



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference

1. INTRODUCTION

The Swansea Bay University Health Board standing orders provide that:

“The board may and, where directed by the Welsh Government must, appoint committees or sub-committees of the board either to undertake specific functions on the Board’s behalf or to provide advice and assurance to the board in the exercise of its functions. The board’s commitment to openness and transparency in the conduct of all its business extends equally to the work carried out on its behalf by committees”.

In line with standing orders (3.4.1) and the health board’s scheme of delegation, the board shall nominate annually a committee to be known as the Health and Safety Committee. The detailed terms of reference and operating arrangements set by the board in respect of this committee are set out below.

The organisation has a statutory obligation by virtue of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (Section two sub-section seven) to establish and maintain a Health and Safety Committee:

“it shall be the duty of every employer to establish in accordance with Regulations (i) a safety committee having the function of keeping under review measures taken to ensure the health and safety of his employees and such other functions as prescribed”.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Health & Safety Committee (“the Committee”) is to:

- Advise and assure the board and the accountable officer on whether effective arrangements are in place to ensure organisational wide compliance of the health board’s health and safety policy, approve and monitor delivery against the health and Safety priority action plan and ensure compliance with the relevant standards for Health Services in Wales.
- This will be achieved by encouraging strong leadership in health and safety, championing the importance of a common sense approach to motivate focus on core aims distinguishing between real and trivial issues.

Where appropriate, the committee will **advise** the board and the accountable officer on where and how, its health and safety management may be strengthened and developed further.

3. DELEGATED POWERS AND AUTHORITY

With regard to its role in providing advice to the board, the committee will comment specifically upon the adequacy of assurance arrangements and processes for the provision of an effective health and safety function encompassing:

- Staff health and safety;
- Premises health and safety;
- Violence and aggression (including security strategy);
- Fire safety;
- Risk assessment;
- Manual handling;
- Health, welfare, hazard substances, safety environment;
- Patient health and safety – patient falls, patient manual handling;
- Staff healthy lifestyle / health promotion activities;
- Water safety
- Staff health and well-being

The committee will support the board with regard to its responsibilities for health and safety:

- approve and monitor implementation of the annual health and safety action plan;
- review the comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the board and the accountable officer's assurance needs across the whole of the health board's activities, both clinical and non clinical;
- the consideration and approval of policies as determined by the board.

To achieve this, the committee's programme of work will be designed to provide assurance that:

- objectives set out in the health and safety action plan are on target for delivery in line with agreed timescales;
- standards are set and monitored in accordance with the relevant standards for Health Services in Wales;
- Robust proactive and reactive health and safety plans are in place across the health board;
- policy development and implementation is actively pursued and reviewed
- where appropriate and proportionate Health and Safety incidents and ill health events are investigated and action taken to mitigate the risk of future harm;
- reports and audits from enforcing agencies and internal sources are considered and acted upon;
- employee health and wellbeing activities are in place in line with the UHB commitment to be a public health practicing organisation and corporate health standards;
- assurance can be taken in relation to migrating health and safety risks;
- employee Health and safety competence and participation is promoted;
- decisions are based upon valid, accurate, complete and timely data and information.

Authority

The committee is authorised by the board to investigate or have investigated any activity within its terms of reference. In doing so, the committee shall have the right to inspect any books, records or documents of the health board relevant to the committee's remit and ensuring patient/client and staff confidentiality, as appropriate. It may seek any relevant information from any:

- employee (and all employees are directed to cooperate with any reasonable request made by the Committee); and
- other committee, sub committee or group set up by the Board to assist it in the delivery of its functions.

The committee is authorised by the board to obtain outside legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of outsiders with relevant experience and expertise if it considers it necessary, in accordance with the Board's procurement, budgetary and other requirements.

Access

The chair of the Health and Safety Committee shall have reasonable access to executive directors and other relevant senior staff.

The executive lead for health and safety shall have unrestricted access to the chair of the Health and Safety Committee

Sub Committees

The committee may, subject to the approval of the Board, establish subcommittees or task and finish groups to carry out on its behalf specific aspects of committee business.

