

Health Facility Guidelines/Health Facility Briefing System - Variations Process in NSW

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Functional Sub group Corporate Administration - Asset Management
Corporate Administration - Governance

Summary This policy is being issued to outline the process for documentation and endorsement of project specific variations to the AusHFG. GL2008_017 detailed NSW recommended practice regarding use of the AusHFGs and notes a process for documenting project variations. It is NSW Health recommended practice that the components contained in the AusHFG are used as the starting point when facilities are being planned and designed, or existing ones refurbished. Consultation with user groups may result in variations or departures from the AusHFGs.

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Applies to Area Health Services/Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporation, Board Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Affiliated Health Organisations - Non Declared, Affiliated Health Organisations - Declared, Public Health System Support Division, Community Health Centres, Dental Schools and Clinics, NSW Ambulance Service, NSW Dept of Health, Public Health Units, Public Hospitals

Audience Area Executive, Capital Planning and Asset Management Staff

Distributed to Public Health System, Community Health Centres, Dental Schools and Clinics, NSW Ambulance Service, NSW Department of Health, Public Health Units, Public Hospitals

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Status Active

Director-General

This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this directive is **mandatory** for NSW Health and is a condition of subsidy for public health organisations.

HEALTH FACILITY GUIDELINES/HEALTH FACILITY BRIEFING SYSTEM - VARIATIONS PROCESS

PURPOSE

The Variations Process clearly defines what a variation is when health care facilities are being planned and designed, or existing ones refurbished and outlines requirements regarding endorsement and sign off project specific variations. The process is to be read in conjunction with the NSW Health guideline on the use of the Australasian Health Facility Guidelines (AusHFG) in NSW, [GL2008_017](#).

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

The NSW Health Facility Guidelines Variations Process is to be followed for project specific changes to the AusHFG. Clearly documented justification and appropriate sign off consistent with individual project governance arrangements is required.

For the purposes of applying the NSW process for project variations to the AusHFGs the following definitions apply.

A variation is:

- a change in the square metres allocated to a room
- a change to the engineering services
- a change to fittings, fixtures, furniture and/or joinery that result in a change to the intended function of the room

A **minor variation** to the AusHFG is considered to be changes to the fitout that do not affect the intended function of the room, including changes to location of fittings, fixtures, furniture, joinery and engineering services. Specifically these changes include:

- The movement/relocation/substitution of any furniture/fixtures within a standard component as a result of a user group request

A **major variation** to the AusHFG is considered to be changes that affect the intended function of the room or related functional spaces, including but not limited to changes to the size or fitout which changes the function of the room/space. These changes may include:

- The exclusion of any item not specified as optional as detailed on the Room Data Sheet (RDS) for a standard component
- A material change in the size of a functional planning unit (eg a decrease in storage space, an increase in bed room sizes)

A **material variation** is a variation that has an impact on the budget, service scope and/or program, or is likely to impact on the guidelines and/or is applicable to other projects (ie not project specific).

IMPLEMENTATION

In accordance with the Health Facility Guidelines/Health Facility Briefing System Variations Process the Project Manager must ensure:

- the process described in the *NSW Health Aus HFGs Variation Process Map (figure 1)* and the *Supporting Documentation for Variations Process Map (page 5)* is followed.
- that statutory requirements, ie those that are legally required such as through the Building Code of Australia or relevant OHS legislation, are met.

Committees involved during the Variation Process evaluation and approval are described on page 3.

The Project Steering Committee can approve Minor Variations and must submit to the Project Planning Committee supported Major and Material Variations.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Amendment notes
June 2009 (PD2009_035)	Deputy Director- General Health System Support	New policy

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

1. Health Facility Guidelines/Health Facility Briefing System Variations Process



Health Facility Guidelines/ Health Facility Briefing System Variations Process

Introduction:

It is NSW Health recommended practice that the components contained in the AusHFG are used as the starting point when facilities are being planned and designed, or existing ones refurbished. The AusHFGs are a tool to assist in identifying acceptable standards for facilities and should form the basis from which planning progresses. Good project planning requires consultation, review and testing with a representative range of stakeholders including service managers, clinicians and consumers to ensure the delivery of appropriate and safe physical environments that support and enhance the delivery of high standards of patient care. It is therefore essential that there is appropriate consideration and consultation regarding the models of care and operational policies for the services to be provided from the facility. The AusHFGs are guidelines that need to be rigorously tested by the Project Team and confirmed as appropriate for each specific project. They are not standards to which compliance is mandated.

