

# **AUSTRALASIAN HEALTH FACILITY GUIDELINES (HFG) PROJECT**

## **Australasian HFG Development and Review Process**

Issue: 18 April 2006  
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## Overview

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The Australasian HFG development and review process is a mechanism for ensuring that the following design criteria are applicable and can be met:

### Criteria

- To achieve standardisation of design outcomes across all HCAMC jurisdictions where appropriate;
- As far as possible, the Guidelines are to be generic but will recognize each jurisdiction's specific policies particularly those that impact on health project briefing and design;
- The Guidelines will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the preparation of project briefs for design proposals enables them to meet the relevant codes and standards for consistency, functionality and buildability across the jurisdictions;
- The Guidelines must facilitate implementation into design proposals of the service plan goals, models of care and operational policies for each project being briefed;
- They must assist in the process of achieving operational efficiencies and containment of capital costs for health facility projects briefed in accordance with the HFG.

## Steps in the Development and Review Process

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### 1. Endorsement of Work Plan

The Australasian Health Facility Guidelines Steering Committee has endorsed CHAA's work plan for the development of Health Planning Units and other guideline components for 2008.

### 2. Production of First Draft of New or Revised Guidelines

The CHAA Australasian HFG Development Team is researching and developing first draft new or revised guidelines and other guideline components for review.

### 3. Establishment of an Australasian HFG Coordination Working Committee

An Australasian HFG Project Coordination Working Committee was established in 2006:

- Each member of HCAMC has been asked to nominate a representative as the committee member for their jurisdiction
- The nominated committee member will be responsible for the coordination of the review process within their jurisdiction for:
  - a. existing material on the web site
  - b. new HPUs and Standard Components
- Processes for selection and the resulting lists of reviewers for various guidelines sections will be developed and agreed in conjunction with the Working Committee and recorded for future reference. For new or revised

guidelines sections, the Steering Committee will be requested to endorse the final lists of reviewers prior to the review process being undertaken. However, should this approval or any recommendations for additions/substitutions not be forthcoming in a timely manner, the review process will be initiated with the preliminary lists of reviewers as first nominated by CHAA and the Project Coordination Working Committee.

- Each jurisdiction representative is responsible for preparing reviewer letters, issuing documents for review, collating, returning consolidated comments to CHAA for guidelines update and reporting progress to Coordination Committee.

#### 4. Distribution of review materials

- CHAA is responsible for the distribution of text (in Word format) and schedules of accommodation (in Excel format) to the nominated PCWC jurisdiction representative as e-mail attachments. Referenced Standard Components and Parts C and D are and will continue to be available on the web site [www.healthfacilityguidelines.com.au](http://www.healthfacilityguidelines.com.au)
- This report will be emailed to each reviewer as part of the above set, and will also be posted on the HFG website for information purposes to inform guideline users and potential reviewers regarding the process of guideline development.

#### 5. Rules for reviewers' comments

- Reviewers will be requested to add their own commentary (appropriately referenced) to relevant clauses, sections, etc; they are also required to be cognizant of other jurisdictions' specific requirements and to consider in their responses, suggestions, etc, how these may also be accommodated without deletion or substantial amendment to either guideline structure, content or intent.
- In order to facilitate the process of consolidating and correlating the comments, reviewers should use the nominated comment template.
- The current Index for each HPU is attached. It should be noted that this is consistent for all HPUs and has its own structure and hierarchy of codes in the guidelines database. The outline Index (table of contents) cannot be altered for either existing or new HPU. However, additional subsections may be inserted within each section. It is suggested that if reviewers are unsure as to where an additional subsection should be placed, they should add it to the end of the document and CHAA will insert as appropriate. Do not renumber any sections; this will be undertaken by CHAA.
- Other sections of the guidelines have similar requirements for consistency of setout and content including the Standard Components and Parts C and D. These will generally only be amended in response to the most persuasive argument, although as for the HPUs, additional subsections may be added within the existing structure. If reviewers are unsure where to add a subsection, they should add to the end of the document and CHAA will place this appropriately.
- Note that Room Data Sheets (RDS) and Room Layout Sheets (RLS) have been extensively reviewed by NSW and are available on the web site for industry use and comments. It is suggested that comments are noted on the

relevant RDS or RLS and faxed to CHAA (61 2 9385 5935). All comments are welcome and will be assessed when the RDS/RLS are reviewed in one year's time.