There are no formal sub-committees of the Health and Safety Committee but the committee will receive reports from the operational health and safety group as part of its assurance framework.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Members

The membership shall comprise:

Chair: Independent member of the Board.

Vice Chair: Independent member of the Board.

Members: a minimum of one other Independent member of the board, Director of Nursing and Patient Experience (Lead Executive); Director of Workforce and Organisational Development; Director of Public Health; Chief Operating Officer; Director of Corporate Governance / Board Secretary.

Attendees

Assistant Director of Health and Safety
Head of Health and Safety
Assistant Director of Strategy Capital Planning
Assistant Director of Strategy (Estates)
Head of Support Services
~~Three staffside representatives; Unite, Unison and Royal College of Nursing.~~

Invitation

The committee chair may extend invitations to appropriate persons to attend committee meetings as required from within or outside the organisation who the committee considers should attend, taking account of the matters under consideration at each meeting.

Secretariat

Secretary: as determined by the Director of Corporate Governance/Board Secretary

Member Appointments

The membership of the committee shall be determined by the board, based on the recommendation of the health board's chair - taking account of the balance of skills and expertise necessary to deliver the committee's remit and subject to any specific requirements or directions made by Welsh Government.

Terms and conditions of appointment, (including any remuneration and reimbursement) in respect of co-opted independent external members are determined by the board, based upon the recommendation of the health board's Chair.

Support to Committee Members

The Director of Corporate Governance (Board Secretary), on behalf of the committee chair, shall:

- arrange the provision of advice and support to committee members on any aspect related to the conduct of their role; and
- ensure the provision of a programme of development for committee members in conjunction with the Director of Workforce and Organisational Development.

5. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Quorum

At least two Independent Members.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings shall be held no less than four times per year and otherwise as the chair of the committee deems necessary – consistent with the health board’s annual plan of board business.

Withdrawal of individuals in attendance

The committee may require any or all of those who normally attend but who are not members to withdraw to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters.

6. RELATIONSHIPS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES WITH THE BOARD AND ITS COMMITTEES / GROUPS

Although the board has delegated authority to the committee for the exercise of certain functions as set out within these terms of reference, it retains overall responsibility and accountability for ensuring the quality and safety of healthcare for its citizens. The committee is directly accountable to the board for its performance in exercising the functions set out in these terms of reference.

The committee, through its chair and members, shall work closely with the board’s other committees, including joint (sub) committees and groups to provide advice and assurance to the Board through the:

- joint planning and co-ordination of board and committee business; and
- sharing of information

in doing so, contributing to the integration of good governance across the organisation, ensuring that all sources of assurance are incorporated into the Board’s overall risk and assurance framework.

The Committee shall embed the health board’s corporate standards, priorities and requirements, e.g., equality and human rights through the conduct of its business.

7. REPORTING AND ASSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The committee chair shall:

- report formally, regularly and on a timely basis to the Board on the committee’s activities. This includes verbal updates on activity, the submission of Committee minutes and written reports, as well as the presentation of an annual report;
- bring to the Board’s specific attention any significant matters under consideration by the committee;
- ensure appropriate escalation arrangements are in place to alert the health board’s Chair, Chief Executive or Chairs of other relevant committees of any urgent/critical matters that may compromise patient care and affect the operation and/or reputation of the health board.

The Board may also require the committee chair to report upon the committee's activities at public meetings, for example, AGM, or to community partners and other stakeholders, where this is considered appropriate, for example, where the committee's assurance role relates to a joint or shared responsibility.

The Director of Corporate Governance (Board Secretary), on behalf of the board, shall oversee a process of regular and rigorous self assessment and evaluation of the committee's performance and operation including that of any sub committees established.

8. APPLICABILITY OF STANDING ORDERS TO COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The requirements for the conduct of business as set out in the health board's standing orders are equally applicable to the operation of the committee, except in the following areas:

- quorum;
- Notice of meetings;
- Distribution of papers;
- Admission of the public and press.

9. REVIEW

These terms of reference and operating arrangements shall be reviewed bi-annually by the committee with reference to the board.