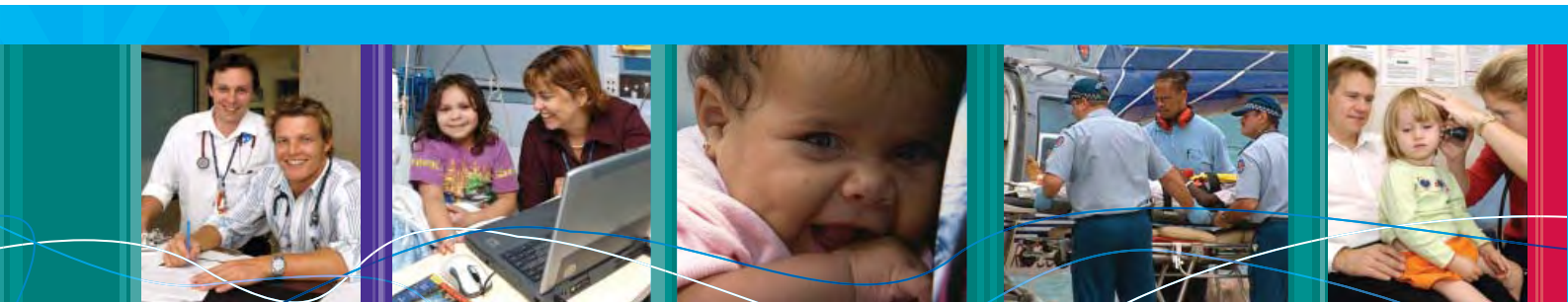


Queensland Health **Safety and Quality Strategic Plan 2005–2010**



healthier

Promoting a *healthier Queensland* through safe, high quality health care



Queensland
Government
Queensland Health

healthier

Promoting a **healthier Queensland** through safe, high quality health care



Dr Steve Buckland
Director-General, Queensland Health

Quality health care

“Quality health care means doing the right thing at the right time in the right way for the right person and having the best possible outcome. With safe, high quality health care, people can enjoy a better life.”

(Adapted from: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 1998)

Providing safe, high quality health services

Improving the safety and quality of health services is a high priority for Queensland Health.

The *Safety and Quality Strategic Plan 2005-2010* is our vision for further improving the safety and quality of public health services. Our goal is to design a health system that meets the challenges of the future and is safer for patients.

Improving safety is not only the responsibility of doctors, nurses and other health professionals. Everyone in the health system has a part to play – including the patients receiving care. Queensland Health wants to foster a culture that recognises that as humans we have the potential to make mistakes. But we also have the capacity to learn from our mistakes particularly when we are willing to discuss them openly and honestly.

Queensland Health is committed to a comprehensive patient safety and quality agenda. We are developing safety initiatives for Queensland Health staff at all levels of the organisation. With three innovative centres of excellence – the Patient Safety Centre, the Clinical Practice Improvement Centre and the Skills Development Centre – we will provide top quality training and support for our staff and provide world class leadership in safety and quality initiatives statewide.

Queensland Health is promoting a healthier Queensland through five strategic intents: *healthier staff, healthier partnerships, healthier people and communities, healthier hospitals, and healthier resources*. To assist in achieving these, the safety and quality plan is focused on three themes:

- **Culture of safety** – creating an environment where staff and patients are supported to report and address errors and system problems
- **Standardised systems and practice** – using the best available evidence to make management and clinical decisions about the care of patients
- **Skills development** – developing a safer, more flexible and effective workforce to meet the challenges of working in the 21st century

By working together, we can confidently provide safe, world class healthcare for the people of Queensland.

Dr Steve Buckland
Director-General, Queensland Health

June 2005



Queensland Health Safety and Quality Strategic Plan 2005–2010

Developing a culture of safety

To continually improve patient safety, Queensland Health must develop a culture that welcomes and encourages staff to report and learn from mistakes. This requires us to avoid blaming people for errors and to focus on improving the system.

People are fallible and even the best people in the best organisations make mistakes. How we plan for and manage human error will determine whether the error happens in the first place, and whether the patient is harmed. Creating a culture of safety does

not occur overnight. It can only happen as a result of effort on everyone's part to consider a different approach to the way we do things. We must constantly question whether we can do things better, more efficiently and in a safer manner.

The initiatives set out in this strategic plan will promote the changes required to create a culture of safety that encourages staff to report and learn in a just and supportive environment.

