

Health Service Directive Management

Queensland Health Policy

QH-POL-366

1. Statement

Health Service Directives (HSDs) are issued by the Chief Executive (Director-General) to a Hospital and Health Service (HHS) under s47 of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*. Health service directives are formal documents that contain mandatory outcomes to be achieved by an HHS and may also contain required actions to be completed.

HSDs will be developed in consultation with HHSs to promote service coordination and integration, optimal use of resources and the setting of standards and policies for the safe and high-quality delivery of health services in Queensland.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to achieve:

- A consistent and rigorous approach to the development and review of health service directives
- Comprehensive consultation with HHSs and relevant stakeholders during the development and review of HSDs
- HSDs that can be effectively implemented, with due regard to risks and impacts
- HSDs that are registered centrally and accessible to HHSs and the public

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors and consultants within the Department of Health (the Department) divisions and business units that are involved in the development, review or rescission of HSDs.

4. Principles

HSDs shall be developed with the following guiding principles:

- **Autonomy:** as the least intrusive option which enables and sustains the greatest benefit for patients and users of the Queensland public health system
- **Clinician-patient relationship:** to optimise the quality of clinician-patient interactions
- **Coordination:** to enable service coordination and integration between HHSs, the Department of Health and other service providers

- **Efficiency:** to optimise the efficient and effective use of resources for health service delivery
- **Quality:** to enable and support safe, high-quality delivery of health services
- **Consistency:** to ensure consistent approaches to the delivery of health services where necessary
- **Transparency:** to enhance accountability through openness and increased participation leading to better-informed decision making
- **Accessibility:** be accessible (available and understandable) for staff and the public
- **Alignment:** be lawful and consistent with any Whole-of-Government, cross agency or agreed national policy on the same matter
- **Human Rights:** ensure all HSDs are considerate of obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019*

5. Requirements

This Policy requires compliance with the Health Service Directive Management Standards.

Mandatory requirements for the initiation, development, consultation, approval, implementation, publication and review of all HSDs are outlined in the supporting Health Service Directive Management Standard.

6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander considerations

HSD custodians must consider the impact the HSD will have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders when drafting, reviewing or rescinding an HSD. If an HSD has the potential to negatively impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, the HSD custodian must take actions to eliminate the negative impact.

7. Human rights

Human rights are not engaged by this standard, however, must be given proper consideration when initiating, reviewing, or rescinding a directive.

8. Legislation

- *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*
- *Public Sector Act 2022*
- *Public Records Act 2002*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*

- *Information Privacy Act 2009*
- *Human Rights Act 2019*

9. Supporting documents

- [Health Service Directive Management Standard \(QH-IMP-366-1\)](#)
- [Health Service Directive Template](#)
- [Health Service Directive Protocol Template](#)
- [Health Service Directive Guideline Template](#)

10. Definitions

Term	Definition
Chief executive (Director General)	Chief executive, or Director-General, of Queensland Health administering the <i>Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011</i> .
Health Service Directive (HSD)	A health service directive issued by the Director-General to one or more HHSs under section 47 of the <i>Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011</i> .
HSD custodian	Officer responsible to lead development of a health service directive and/or oversight implementation and review of an approved health service directive. Health service directive custodian is a position, not an individual, and will at minimum be a Senior Officer (SO) equivalent or above.

11. Approval and implementation

Policy Custodian	Policy Contact Details	Approval Date	Approver
Executive Director, Governance, Assurance and Information Management Branch	GAIM-corro@health.qld.gov.au	22 October 2024	Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services Division

Version control

Version	Date	Comments
Version 1	5 April 2012	New document
Version 2	20 May 2015	Policy rationalisation project
Version 3	22 May 2023	Updated to make minor amendments to maintain currency. Updated policy custodian information.
Version 4	4 January 2024	Full review with Departmental and HHS consultation conducted.
Version 5	22 October 2024	Updated policy custodian information.