

Abstract

Theme: Clinical Effectiveness:

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) is the regulator for pre-hospital emergency care in Ireland. Within its statutory remit¹ PHECC:

- prepares Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) for pre-hospital emergency care and makes them available to pre-hospital emergency care service providers and other persons considered appropriate.
- recognises, in accordance with rules made by the Council, those pre-hospital emergency care service providers which undertake to implement the clinical practice guidelines.

Organisations who are recognised by PHECC to implement clinical practice guidelines are known as licensed CPG providers and are currently subject to an annual licence renewal cycle.

Drivers for the Project:

Setting and implementing standards and monitoring of compliance are important levers in driving improvements in quality and safety in healthcare². In accordance with its strategic plan³ PHECC has developed a Governance Validation Framework (GVF) to further enhance patient safety, improve the quality of service provision and provide PHECC Council with the assurance that its licensed CPG providers are operating in-line with PHECC rules and requirements for their recognition. The GVF is designed to be compatible with existing national healthcare improvement standards⁴.

Patient Safety Initiative Development:

The development of the GVF utilised a collaborative approach with all PHECC licensed CPG providers. An initial trial model was developed which included template based self-assessment, onsite review, staff and management engagement and culminated in a final report to the organisation. This model was field tested with self-selected providers. Following the trial feedback was sought from a number of sources e.g. the development team, the external assessors, lead assessor, PHECC senior management team and the CPG providers who participated in the trial. The framework was further refined and a final GVF model was approved by PHECC in July 2017. The project has now transitioned into its implementation phase.

Benefits for Patient, Providers and PHECC:

The GVF is a quality assurance initiative which includes a patient focussed risk-based approach that has been developed to support quality improvement within PHECC licensed CPG providers. The framework utilises self-assessment by the provider followed by review and external assessment. Providers prepare, submit and maintain an annual quality improvement plan. GVF is designed to:

- ensure and continuously improve patient safety
- promote quality improvement within licensed CPG providers
- support pre-hospital practitioners in their activities
- assure PHECC of the quality of licensed CPG providers activities/operations.

Outcome:

The GVF will support a three year license renewal cycle which is focussed on protection of the patient and quality improvement. Alongside existing renewal requirements providers will be required to submit annually:

- a structured medical directors report
- a structured risk based self-assessment and
- a quality improvement plan.

When linked with the provider renewal system PHECC are confident that GVF will positively impact and improve patient safety, the pre-hospital practitioners' environment and the quality of service provision of PHECC licensed CPG providers.

1 The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (establishment) order, 2000 (amendment) order, 2004. S.I. No. 575 of 2004. www.phecc.ie

2 World Health Organization. (2006). Quality of care: A process for making strategic choices in health systems. The Journal of the American Medical Association, 267, 1–50. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2010-1791>

3. Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council. Strategic Plan (2015-17). available at <https://tinyurl.com/vb17th8q>

4. Health Information and Quality Authority. (2012). National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare. www.hiqa.ie

Introduction

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) is the regulatory body in Ireland responsible for pre-hospital emergency care¹.

PHECC currently recognise 27 organisations to provide pre-hospital care. PHECC licensed Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG) providers operate in four different sectors.

- Statutory
- Private
- Voluntary
- Auxiliary

Each of the 27 organisations has a distinct organisational profile and area of operations.

Patient Safety

The Governance Validation Framework (GVF) is a patient safety and quality of care initiative. Protecting the public is at the core of the PHECC Mission Statement.

"The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council protects the public by independently specifying, reviewing, maintaining and monitoring standards of excellence for the safe provision of quality pre-hospital emergency care"

Figure 1: PHECC Mission Statement.

Rationale

To enhance the level of protection for the public and the quality of service provision, PHECC decided to develop a quality framework² which includes internal and external assessment for its licensed CPG providers to:

- ensure and improve patient safety
- promote quality improvement within the licenced CPG providers
- support pre-hospital practitioners in their activities
- provide PHECC with quality assurance.

Following an extensive trial period which included field testing of the model, PHECC has approved the GVF as the mechanism to quality assure its licensed CPG providers.

GVF Development

GVF provides an evidence-based, transparent methodology designed to improve quality and safety in pre-hospital emergency care services.

It contains a series of standards related to specific themes and identifies supporting components which organisations should have in place, or work towards in their quality improvement plan.

Quality improvement is a Journey

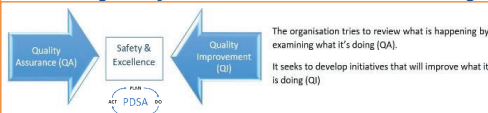


Figure 2: Quality Journey / PDSA cycle

Setting and implementing standards and monitoring of compliance are important levers in driving improvements in quality and safety in healthcare.³

The Framework includes a system of self-assessment, onsite review, staff and management engagement and quality improvement planning as a support to the licensing cycle.

GVF standards are relevant to the pre-hospital domain and acknowledge both the national quality standards⁴ and PHECC rules to become a licensed CPG provider.

Framework Testing

GVF was developed and the model was trialled with self-selected licensed CPG providers. The model has been further refined in accordance with assessors and participating organisations feedback. As a result licensed CPG providers have clarity on Council's expectations for their operations.

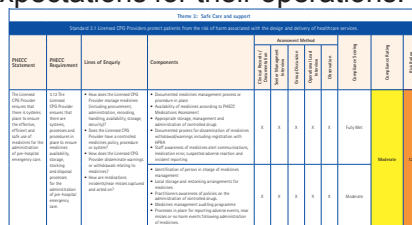


Table with 10 columns: PHECC Statement, PHECC Requirements, Lines of Enquiry, Components, and Assessment Results (Satisfactory, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory).

Figure 3: Example of GVF template

Quality Improvement

GVF provides an important risk based methodology for the licensed CPG providers to identify their areas of best practice, quality gaps and deficiencies as well as providing a framework for the development of remedial and quality improvement actions.

Quality Assurance

GVF provides the basis for PHECC to undertake regular assessments of its Licensed CPG Providers.

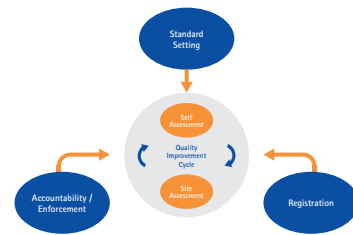


Figure 4: Framework Design

Output

When fully implemented GVF will support the PHECC system of application and renewal of licensed CPG providers. All GVF final assessment reports will be published online through the PHECC website.

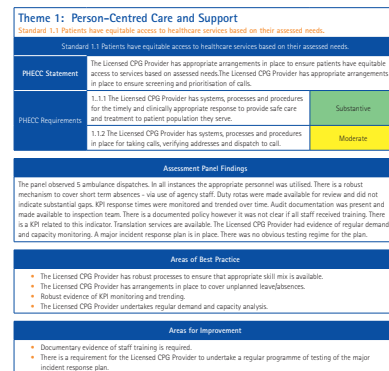


Table with 2 columns: PHECC Statement/Requirements and Assessment Findings (Substantive, Moderate).

Figure 5: Mock-up sample of GVF report section

References

- 1 The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (establishment) order, 2000 (amendment) order, 2004. S.I. No. 575 of 2004. www.phecc.ie
2. Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council. Strategic Plan (2015-17). available at <https://tinyurl.com/ybt7th8q>
3. World Health Organization. (2006). Quality of care: A process for making strategic choices in health systems. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 297, 1-50. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2010-1791>
4. Health Information and Quality Authority. (2012). National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare. www.hiqa.ie