Promoting safety and quality through innovation

To maintain the high standard of health care expected by all Queenslanders, we will invest resources in a long-term safety and quality agenda. To achieve our objectives, significant workforce reform and change in practice may be required to make our health services safer for our patients and staff.

The formation of the Innovation and Workforce Reform Directorate and the Safety and Quality Board, will assist Queensland Health and its staff to progress the safety and quality agenda through a broad range of innovative initiatives and programs.

The strategic focus will be to:

- standardise processes for high risk areas
- improve key business processes and systems
- support evidence-based management
- develop a culture of safety and quality
- use information systems to support safe, quality health services

To achieve these goals we require the commitment, dedication and support of all in the health system. We are confident that working together within a clear clinical governance framework, we can deliver safe, high quality healthcare for Queenslanders.



Dr John Scott
Senior Executive Director
Health Services Directorate
June 2005



Dr Mark Waters
Senior Executive Director
Innovation and Workforce Reform Directorate
June 2005

Developing a culture of safety and quality

Hypothetical: A Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) on a busy medical ward interviewed an Enrolled Nurse (EN) who had been on duty overnight. An elderly patient had fallen in the night and fractured her hip. The Enrolled Nurse, a well-respected member of staff, expected to be blamed (and indeed blamed herself) for the incident. Instead, the CNC worked through a simple incident analysis checklist which she had been given on her Human Error and Patient Safety training course. The analysis began to turn up a number of unrecognised system issues, and she was able to identify changes that addressed these issues and helped to improve safety measures for patients.

Amongst other things, the analysis revealed a number of communication issues between the medical, allied health and nursing teams regarding treatment protocols for this patient. Most interestingly of all, over the next weeks and months the CNC began to receive a number of reports from other staff regarding errors, near misses and potential errors which she had never been told about before.

By being willing to do a situation analysis the CNC has helped introduce a culture change in her workplace that will benefit patients and staff.



healthier

Promoting a **healthier Queensland** through safe, high quality health care



Safety and quality principles

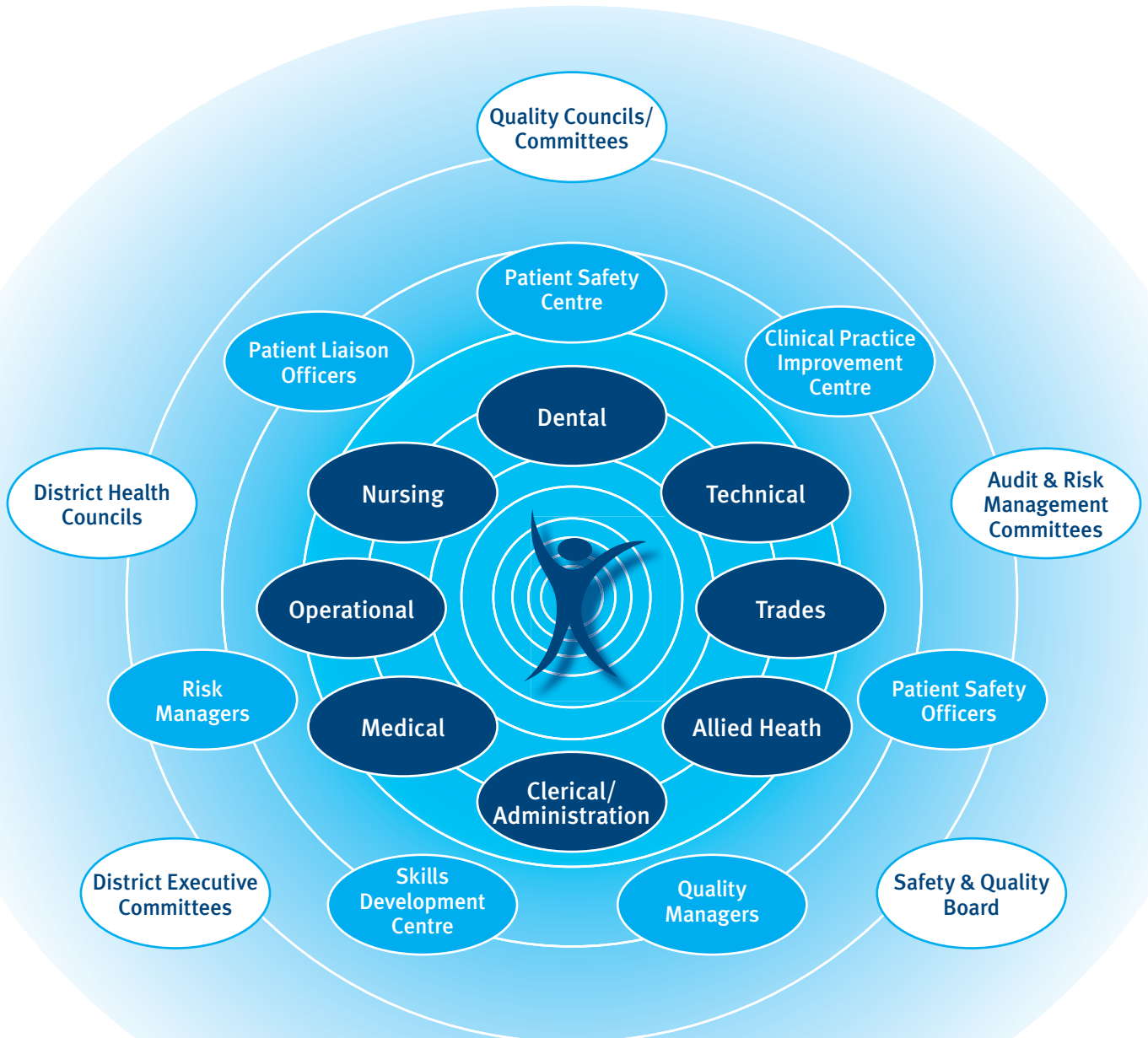
Queensland Health has adopted the following principles to guide the provision of safe, quality healthcare services over the next 5 years:

- we will support all staff to deliver safe, quality health services
- people at all levels will be willing to openly discuss errors and systems problems
- consumers will be actively involved in their own health care
- we will continually educate and train our staff to provide safe, quality health care and promote a learning culture
- we will use the best available evidence to make management and clinical decisions about the care of patients

Supporting all staff to provide safe care for patients

Patient safety is everyone's responsibility, from those with direct patient contact through to staff that provide support services. Clear responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of patient care are key aspects of good clinical governance. The diagram below shows the relationship between the patient, Queensland Health staff and some of the systems and initiatives required to support staff to deliver safe health services.

Safety and quality initiatives will be developed to support Queensland Health staff to achieve the delivery of safe, high quality health care.

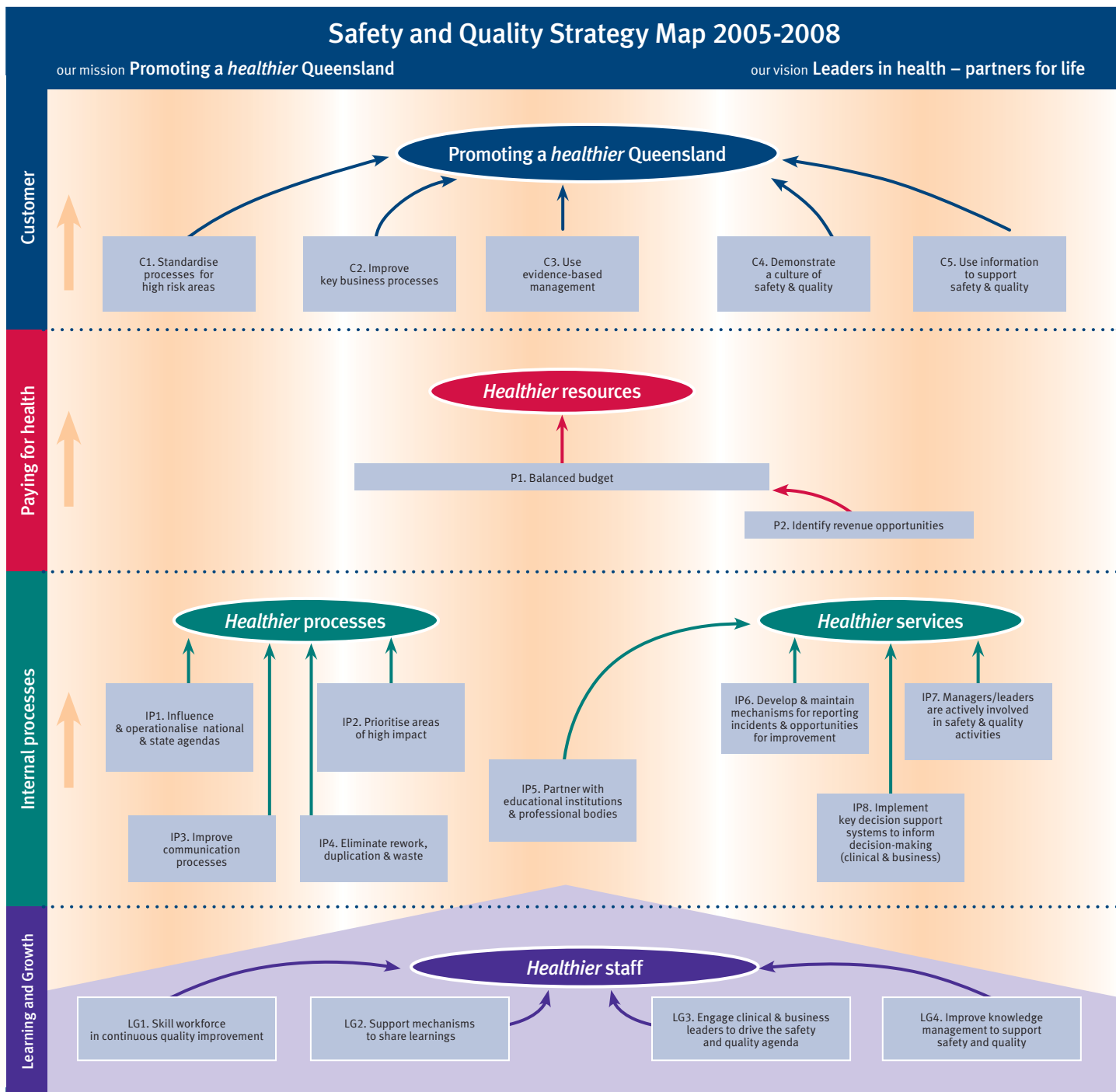




Our strategy map

The strategy map below identifies five key 'Customer' objectives for 'Promoting a healthier Queensland'. Under these, are a number of objectives grouped into four areas; *healthier staff*, *healthier processes*, *healthier services*, *healthier resources*, that reflect what Queensland Health is aiming to achieve in relation to safety and quality.

The objectives in the 'Internal Processes' section of the map describe key business processes that Queensland Health needs to do really well in order to achieve the 'Customer' outcomes. In this case, the customers are the staff of Queensland Health. They do not describe everything that we will do, but together with the 'Learning & Growth' objectives, they specifically focus on what we need to change and do well to support staff to deliver safe, high quality health services.





How we will achieve our goal of ‘Promoting a healthier Queensland’

Standardise processes for high risk areas

We will develop standard ways for reporting, prioritising and analysing areas of high risk to patient safety. This will be achieved by:

- developing and implementing State and national safety and quality initiatives
- promoting best practice non-clinical and clinical processes, particularly in areas of chronic disease
