

An environmental scan summary: Clinical governance resources for the aged care sector

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Key points

- We undertook a desktop environmental scan to find Australian resources on clinical governance specific to aged care that might support providers to implement clinical governance in their organisations.
- Our process involved structured Google Advanced searches and a scan of relevant organisational websites. We also consulted an Evidence Advisory Group of experts in the field.
- We found 37 resources reporting clinical governance in the context of Australian aged care, including residential and home care settings.
- These resources cover topics such as why clinical governance is important; how to meet governance obligations; examples of existing frameworks, and practical tools and advice for establishing a clinical governance framework within an organisation.

Background

The aim of this desktop environmental scan was to find current Australian tools and resources to support effective clinical governance in an aged care setting. We specifically sought resources that might support service providers, policy makers, administrators, clinical staff and personal care workers to understand what clinical governance is and its importance in care delivery.

Methods

The environmental scan followed a structured method for finding resources. We used a defined search strategy and checked each item against eligibility criteria. These processes are explained in further detail below.

Search strategy

The scan adopted a three-pronged approach to finding relevant resources. This involved conducting web searches, scanning organisational websites, and consulting an Evidence Advisory Group set up to guide content development on this topic.

Google Advanced searches

Structured searches for Australian aged care resources with a focus on clinical governance were conducted from mid-March to April 2023 using the Advanced Search version of Google (Chrome browser in incognito mode to avoid earlier search history affecting results). We varied the search terms to find a variety of resources including webpages, information sheets, toolkits, posters, and podcasts originating from Australia.

A set of terms was developed to guide the search based on two concepts: aged care and clinical governance (see Table 1). Terms were combined across concepts as well as with search terms for types of resources, e.g., report, guideline, podcast, handbook, toolkit, etc. Each search was limited to Australia using the 'Region' drop-down menu in Google Advanced search.

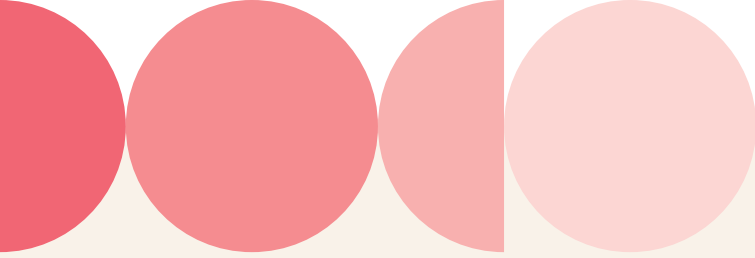
Table 1. Concepts and keywords used to find resources

Concept 1 (aged care context)	Concept 2 (clinical governance)
Aged care	Clinical governance
Home care	Governance/governing
Community care	Frameworks
Residential aged care	Quality and safety
Nursing homes	Risk
Long term care	Professional competency

For each combination of terms searched, we reviewed the first 10 pages of results returned. We also looked within each resource for other relevant resources.

Scanning organisation websites

We compiled a list of key organisations for more targeted searches for resources. This included organisations with relevance to the aged care generally or clinical governance within the aged care sector.



Organisations were nominated by the Knowledge and Implementation Hub team or found during the scan process. They included:

- Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
- Aged Care Essentials
- Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
- Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
- Department of Health and Aged Care
- Governance Institute of Australia
- KPMG
- Evidence Advisory Group

The Clinical Governance in Aged Care Evidence Advisory Group (EAG) was set up to guide our content development and were asked to suggest relevant Australian resources during the first formal meeting.

Eligibility criteria

Resources were considered for inclusion if they:

- Provided significant and valuable information to inform and guide service providers and the aged care workforce to implement clinical governance for care delivery.
- Were available online and free of charge. Those needing registrations were also considered.
- Were produced since 2019 (due to the updated clinical governance guidelines).
- Met criteria listed in the AACODS Checklist.

Data extraction

We extracted the following details about each resource to help describe it in the Resources collection:

- Author or responsible organization
- Year published
- Resource title
- Description of resource(s)
- URL
- Audience
- Settings
- Resource type.

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ARIIA was established as an independent, not-for-profit organisation, set up to lead the advancement of the aged care workforce capability by promoting and facilitating innovation and research to improve the quality of aged care for all Australians.

Results

From our search processes we found 37 resources that met the inclusion criteria of relevance and quality. These resources are now available to the aged care workforce through the Knowledge and Implementation Hub Resources Collection.

Resource characteristics

The resources vary in type and target audience. They include information sheets, webpages, reports, guidance, toolkits, posters, and podcasts. Most resources were intended for use by more than one audience and might apply in more than one service setting.

The selected resources focus on a variety of topics including:

- Clinical care and governance frameworks
- How clinical governance policy and standards affect the aged care sector and why clinical governance is important
- How to meet aged care clinical governance obligations
- Governing inclusively
- Clinical governance in times of change, e.g., by balancing risk, regulation, and duty of care in aged care
- Clinical governance for allied health practitioners
- How to meet your aged care governance obligations (corporate and clinical governance)
- Practical tools and advice for establishing a clinical governance framework within an aged care organisation.

Conclusion

Clinical governance supports the aged care workforce and visiting practitioners to deliver safe, quality clinical care to older people. This summary describes the processes used to find resources capable of informing, training, educating, and supporting the aged care sector in clinical governance. We will repeat the scan process on a scheduled basis to ensure new resources are found and included so that Hub content stays relevant to the sector's needs.

 Aged Care Research & Industry Innovation Australia

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and Aged Care