- With regard to **language style and terminology**, the following is an extract from "Health Facility Guidelines Framework for Development", the full text of which can be found on the web site under "Useful References":  
In order to create consistency within a large body of work ..., the style of writing has been carefully considered. All current and future authors of the new guidelines are encouraged to write in a consistent style which combines the good features of ... writing and language styles. These can be summarised as follows:
  - The new guidelines generally use a combination of Performance Based and Prescriptive styles. Proscriptive style is generally avoided except for warnings against common mistakes.
  - Authors are required to write the guidelines in relatively short paragraphs incorporating the principle of "one clause=one concept".
  - This allows each clause to stand alone, be accepted, modified or rejected by the reviewers in different States.
  - All clauses are to be written in a positive language (e.g. "An Inpatient Unit includes the following Standard Components"). Negative language used in more legalistic codes is to be avoided (e.g. "A Hospital may not be built unless it provides the following Standard Components in every Inpatient Unit")
  - Hard internal cross references are to be avoided (e.g. every operating room shall comply with clause 23.5.1 (b) on page 375.) Such hard references become obsolete with every change to the guidelines affecting clause or numbering. Also, they do not suit the web delivery system. Instead reference may be made to the information compartments within the new guidelines (e.g. "Refer to Part D Infection Control" or "Refer to "Clean Utility in the Standard Components")".

### 6. Collation and records of reviewers' comments and updating documents.

- CHAA will be responsible for collating and recording all reviewers' comments. All comments will be initially recorded (with CHAA responses/actions) in digital format as evidence-based research for future reference.
- CHAA will consolidate all responses from targeted reviewers, review and consider these in conjunction with the Working Committee as necessary, and recommend and make amendments to the documents prior to their final issue for endorsement by the Steering Committee;
- Conflicting or differing opinions between jurisdictions will be managed via conference calls or – if necessary – meeting. If resolution cannot be reached, the issues will be referred to the Steering Committee for a final decision on how to proceed.
- The final response and actions taken in regard to the received commentary will be collated as above and made available for review as required by both Coordination Working Committee and Australasian HFG Steering Committee members.
- Generally reviewers will not be advised of the specific actions taken in response to their commentary, unless they personally follow this up with CHAA.

### **7. Endorsement and approval of guideline documents**

- The final drafts of all documents whether relating to HPU, standard components or other guideline sections will be submitted to The Australasian Health Facilities Guidelines Steering Committee for endorsement prior to placement on the Australasian HFG website.

### **8. Australasian HFG website**

- Once endorsed, the guideline documents will be posted onto the CHAA-managed Australasian HFG website.
- Following posting for public release, an announcement will be made via agreed pathways e.g. by emailing of chaa.net members or other suitable avenues to be nominated and advised to CHAA by each jurisdiction.

### **9. Future Review of Guidelines**

- Once posted, guideline documents will be available for 'industry use and review', with a process outlined on the HFG website that will allow feedback from industry to CHAA on issues in regard to current guideline sections and components. This will allow for incorporation of 'variations' to current guideline sections in response to evidence provided by industry or others regarding the need to alter or amend existing provisions to more closely reflect current industry practices or in anticipation of changes in practice that will support innovation in healthcare service delivery e.g. new models of care.
- The guidelines' website will also provide information regarding issue dates for current and future guidelines sections plus the agreed protocols for a regular review and update cycle for all guideline components including 'sunset clauses' for guideline review.

The proposed Standard Components Revision Process was endorsed by the Australasian Project Co-ordination Committee on 03 May 2006.

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**Australasian HFG Project**

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