- developing ways of reporting and analysing incidents and processes, leading to safety and quality improvements

Improve key business processes

We will identify and redesign key business processes across the organisation, using strategies that:

- prioritise areas of high impact: high frequency, high mortality/morbidity, and/or cost conditions or interventions
- set specific, measurable and flexible targets to improve clinical and non-clinical outcomes and efficiency
- implement system and process change strategies to improve patient safety
- enhance information exchange within and outside Queensland Health
- eliminate duplication of clinical and non-clinical processes wherever possible

Support evidence-based management

We will use the best available evidence to make decisions about policy and program design and to make decisions about the care of patients. We will also discontinue processes that have been shown to be ineffective.

We will develop ways of sharing our successes, failures and learnings to continually improve the decisions we make.

Develop a culture of safety & quality

We will create a culture where staff are willing to discuss and address errors and systems problems in a just environment. This culture will be promoted by:

- Queensland Health managers and health leaders being involved in safety and quality initiatives
- providing all staff with education, training and support to deliver safe care to patients
- educating staff about the ‘systems’ approach to dealing with mistakes in contrast to assigning individual blame

Use information systems to support the delivery of safe, quality health services

We will develop data and information systems at all levels of the organisation to improve the safety and quality of health care. The aim of developing data and information systems will be to:

- support staff to make the right decisions
- collect and analyse data to identify areas of high risk
- monitor and evaluate variations in clinical and non-clinical practice

Standardising processes for high risk areas

Hypothetical: A patient is admitted through a busy Emergency Department (ED) with a possible blood clot in his leg. A medical officer writes up an order for Heparin to thin the patient’s blood. While the patient waits for transfer to the ward, an ED nurse reads the order and asks a wards-person to get her an infusion pump from the equipment room while she prepares the medication.

