



Learning and Development Policy

1. Background

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) aims to provide a learning and development framework that ensures the delivery of safe, high quality, consumer-centred care and services. We achieve this by supporting and facilitating learning programs that provide for the development and maintenance of professional skills through contemporary workforce education and learning.

Learning and development requirements are outlined within WACHS-wide policies including the [Induction and Orientation Policy](#) and other policies which include specific education requirements for staff. Legislation and Government policy may also determine education requirements applying to WACHS staff. The [WACHS Employee Development Policy](#) underpins the engagement required with staff to ensure ongoing skills development and continuous learning. This assists WACHS to attract and retain a workforce whose skills and capability grow in line with service needs.

2. Policy Statement

This policy applies to all WACHS staff (refer to the definition table for statement)

Staff are required to comply with mandatory training for the entire workforce as well as programs specific to their profession and/or organisational role. These are set up as Learning Frameworks within the WACHS Capabiliti LMS. . It is recommended that new staff will complete their mandatory training requirements within the first three months of commencing employment.

This policy does not address learning and development requirements for students or people on work experience placements.

3. Principles

The following principles support the WA Health Strategic plan in which we aim to 'Enable our staff' in building the knowledge, skills and attributes to provide an informed, and skilled workforce.

- Learning Framework requirements are completed as a priority by all staff.
- Learning is linked to WACHS values and organisational requirements, as well as team and individual needs.
- All staff are to have access to relevant learning and development opportunities.
- Managers support staff to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- Support is provided to achieve individual learning needs with an emphasis on adopting contemporary learning methodology to acquire skills.
- Competency assessment activities are underpinned by contemporary verification methods that are evidenced and maintained by employees.
- Technology is used where appropriate to enhance the accessibility and quality of learning by staff in regional areas including e-learning, simulation, videoconferencing, and interactive online learning.

- Interdisciplinary learning is promoted and supported.
- Staff are to be engaged with the skills and experience required to meet the core requirements of the job as outlined in the selection criteria.
- A standardised approach to the development, management, delivery and reporting of learning programs will be adopted wherever possible.
- Education programs and competency verification processes are aligned to the WACHS Strategic Plan and values.

4. Governance

Learning and development strategies and initiatives aim to ensure the ongoing ability of staff to meet their workplace responsibilities. Learning and Development activities can also be used to expand learning and support career growth.

Where possible, learning and development approaches will be standardised across WACHS. This will ensure that the same standards and content for learning are delivered across and within regions, ensuring a consistent approach.

It is acknowledged that there may be occasions where learning and development approaches will be developed in collaboration with external bodies/providers to develop innovative programs that enhance learning outcomes.

The learning and development system will enable continuous improvement through analysis of program content and learning outcomes.

It is recognised that staff may have completed programs via other institutions/Health Service Providers. To acknowledge prior education (skills and knowledge), recognition of prior learning - (RPL) can be applied to an individual's LMS learning record when current evidence of equivalent course completion is produced.

Each endorsed mandatory program stipulates identified learning and/or performance objectives. Any exemptions granted against a mandatory program will be for a program that is comparable in content, length, skill level and learning outcomes to the WACHS endorsed program. The exemption process is facilitated and processed by the WACHS and Regional Learning and Development teams.

WACHS Learning and Development determine the LMS program code. All programs are categorised in the [Program Catalogue](#) before being published in the Learning Management System (LMS).

The WACHS Learning Management System (LMS) provides a system for the management and administration of workplace learning and development. The system hosts eLearning programs, events. Standard LMS features enable program notifications and generate standard reports for organisational compliance. A series of [LMS Fact Sheets](#) provide clear instructions on the functions of the LMS.

5. Learning Frameworks (mandatory training)

WACHS has established mandatory and recommended learning programs to ensure that staff have an understanding of their obligations in legislation and policy and also to support safe clinical practice; responsibilities for safety and quality, compliance with codes of conduct and ethics, and to prevent workplace injury.

All learning requirements defined in the Learning Framework structure must be underpinned by a governance statement as to why the training is required. This may be as a result of legislation, Government, WA Health or WACHS policy, or as defined in the National Safety and Quality Healthcare Standards (NSQHS).

