



# ACIPC

Australasian College  
for Infection Prevention and Control

# Australasian College of Infection Prevention and Control

## Operational Guideline

### Position Statement Development

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## Introduction

This guideline is an information resource to support the Australasian College of Infection Prevention and Control (ACIPC) Policy Committee in the development of position statement documents using the Development Cycle outlined below. The aim of this guideline is to provide a streamlined process for all committee members to follow to ensure consistency across position statement development.

### Development Cycle

The Development Cycle includes:

- Getting started
- Approval to go ahead
- Development of position statement, including:
  - Research and analysis of the evidence to support your position statement
  - Drafting
  - Consultation and incorporating feedback
- Policy Committee review
- Endorsement by ACIPC Board of Directors
- Document management
- Implementation and loading onto the ACIPC website
- Notification of all members of the availability of the position statement, and
- Ongoing Review.

The ACIPC Position Statement Development Cycle states (1) how the ACIPC brand distinguishes itself, (2) how the members will benefit from the position statement, and (3) how this will be communicated to the members. The position statements should be constructed to be patient-centred, and built on collaboration. Position statements are to be evidence-based, current and consistent. Position statements protect members of ACIPC, patients and staff who use the position statements.

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## Scope

This guideline applies to all ACIPC members involved in the development and endorsement of position statements.

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## Section 1 – Getting Started

### Organisational Needs

Consider whether a new position statement document is the best way of addressing the issue or whether the issue can be addressed by other means. Before developing an ACIPC position statement document there are some key questions that you should ask:

1. **Why do you need to write a position statement document?**

Will writing a position statement document, improve patient safety and support ACIPC members to implement changes to support:

- Control of real or perceived risks or hazards
- Improved clinical care through the introduction of a new treatment or change in practice
- Improved morbidity/mortality outcomes
- Improved use of budget and resources?

2. **Are there suitable International, National or State guiding documents that could be used or adapted?**

If there are national guidelines or best practice standards that address the topic and the clinical experts/leads of the area support their endorsement, an application can be made to the ACIPC Policy Committee to endorse use of a such documents.

3. **Does ACIPC need a position statement or does a similar position statement already exist?**

To identify if there is an existing position statement that covers the topic, practice, treatment or risk, a search of the internet should occur. If there is an existing document a new document will not need to be written and ACIPC members can be referred to the existing document.

If a position statement is found that deals with similar issues or the new position statement could be incorporated into an existing position statement, then consideration should be made for the position statement be adapted for the use of ACIPC members.

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## Section 2 – Approval to go Ahead

1. Once a position statement has been selected for development, approval to move forward should be sought from ACIPC Board of Directors.

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## Section 3 – Development

1. **Assemble a development team (if appropriate/optional).** A development team is a group of subject experts and interested staff to provide the author with advice and assistance through the position statement development phase. The development team should have members from across the ACIPC membership.
2. **Develop a timeline** and factor in reasonable times to undertake research, drafting the position statement document, consulting with key users, incorporating feedback and submitting the position statement to the ACIPC Position Statement Committee and gaining their endorsement for further endorsement from the ACIPC Executive Board.
3. **Research and Analysis:** Research must be conducted to ensure the position statement is evidence-based and meets the needs of members. You may also be able to find a document that can be adapted for use by ACIPC. Research activities may include:
  - Conducting a literature review
  - Searching and reviewing related position statement documents – this could include health services, state, and other jurisdictions (national and/or international) as appropriate, identifying current best available practice
  - Consultation with experts
  - Examination of data and statistics.
4. **Legislation:** It is important that ACIPC position statement documents reference relevant state or national legislation. It is only necessary to list legislation that is directly related to the subject of the position statement.
5. **Communication and implementation:** During this stage of the Development Cycle consideration is given to communicating with ACIPC members regarding the development and implementation of the position statement.

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## Section 4 – Drafting

To start drafting your position statement:

- Ensure the correct template is used
- Ensure that the style for writing is agreed upon
- Ensure consideration is given to ACIPC members and consumers with English as a second language
- When using timeframes in position statements please use 24 hour time (ie 07:00 – 13:00)
- Consider whether completion of a First Australian Peoples Impact Statement is required.