When the infusion pump arrives, the nurse begins programming the pump to deliver the medication. As she is finishing there is an emergency call, and she misses one step in the programming, meaning that the infusion rate is ten times too high. During the next few hours the patient receives almost a whole day’s dose of Heparin.

On examination, the following chain of events was identified:

There were 6 different types of syringe pump in the hospital, each requiring a different programming sequence.

The nurse thought she was programming the pump she ‘usually’ used.

The nurse was called to an emergency during pump programming, taking her focus off the patient.

The hospital policy stated that only one nurse need check the infusion pump rate.

As can be seen from this hypothetical although the nurse was experienced, a series of systems errors led to her error and the patient being harmed. On reflection, safeguards could have been put in place at each point of this chain of events, thus minimising or preventing the adverse outcome.

Since this event, all pumps have been standardised throughout the hospital and a policy put in place that requires two nurses to check a pump infusion rate. These measures will reduce the risk of harm to patients.

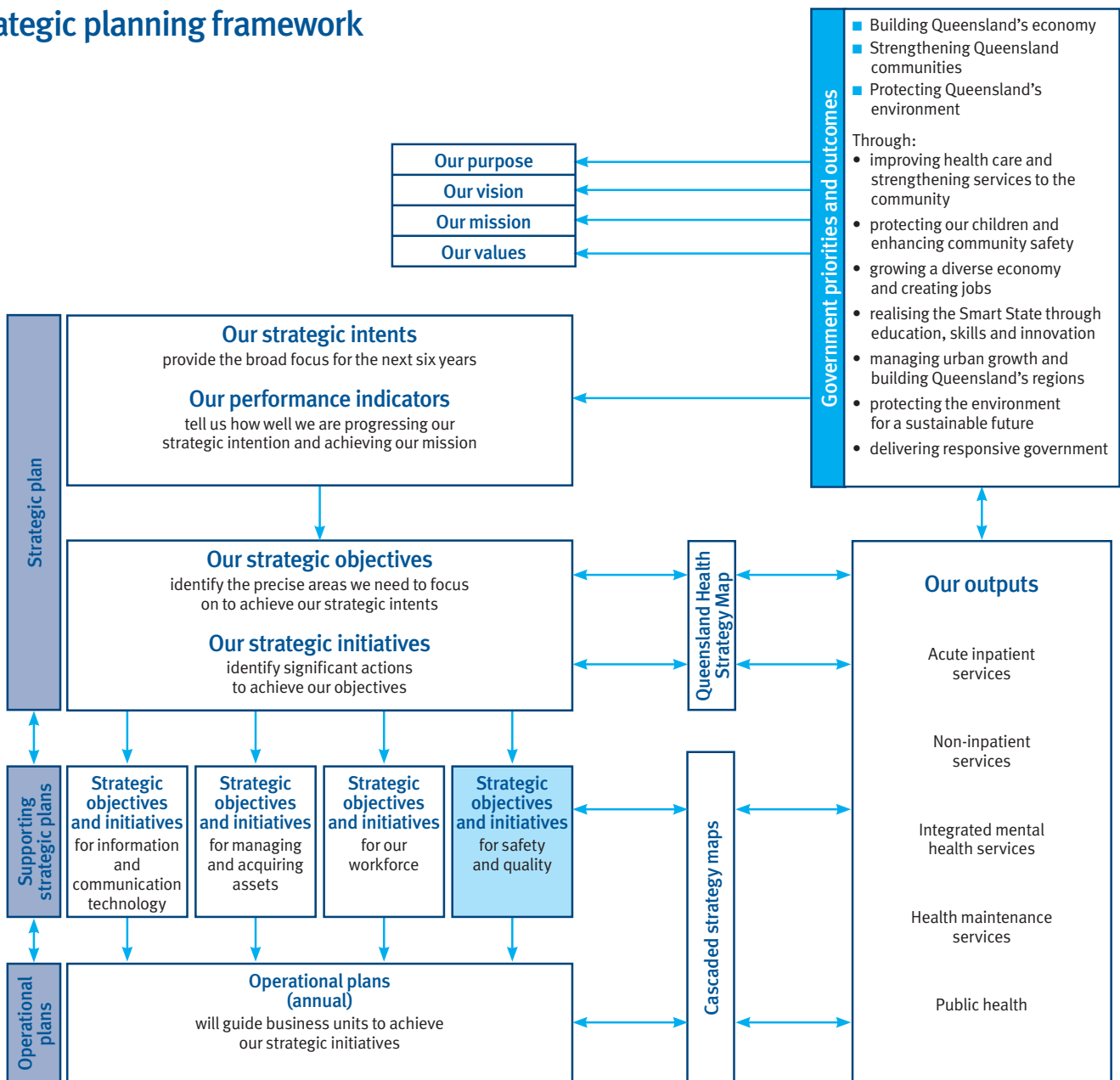
Strategic planning

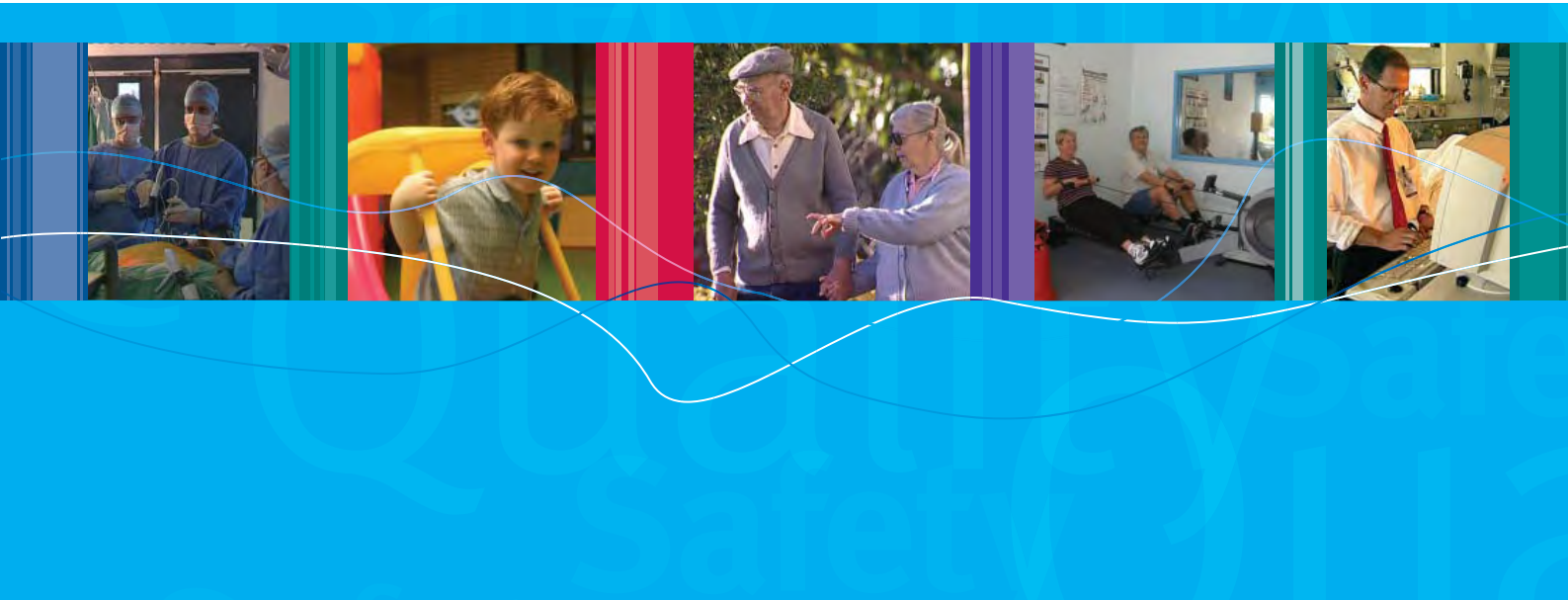
This diagram depicts Queensland Health’s strategic planning framework. It identifies the influence of the Department’s strategic plan and supporting strategic plans on our operational planning. The *Safety and Quality Strategic Plan 2005-2010* underpins the Safety and Quality Strategy Map. The strategy supports the organisation in the development of strategic and operational plans that include elements of workforce and information management.

Our contribution to whole-of-government policy priorities

Queensland Health is committed to progressing the Queensland Government’s policy priorities. Our outputs directly contribute to the first priority, health care, and support all other priorities. This reflects the fact that health is determined by a range of factors including our physical, social, economic, cultural and political environments, educational and employment opportunities, and access to health care. The influence of the government’s policy priorities and our contribution to them is shown through the department’s purpose, mission, vision and values, and in the *Queensland Health Strategic Plan 2005-2011*.

Strategic planning framework





Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Queensland Health staff who participated in the development of this plan.

Information

For more information about this plan, please contact:

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Intranet: http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/masters/QHUnits_innovate.htm

Internet: <http://www.health.qld.gov.au>