The established learning resources are based on the minimum learning requirements for that program. If additional learning is required to enhance knowledge or to reduce a specific risk, regions and/or work areas may supplement the learning programs with additional resources or more frequent training provided at a regional level.

Within the LMS, mandatory learning programs, skills and competencies are assigned to staff based on their occupational role. The LMS also provides access for staff not directly employed by WACHS (e.g. agency staff and non-salaried practitioners) to complete relevant mandatory learning.

A full list of the Learning Framework requirements is provided at [Appendix A](#).

6. Employee Development

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.

The WACHS Employee Development policy complements this Workforce L&D policy by supporting individual, team and organisational educational needs and strategies to achieve those needs.

WACHS supports the [Public Sector Commission 70:20:10 Framework](#). This learning philosophy states that learning is a continuous and reflective practise. It is a process for facilitating and inspiring individual, group and organisational learning and development.

7. WACHS Learning Programs

There are a number of methods by which WACHS will source and deliver learning programs. Primarily, programs adopted for use across WACHS are:

1. internally developed - programs developed and maintained internally; or
2. externally sourced - programs that are sourced externally, either as an off-the shelf or customised product.

The [Program Development procedure](#) outlines the pathways and processes for endorsement of learning programs for WACHS-wide use. Governance processes for the management of WACHS-wide learning programs is administered by the WACHS Learning and Development team.

For a program to be published for WACHS-wide use, a learning program must have been reviewed and endorsed by a nominated member of the WACHS Executive (the Executive Sponsor). For clinical programs, the Executive Sponsor must be responsible for the relevant standard under the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHSS).

Resources for the development of WACHS learning programs are based on current need, priority, funding availability and content development skills.

Where appropriate, WACHS will engage consumers and/or carers in the design and delivery of workforce learning for staff to ensure an ongoing focus on patient-centred care.

All WACHS endorsed programs are identified by a unique program title, code and relevant skill level. Program sponsors determine the minimum skill level for the program. The skill level options are:

- 001/EL1: Awareness
- 002/EL2: Knowledge tested
- 003: Demonstrated skill
- 004: Assessor
- 005: Trainer

All competency assessment activities (skill level 003) are underpinned by contemporary verification and assessment methods. Program Leads, cognisant of Quality Improvement indicators, determine the competency evidence strategies.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 WACHS Executive, and WACHS Managers are to:

- Arrange for new team members to be given LMS access/profile prior to commencement.
- create and support an environment that encourages self-development, continuous learning and the sharing of skills and knowledge
- support programs endorsed for WACHS-wide use
- support / approve staff attendance to meet mandatory training and professional requirements
- support and implementation processes for the collection and management of individual and regional learning and development needs
- determine regional objectives and baseline performance indicators to ensure that the workforce is suitably trained and developed to meet objectives
- ensure employee development conversations are conducted with employees and where suitable Regional Learning and Development teams are made aware of specific/required development opportunities.
- facilitate the processes for employees to identify skill gaps and learning needs through active participation in the Employee Development process including achievement of agreed plans
- identify any additional specific or unique training requirements for their staff that may be required by law or policy (e.g. handling of dangerous goods) and ensure that these education requirements are met.
- Actively monitor teams and individuals learning compliance areas via the LMS reports portal and LMS Dashboard reports.

8.2 All WACHS Employees are to:

- Complete Learning Framework elements within timeframes set by organisational policy
- accept responsibility for their own learning and development
- be responsible in accordance with legislative requirements to maintain professional development requirements required to maintain currency of registration
- identify skill gaps and learning needs through active participation in the Employee Development process including achievement of agreed plans and professional development opportunities.
- collect and maintain a variety of evidence sources for competency based programs.
- provide feedback and evaluation of learning and skills validation activities as requested
- utilise acquired skills and knowledge within their professional scope
- maintain records of professional development. This can be captured in the using the WACHS Learning Management System (LMS) or other methods such as the resources available on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency portal (APHRA)

