manager/supervisors. These discussions are to enable the employee to understand the requirements of their role, discuss any issues they are experiencing, strive for continuous improvement and importantly, to acknowledge and celebrate key achievements.

This policy does not apply in circumstances where the [Employment Policy Framework: Managing Unsatisfactory and Substandard Performance Policy MP 0041/16](#) applies.

All employees including full time, part time, permanent and fixed term contract employees employed for a period in excess of three (3) months, are required to participate in the development cycle.

It is not a requirement for casual employees, volunteers or agency staff to participate in the development cycle. However, where it is beneficial to the organisation and the member of this cohort chooses to participate, this policy may be applied.

All nurses and midwives are offered the opportunity of meeting with their manager for development planning. In line with the 2018 election commitment, this meeting is not mandatory. All nurses and midwives will need to complete mandatory training requirements as per the Professional Practice Framework and Continuing Professional Development requirements of the Nursing & Midwifery Board.

To facilitate performance and skills development, line managers/supervisors should schedule in an initial development review with their team members within the first three (3) months of employment and thereafter a minimum frequency of an annual review. Regular ad-hoc feedback should occur to encourage and support employees during the development cycle.

3. Definitions

WACHS Casual Workforce	WACHS' casual workforce comprises of those employees who are engaged on a casual basis consistent with the applicable industrial instrument.
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4. Employee Development Principles

Developing the WACHS employees assists them to:

- demonstrate our strong commitment to the delivery of high quality and safe health care
- promote a culture of feedback, development and improvement
- provide opportunities for our workforce to develop and broaden their skills, abilities, knowledge and experience
- support performance effectiveness of all employees regardless of role, responsibility or level
- achieve improvements in performance through the provision of regular and constructive feedback that offers a structured and well planned process to promote skills development
- develop constructive relationships between managers and employees by fostering a regular and frequent 'check-in' discussion
- encourage individual, team and work unit planning which is linked to organisational goals and supports short and long term performance development
- set performance expectations that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, fair and equitable
- provide clarity with respect to roles and responsibilities
- promote ongoing discussion, feedback, coaching and support on performance in a timely and constructive manner
- provide a process for an employee to access support for engaging in professional development learning opportunities
- discuss strategies for achievement of success and identify barriers to completion of mandatory training requirements
- ensure compliance with industrial awards and agreements.

5. Governance

Systems, forms and templates used to implement employee development principles may be adopted at regional level, however, the employee development process should comprise of four (4) main steps:

1 – Expectations and Planning

Within the first three (3) months of the new employee commencing work, the manager and employee should conduct a development discussion/meeting. In this meeting, job requirements are analysed to determine performance expectations. Information required for this stage may come from the relevant Job Description Form (JDF), WACHS values and service strategies, service agreements, regional priorities action plans, individual work plans, and/or project plans. This step should identify the individual's contribution to deliverables or priorities for the team, directorate, site or service. It is important that a development plan be established that defines the expectations, including identification of key indicators, milestones or deliverables to measure progress against development and performance goals. This is the appropriate time for the employee and manager to identify any foreseen barriers including skill gaps and development needs and include any actions required to address these within the plan. It is important that the plan is documented.

Documentation should contain the date of the conversation, employees name, manager's name, agreed action completion dates and signatures to confirm agreement has occurred between the two parties.

2 – Support and Measure

It is essential that regular two-way conversations are occurring about performance and development. All outcomes and their assessment should be documented within the plan. Use agreed qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure outcomes. Identify and address any issues or concerns early. Identify barriers to performance through discussion and provide appropriate support. Both the line manager/supervisor and the employee should provide positive feedback throughout the process and acknowledge and celebrate effective performance and achievements.

3 – Development

Line managers/supervisors should provide sufficient time for employees to undertake role specific mandatory training and recommended training areas. In addition, it is important that the employee be supported to explore professional development opportunities to broaden their skills and knowledge in areas that are complementary to their role/duties within WACHS. It is at this stage that line managers/supervisors and employees should discuss relevant industrial instrument provisions or entitlements that may be accessed or utilised for development purposes that meet employees and organisational prioritised needs/goals.

Mandatory training requirements are a legislated priority. However, other development opportunities can be planned and achieved in relation to specific role requirements. Additional learning does not need to be in the form of formal education; under the [Public Sector Commission 70:20:10 Framework – Learning philosophy](#), 70% of action learning comes from on the job training, problem solving and real life experiences. Approval processes and documentation of professional development support should align with WACHS wide systems such as the WACHS Professional Development Support Application process. Following completion of supported professional development opportunities, employees are required to support the professional development of colleagues by sharing newly acquired skills and knowledge.

4 – Evaluate

Line managers/supervisors should schedule a structured discussion on a minimum frequency of at least an annual basis from the date of initial discussion. The session is to focus on the agreed plan and demonstration of any evidence of performance improvement, development and achievement against the plan. Use the performance indicators and milestones that were set at Step 1 to assist in identifying whether skill development plans were met, and required skills were developed and applied. In addition, this is an opportunity to examine any additional unplanned development opportunities that may have been undertaken through the cycle. Employee development is seen as a cycle through which employees and line managers/supervisors providing ongoing commitment to the development of WACHS staff.