It is important to note that the AusHFGs do not intend to restrict innovation that might improve performance or outcomes, or to be prescriptive where clinical service circumstances can validate an alternative configuration. It is the role of the Project Teams to identify specific project requirements, including practices of relevance to that project; Opportunities for innovation; impact on achievement of the service model; and, facilitation of operational policies.

Consultation with user groups may therefore result in variations or departures from the AusHFGs. Where the project brief has been amended to meet the requirements of the particular project, the project manager must ensure that statutory requirements, ie those that are legally required such as through the Building Code of Australia or relevant OHS legislation, are met.

For further information on the application of the AusHFGs in NSW please refer to the NSW Health Guideline GL2008_17.

Variations:

For the purposes of applying the NSW process for project variations to the AusHFGs the following definitions apply.

A variation is:

- a change in the square metres allocated to a room
- a change to the engineering services
- a change to fittings, fixtures, furniture and/or joinery that result in a change to the intended function of the room

A variation is not the use of a component from another HFG that is consistent with the service model. For example, if a therapy space is required in an acute inpatient area, it is deemed appropriate to use the therapy space specified in the rehabilitation guideline. Similarly, a special imaging suite may be required in an operating theatre development and it would therefore be appropriate to use the control room specifications from the medical imaging guideline.

A **minor variation** to the AusHFG is considered to be changes to the fitout that do not affect the intended function of the room, including changes to location of fittings, fixtures, furniture, joinery and engineering services. Specifically these changes include:

- The movement/relocation/substitution of any furniture/fixtures within a standard component as a result of a user group request

Minor variations are to be managed at the project level. The outcome of the variation is to be forwarded to the NSW AusHFG Project Planning Committee to provide a mechanism for monitoring any trends in variations across all projects.

A **major variation** to the AusHFG is considered to be changes that affect the intended function of the room or related functional spaces, including but not limited to changes to the size or fitout which changes the function of the room / space. These changes may include:

- The exclusion of any item not specified as optional as detailed on the Room Data Sheet (RDS) for a standard component
- A material change in the size of a functional planning unit (eg a decrease in storage space, an increase in bed room sizes)

A **material variation** is a variation that has an impact on the budget, service scope and/or program, or is likely to impact on the guidelines and/or is applicable to other projects (ie not project specific).

Major and material variations are to be submitted to the AusHFG Project Planning Committee for assessment. If the variation is assessed as having potentially a broader impact than the relevant project, the variation will be submitted to the AusHFG Steering Committee for consideration and endorsement.

It is important to note that material variations for high risk projects or projects of value greater than \$50 million will need to submit a separate variation report to Treasury consistent with their requirements (Treasury Appraisal/Monitoring for Construction Projects).

Figure 1 describes the process to be followed for project variations to the AusHFGs in NSW.

Committees referred to in Figure 1 generally include the following representatives:

User Group:

Members of the project team, clinical staff, support staff & management responsible for operating services from the facility

Project Steering Committee:

Area Health Service Executive, NSW Health including Statewide Services Development Branch and Health Infrastructure, project team, staff and management responsible for operating services from the facility

