

1. Purpose

1.1 Policy Statement

Leaders of health service organisations develop, implement and maintain systems to partner with consumers. These partnerships relate to the planning, design, delivery, measurement and evaluation of care. The workforce uses these systems to partner with consumers (NSQHS Standard 2 — Partnering with Consumers).

Specialist Surgicentre Management (SSM) is committed to partnering with consumers and aims to create a health service organisation in which mutually beneficial outcomes are achieved through:

- Respectful relationships
- Clear and interactive communication that enables shared understanding
- Adherence to cultural protocols
- Promotion of gender equality, including recognition of pronouns
- Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge
- Consumers as partners in planning, design, delivery, measurement and evaluation of systems and services
- Patients as partners in their own care

SSM recognises the importance of involving patients in their own care and providing clear communication. Consumer partnerships form an integral component of clinical governance and safe patient care.

1.2 National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards (Version 2)

This policy supports the NSQHS Standards, including:

- Action 2.11 Partnering with consumers in governance, planning, design, measurement and evaluation
- Action 2.16 Providing information that supports shared decision-making and health literacy

2. Objective

To provide a high-quality, responsive healthcare service that is equitable and accessible to the socially, culturally, multi-faith and linguistically diverse community served by the facility, as far as is practical to individual circumstances.

Specialist Surgicentre provides care without discrimination and delivers services equitably regardless of age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, intersex status, marital or family status, pregnancy or breastfeeding status, race, cultural background, language, religion, socioeconomic status or health condition.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are supported to access services without discrimination.

Patients are identified through the patient registration process, including recognition of cultural diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status where disclosed. SSM builds mutually beneficial partnerships, promotes respectful interactions, adheres to cultural protocols and ensures clear communication to support shared understanding.

Where appropriate, community partnerships are incorporated to enhance patient outcomes.

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3. Scope

This policy applies to all workforce members employed or engaged by Specialist Surgicentre Management, including:

- Nursing Staff
- Visiting Medical Officers
- Clinical Staff
- Visiting Proceduralists
- Contractors
- Students
- Visitors

4. Definitions

4.1 Partnering with Consumers

Occurs when health systems, health service organisations and clinicians work in collaboration with consumers to improve patient experience and outcomes.

4.2 Consumers

- Patients
- Families and carers
- Community members who use Specialist Surgicentre hospital services.

5. Procedure

5.1 Transparency and Consumer Information

SSM management ensures consumers and potential consumers have access to relevant clinical outcome data to support informed decision-making when selecting a healthcare provider.

The organisation website provides information relating to safe and quality healthcare services.

Safety and quality information published includes:

- Hand hygiene audit results
- Antimicrobial stewardship information
- Infection rates
- Cleaning audit summaries
- Patient satisfaction survey results

5.2 Consumer Partnership Across the Patient Journey

Consumer partnership is embedded throughout the care continuum.

This includes:

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- Preadmission documentation that supports understanding of day surgery care
- Engagement of whole team that encourages mutual sharing of information
- Preadmission telephone assessment to support planning for a safe episode of care
- Admission processes led by competent clinical staff to identify risks and provide education
- Discharge processes involving carers to ensure continuity of care
- Provision of feedback opportunities following discharge

5.3 Patient Advocate

SSM has appointed a Patient Advocate as the designated independent consumer representative.

The Patient Advocate:

- Acts in the interest of consumers
- Provides independent consumer perspective
- Undergoes education and training to support understanding and awareness of the value of partnerships with consumers, including:
 - Person-centred Care
 - Shared Decision Making
 - Communication Techniques
 - Health Literacy
- Reviews patient-facing documentation for readability and health literacy
- Reviews consumer feedback
- Supports workforce education regarding consumer expectations

Patients are encouraged to provide feedback on all aspects of their care.

The Complaints Officer role remains separate from the Patient Advocate to support impartial management of feedback.

The Patient Advocate participates in the Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) and provides quarterly reports, including:

- Clinical outcomes
- Audit findings
- Improvement actions from a consumer perspective

6. Monitoring and Compliance

The Partnering with Consumers Policy and Procedure is regularly reviewed and audited to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and best practice standards.

Risk assessment of patient admission policy and procedure was undertaken initially to establish facility standards.

Compliance is monitored through:

- Internal audit program
- Consumer feedback analysis
- MAC oversight
- IIR processes where improvement actions are required

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7. Documents and Records

Document	Format	Location	Retention	Access
Interpreter Services Form	P/E	WI-13-05	7 years	Staff involved in care
Patient Portal	P/E	Medical Record	Life of document	Staff involved in care
Patient Feedback Form	P/E	Website	Life of document	Staff and Patient Advocate

8. References

Babacan H (2008), Multicultural Affairs in Victoria — Victorian Multicultural Commission
National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (2nd ed.)
NSQHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health User Guide (2017)
Health Services (Private Hospitals and Day Procedure Centres) Regulations 2024