8.3 WACHS Learning and Development Team are to:

- provide system-wide leadership of learning and development activities within WACHS
- administer the WACHS Learning Management System as per agreed business rules
- manage the governance processes for program development across WACHS
- manage program development of WACHS-wide programs
- establish minimum program standards
- manage WACHS Program Catalogue according to WACHS education/assessment program governance requirements
- develop programs as determined by the WACHS L&D Manager
- develop, manage and evaluate program development resources.
- communicate with Executive Sponsors and Program Leads where issues are identified with program content and integrity
- facilitate the engagement of consumer representatives in program development and evaluation
- lead a WACHS-wide Learning and Development Network (including any agreed sub-committees) and report minutes and outcomes key stakeholder groups/networks
- provide governance of learning evaluations to ensure systematic analysis of programs to support continuous improvement
- ensure reporting is facilitated to the WACHS Executive and relevant sub-committees and the monthly production of management reports.

8.4 Regional Learning and Development teams* are to:

* Regional Learning and Development teams include the Regional Coordinator, Regional Nurse Educators; Staff Development Nurses; site/area based staff development and trainers

- where applicable, conduct needs analysis, monitor trends and coordinate regional learning and development priorities
- work collaboratively with all learning and development staff and clients
- provide an advisory and coordination function for learning and development activities within the region
- where regional induction occurs, coordinate and/or facilitate regional induction of employees
- ensure maintenance of agreed standards on learning and skills assessment/validation
- provide appropriate reports on learning and assessment/validation activities, as required
- implement innovative education strategies to increase flexibility of program delivery and assessment against identified learning and performance objectives
- provide systematic analysis of programs to support continuous improvement.
- adhere to processes that include LMS Procedures and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes
- provide evaluation of programs to ensure that a systematic analysis of the merit, worth or significance of the object, system or program is addressed for regional programs
- coordinate and establish regional schedules of learning within LMS

- where appropriate, ensure that consumers/carers are involved in the design and/or delivery of Learning and Development programs.

9. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy document may constitute a breach of the WA Health system MP0031/16 Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (WA) 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.

10. Records Management

The Learning Management system is the organisation system for learning records.

All WACHS corporate records must be stored in the approved Electronic Documents and Records Management System. [Records Management Policy | Health Record Management Policy](#)

11. Evaluation

Evaluation is to address:

- evidence of meeting legislative requirements
- evidence of identification of learning needs of employees through the Employee Development meetings.
- program merit and outcomes
- evidence of meeting learning objectives
- staff satisfaction of program outcomes

This policy is to be reviewed every five years or earlier if required.

12. Definitions

| Role Definitions | Definition |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All Staff | Under the Health Services Act 2016 s6. a staff member, of a health service provider, means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an employee in the health service provider; • a person engaged under a contract for services by the health service provider Regardless of their contracted hours full-time, part time, fixed term or casual staff (including salaried doctors) |
| Clinical Workforce | The nursing, medical, mental health and allied health workforce who provide patient care. This may also include laboratory scientists. |
| Clinical Manager | Includes any staff member who holds management responsibility for a team of clinical staff. |
| Non clinical workforce | The workforce engaged in health service organisation that do not provide direct clinical care but support the business of health service delivery through administration, hotel services and corporate record management, management support or volunteering. |
| Nominated/Targeted staff | Staff responsible for undertaking specific duties at a facility E.g. OSH representative and Emergency Management roles. |
| Healthcare worker | For the purpose of this policy refers to doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, laboratory staff and mortuary attendants, clerical staff, support staff such as cleaners, orderlies and other staff who may have contact with patients. |

13. References

[WACHS Strategic Plan 2019-24](#)

[WACHS Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework and Guidelines](#)

14. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards 1.22](#)

15. Legislation

[Occupational Safety and Health Act \(1984\) \(WA\)](#)

[State Records Act 2000 \(WA\)](#)

16. Related Policy Documents

WACHS [Learning and Development Program Development Procedure](#)

WACHS [Induction and Orientation Policy](#)

WACHS [Emergency \(Disaster\) Management Arrangements Policy](#)

17. Policy Framework

[Employment](#)

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

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