Nurses and midwives can elect not to meet with their line manager/supervisor however; they must complete an Annual Professional Development Plan and provide a copy to their manager.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

WACHS Executive Directors and WACHS Regional Directors are responsible for:

- encouraging, supporting and motivating WACHS employees to engage in active continuous learning practices relevant their job/role/function;
- endorsing systems, education and tools that enable performance development planning, support, monitoring and evaluation;
- workforce compliance with policies and procedures which have statements of professional development requirements including [WACHS Learning and Development policy](#); and
- monitoring trends to identify and understand themes to assist WACHS strategies and planning.

Line managers/supervisors are responsible for:

- prioritising and planning for employee development opportunities;
- ensuring that employees are provided with adequate time and resources to complete mandatory training;
- ensuring that a development discussion is held with each employee within 3 months of employment and at least once per year;
- guiding, encouraging, and supporting the provision of constructive feedback to employee members in the achievement of development plans;
- ensuring that key organisational requirements and standards relevant to the work role (may include discipline scope of practice requirements) are discussed;
- establishment of appropriate plans of action that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely to address any requirements or skill needs;
- ensuring opportunities for education, training and development are allocated in an equitable manner to all employees;
- knowing industrial instrument provisions or entitlements related to professional development or study leave where relevant;
- recording the date, time, agreed plan, actions and outcomes of all employee development meetings;
- registering the completion of each employee development session on [WACHS Employee Development](#) intranet page; and
- documentation of all support provisioned to employees for attendance at learning opportunities is completed using WACHS processes and tools.

Employees are responsible for:

- owning and driving their own development process;
- consultation and communication with the line manager or delegate, taking responsibility for the achievement of the tasks and outcomes included in the plan;

- identifying any barriers or skill requirements early, to ensure that these can be addressed;
- taking an active role in the identification and addressing of their own learning needs/gaps including maintenance of professional skills and areas that are stated in the relevant scope of practice;
- completing the appropriate documentation and tools for seeking support for employee development assistance;
- maintaining personal records of attendance at external learning opportunities including keeping certificates of attendance/competency;
- utilising the WACHS Learning Management System (LMS) to identify, address and record learning activities; and
- engaging with local, regional and WACHS staff development and Learning & Development staff and resources for support and guidance.

Regional and Central Office Human Resources teams are responsible for:

- providing advice and support to line managers/supervisors and employees on the Employee Development policy and process;
- monitoring participation levels in the WACHS Employee Development policy and informing Line Manager s/Supervisors of compliance gaps;
- providing a system for line managers/supervisors to follow to meet recordkeeping requirements; and
- promoting recording of completed development sessions through the WACHS [Employee Development](#) intranet page.

WACHS Executive is responsible for:

- the provision of WACHS-wide processes and governance systems for recording and reporting of employee development activity and the Professional Development Support Application process.

7. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (HSA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

8. Records Management and Reporting

All employee development documentation should be stored securely in accordance with the relevant record keeping policy. WACHS wide systems and processes are to be applied in full.

All WACHS corporate records must be stored in the approved Electronic Documents and Records Management System.

[Records Management Policy](#)

Data on the completion of employee development is collected and maintained for reporting purposes via the Employee Development page of the [WACHS intranet](#).

Reporting will account for full time, part time, permanent and fixed term contract employees.

Performance development reporting is a requirement of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare. It is an assessable component of the National Safety and Quality Health Services Standards and is a key requirement of the Public Sector Standards. Reports are provided quarterly to the WACHS Board and monthly to regional teams.

Professional Development Support Applications process information is collected and maintained by the WACHS wide Professional Development Support Applications system.

9. Evaluation and Compliance

Monitoring of compliance with this Policy is undertaken by WACHS Human Resources with compliance rates reviewed quarterly at Business Performance Review meetings, monthly at Regional Executive meetings / Corporate Office Executive meetings and quarterly at WACHS Executive.

A compliance rate of 80% or higher is acceptable.

It is a requirement of WA Health that employees comply with all applicable WA Health policy frameworks. A breach of the code may result in improvement action or disciplinary action in accordance with the WA Health Employment Policy Framework. WACHS employees are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

10. Standards

[Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare.:](#) The National Safety and Quality Health Care Standards_version 2.

[Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare](#) : The National Corporate Program

[Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management](#)

[Public Sector Commission 70:20:10 Framework](#)

[Public Sector Management Standard](#)

11. Legislation

[Health Services Act 2016](#)

12. References

N/A

13. Related Forms

N/A

14. Related Policy Documents

WACHS [Induction and Orientation Policy](#)

WACHS [Workforce Learning and Development Policy](#)

15. Policy Framework

[Employment Policy Framework](#)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

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