**Naming your position statement:**

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- It is very important that the name of the document easily identifies the content
- Keep the title as short as possible
- Start with words that describe the subject or issue to assist members who may search for a position statement.
- Use simple language and plain English
- Do not use acronyms or abbreviations, and
- Where possible words such as 'the' or 'a' should not be used at the start of your title.

### **Test your document:**

When your draft is complete, it is important that your document is tested.

Ask a small group of ACIPC members to read the draft, to provide you with some feedback about how it reads. For example, after reading the draft once:

- Did they understand the content?
- What were the essential messages and were they easy to recognise?
- Did they understand what they needed to do?
- Did the information provide a logical step by step process to be followed?
- Were there any words they didn't understand?
- Were there any typing mistakes to be corrected?

Prior to sending the document out for consultation, make sure the position statement is plainly marked on each page as a 'Draft' so that it cannot be confused with an endorsed document. You will need to have a system for version control as ongoing changes are made to the draft before and after consultation.

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## **Section 5 – Consultation**

Key users of a proposed position statement and those whom it will affect must be included in consultation on the draft document.

### **Managing Consultation Feedback:**

When circulating a document for consultation identify the scope for comment so that stakeholders are clear on what their feedback should cover.

Specify a deadline of ideally two to four weeks for providing feedback. Documents relating to high risks or sensitive issues may need a longer consultation period. A shorter consultation period may be appropriate for:

- Brief documents
- Minor amendments following review, and
- Simple processes.

When circulating documents for comment, clearly state how feedback is to be provided, to

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whom and by when.

### Review of Feedback:

The author needs to review and assess feedback received to decide whether to:

- Accept the feedback and make changes to the draft to incorporate, or
- Justify why feedback is not going to change the draft.

A summary of all consultation feedback must be recorded on the template to:

- Highlight the issues raised
- Explain how issues have been addressed, and
- Provide evidence of appropriate consultation and that all stakeholder views were considered when position statement documents are submitted for endorsement.

What to include in the consultation summary sheet:

List the ACIPC members to whom the draft position statement document was provided to during the consultation phase and record:

- The name of the stakeholder
- A summary of the feedback received
- Whether the feedback is accepted or not accepted, and reasons why
- How the feedback was actioned or the justification for not accepting the feedback
- If a stakeholder does not provide feedback within the set time frame it is very important to include a notation that 'No response was received'. This should not be considered as endorsement or agreement with the position statement document.

Minor feedback relating to formatting, spelling, and grammar and typing mistakes etc can be summed up as 'minor editing amendments'.

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## Section 6 – Submission and Endorsement

In order for ACIPC position statements to be valid, the position statement and any accompanying material must be endorsed by the Board of Directors, uploaded to the internet, and members of ACIPC informed of this.

When your position statement document has been drafted, the consultation period is finished and the document finalised, you should submit it to the ACIPC Policy Committee via email and include:

- The draft position statement
- Consultation feedback summary

When submitting documents to the ACIPC Board of Directors please ensure that only clean copies have been submitted i.e. no track changes or reviewer comments.

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## Section 7 – Document Management

Once the position statement has been approved by the ACIPC Board of Directors the position statement will be loaded onto the ACIPC website.

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## Section 8 – Implementation of your Position Statement

Each new or revised position statement must be communicated to the members of ACIPC.

During planning for implementation you will need to consider who will be affected by the position statement and determine the best and most appropriate, efficient and cost-effective way of informing them.

Some position statements will need more comprehensive communication strategies, such as a media release or launch.

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## Section 9 – Review

Position statements and any supporting material need to be reviewed regularly to ensure they retain their relevance and effectiveness. During this stage consideration is given to the position statement documents intent, implementation and other factors such as local interpretation and unexpected outcomes. The effectiveness and consequences of the position statements are considered to see how they are operating and if they are achieving the desired effect.

ACIPC position statements need to be reviewed every three to five years as a minimum requirement. It may be necessary to review high risk position statements more frequently or prior to the allocated review timeframe because:

- An incident has occurred, or
- Legislation, best practice or strategic direction has changed.

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