

NATIONAL CORE STANDARDS FOR HEALTH ESTABLISHMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

As part of quality assurance, the National Department of Health developed the National Core Standards against which service delivery by health establishments can be assessed. The seven domains of the National Core Standards are:

1. Patient Rights
2. Patient safety, Clinical Governance and Care
3. Clinical Support Services
4. Public Health
5. Leadership and Corporate Governance
6. Operational Management
7. Facilities and Infrastructure

1. Patient Rights

Patient rights must be respected and their rights be upheld, including access to needed care and to respectful, informed, dignified attention in an acceptable and hygienic environment, seen from the point of view of the patient, in accordance with Batho Pele principles and the Patient Rights Charter.

- *Respect and dignity*
- *Access to information for patients*
- *Physical access*
- *Continuity of care*
- *Reducing delays in care*
- *Emergency care*
- *Access to a package of health services*
- *Complaints management*

2. Patient safety, Clinical Governance and Care

There must be quality nursing and clinical care and ethical practice, reduced unintended harm to health care users or patients in identified cases of greater clinical risk, prevention and management of problems or adverse events, including health care associated infections.

- *Patient care according to protocols*
- *Clinical management of priority health conditions – MCWH, HIV and AIDS, TB, STI's*
- *Clinical leadership*
- *Clinical risk*
- *Adverse events management*
- *Infection prevention and control*

3. Clinical Support Services

There must be timely availability of medicines, efficient provision of diagnostic, therapeutic and other clinical support services and necessary medical technology, as well as systems to monitor the efficiency of care provided to patients.

- *Pharmaceutical services – effective procurement, stock control, prescriptions and dispensing of medicines*
- *Diagnostic services – quality and safety*
- *Therapeutic and support services e.g. blood, social and rehabilitation services*
- *Health technology - medical equipment and medical devices*
- *Sterilization services (CSSD)*
- *Mortuary services*
- *Clinical efficiency management*

4. Public Health

Health facilities should work with Non-governmental Organizations (NGO's) and other health care providers along with local communities and relevant sectors in promoting health, preventing illness and reducing further complications, and ensure that integrated and quality care is provided for the whole community, including during disasters.

- *Population based planning and service delivery – Flagship Programme*
- *Health promotion and disease prevention*
- *Health emergencies and disaster preparedness*
- *Environmental controls*

5. Leadership and Corporate Governance

Senior management must provide strategic direction through proactive leadership, planning and risk management, supported by the hospital board, clinic committee as well as the relevant supervisory support structures.

- *Oversight and accountability – functional governance structures*
- *Strategic management – strategic and operational plans*
- *Risk management – risks and medico-legal incidents*
- *Quality improvement systems*
- *Effective leadership*
- *Communications and public relations*

6. Operational Management

There must be effective and efficient human and financial resources, assets and consumables, records and information systems to support and ensure delivery of safe and effective patient care.

- *Human resource management and development*
- *Staff welfare and employee wellness*
- *Financial management*
- *Supply chain and assets management*
- *Transport and fleet management*
- *Information management*
- *Medical records*

7. Facilities and Infrastructure

There must be clean, safe and secure physical infrastructure (buildings, equipment, plant and machinery) as well as functional, well managed hotel (hospitality) services and effective waste disposal.

- *Buildings and grounds- adequacy and safety of buildings, cleanliness of premises*
 - *Machinery and utilities – electricity, telephone systems*
 - *Safe and secure environment*
 - *Hygiene and cleanliness*
 - *Waste management – general and medical waste*
 - *Linen and laundry*
 - *Food services*
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