Effective clinical governance for the medical profession:

An introduction to the handbook
About the handbook

Who is the handbook for?
People with leadership roles in delivering and assuring the quality of clinical governance for doctors.

What is the purpose of the handbook?
It aims to provide boards with a description of the core principles underpinning effective clinical governance for doctors focusing particularly on responsibilities outlined in the Responsible Officer (RO) regulations.
About the handbook

What does the handbook cover?
• Leadership, delivery and quality of clinical governance for doctors
• Medical revalidation
• Identifying and responding to concerns about doctors
• Pre-employment checks for doctors*

How should the handbook be used?
You should use it as a tool to review and improve the clinical governance arrangements for doctors in your organisation.

*The RO Regulations only impose obligations in respect of pre-employment checks on responsible officers in England; Reg. 16(2) Medical Profession (Responsible Officers) Regulations 2010.
Who developed the handbook?

The handbook has been developed in partnership with the following organisations:

- Care Quality Commission
- Crown Commercial Service
- General Medical Council
- Healthcare Improvement Scotland
- AGIC
- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales
- National Guardian Freedom to Speak Up
- NHS England
- NHS Improvement
- The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
About the principles of effective clinical governance for the medical profession

Why are the principles important? They underpin effective clinical governance for the medical profession.

Embedding them can lead to better outcomes by helping organisations develop systems and processes in a way which supports the delivery of high quality patient care.
The principles

1. **Principle 1 – Organisations create an environment which delivers effective clinical governance for doctors.**
   Clinical excellence and the well-being of doctors are at the centre of the organisation’s approach to deliver high-quality patient care.

2. **Principle 2 – Clinical governance processes for doctors are managed and monitored with a view to continuous improvement.**
   Well-structured and governed systems with learning and continuous improvement at their heart promote confidence in patients and doctors.

3. **Principle 3 – Safeguards are in place to ensure clinical governance arrangements for doctors are fair and free from bias and discrimination.**
   It is important patients, doctors, and other healthcare professionals have confidence that clinical governance arrangements for doctors are fair. Transparency of processes, including sharing of information and how decisions are made, play a key role in this.

4. **Principle 4 – Organisations deliver clinical governance processes required to support medical revalidation and the evaluation of doctors’ fitness to practise.**
   Organisations have a responsibility to ensure their clinical governance arrangements support the medical workforce to practise safely and meet their professional obligations. But also to identify and respond to concerns about doctors as they emerge.
Organisations create an environment which delivers effective clinical governance for doctors.

Embedding this principle means your organisation’s board:

**Outcomes**

1a has the knowledge, skills, competences and access to relevant information to enable it to exercise its responsibilities effectively with respect to clinical governance for doctors.

1b provides leadership on promoting the importance of clinical governance for doctors.

1c actively encourages a culture of honesty, learning and improvement.

1d monitors risks associated with clinical governance systems for doctors.
Clinical governance processes for doctors are managed and monitored with a view to continuous improvement.

Embedding this principle means your organisation’s board:

**Outcomes**

2a Ensures internal and external quality assurance is undertaken to ensure the robustness of clinical governance processes for doctors.

2b Ensures learning is used to continually improve clinical governance processes for doctors.
Safeguards are in place to ensure clinical governance arrangements for doctors are fair and free from bias and discrimination.

Embedding this principle means your organisation’s board:

**Outcomes**

**3a** Provides leadership on equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) by overseeing and scrutinising development and implementation of EDI strategies.

**3b** Ensures decision-making processes are fair and free from bias and discrimination.
Organisations deliver clinical governance processes required to support medical revalidation and the evaluation of doctors’ fitness to practise.

Embedding this principle means your organisation:

**Outcomes**

4a appoints a responsible officer.

4b ensures medical appraisal is delivered in line with GMC and other national and local requirements.

4c ensures revalidation recommendations are made in line with GMC requirements

4d ensures processes for responding to and managing concerns including monitoring the ongoing fitness to practise of doctors are in place

4e ensures there are processes are in place to handle and share information relating to clinical governance systems for doctors appropriately.

4f ensures the necessary checks are in place for doctors before they start work.
Tools to support effective clinical governance for the medical profession

Read the checklist in the handbook. This provides you with detailed descriptions of outcomes and a series of prompts.

Use the simple self-assessment development template to help you review and improve your clinical governance arrangements for doctors.

Review → Plan → Improve
Access the handbook on the GMC website

Effective clinical governance for the medical profession

“Clinical governance is the system through which 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 can flourish.”

Effective clinical governance contributes to the safety and quality of patient care. Good clinical governance helps to reduce the risk of adverse events for patients, medical staff and the public.

Effective clinical governance is an essential management function that supports the effective management of risk and concerns the entire clinical, team and wider organisational learning.

This handbook acts as a significant support for organisations in evaluating the effectiveness of their clinical governance arrangements for doctors in the UK.

Who is this handbook for?

A guide to how the GMC’s present working practice can help you to deliver effective and sustainable effective governance framework for doctors in the UK.

What is its purpose?

To provide a guide with a description of the key principles underlying clinical governance for doctors, focusing particularly on the processes used in the supervision of clinical management.

1. Summary
2. About the handbook
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Clinical governance for doctors
5. About the principles

Save this link to read the latest version of the handbook online at any time.