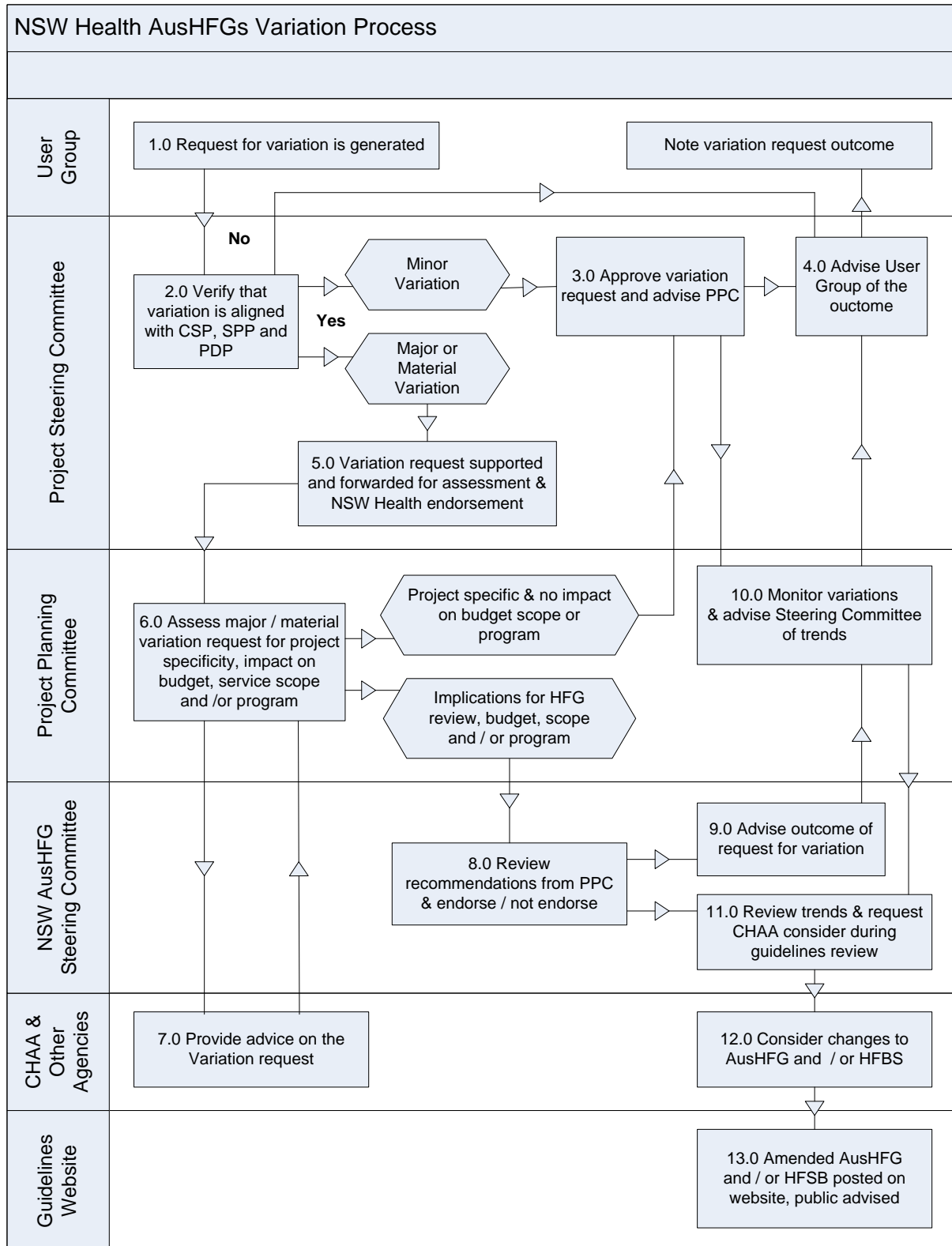
Project Planning Committee:

NSW Health including Strategic Procurement & Business Development, Statewide Services Development Branch, Health Infrastructure, Workplace Relations & Management; Area Health Service Representative. The Area representative is on a 12 month rotation.

NSW AusHFG Steering Committee:

NSW Health including the Director - Statewide Services Development Branch, Chief Procurement Officer, Chief Executive – Health Infrastructure.

Figure 1



SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION FOR VARIATIONS PROCESS MAP

Process Ref	Process Title (as per process map)	Comments
1.0	Request for variation is generated	Australasian Health Facility Guidelines (AusHFG) and the Health Facility Briefing System (HFBS) are the standards used for all NSW Health capital project planning and construction. User groups during the planning process may request variations to the standard components. This may include the standards or functions and or specification of components making up a health facility that affect the future operational efficiency or service levels.
2.0	Verify that variation is aligned with CSP, SPP & PDP	<p>The Project Director and HI rep should ensure that the request is evidence based and is aligned with the objectives of the Clinical Services Plan (CSP), Service Procurement Plan (SPP) and PDP (Project Definition Plan).</p> <p>The User Group is to be advised by the appropriate Project Director/Manager on the outcome of the variation.</p>
3.0 4.0 5.0	Is the variation major or minor?	<p>If the variation meets the requirement at 2.0 then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor variations are to be approved by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) (or Project Coordination Group and Planning and Development Committee where no PSC) and the PPC advised as to the variation content • The User Group is to be advised by the appropriate Project Director/Manager • Major/material variation requests that are supported by the Project Steering Committee require the completion of the attached variation request template. Supporting documentation including evidence and assessment of capital and recurrent cost implications must be completed <p>Documentation for all variations must be available on request.</p>
6.0	Assess variation for project specificity, impact on budget, service scope and/or program	<p>The completed variation request for major/material variations is to be submitted to the Chair of the AusHFG NSW Project Planning Committee (PPC). The PPC will assess the variation to determine if it is project specific and whether there is any impact on budget, service scope and/or program. If the variation is assessed as project specific, can be accommodated within the budget and does not impact on service scope or program it will be referred to the Project Steering Committee for approval.</p> <p>If the PPC assess that the variation request has implications for the relevant AusHFG, an impact on budget, service scope or program, the request will be forwarded to the NSW AusHFG Steering Committee for consideration. The PPC may request additional supporting information from specialist areas.</p> <p>Proponents should submit requests as early as possible in a project. Response by Steering Committee will take up to 2 months.</p>
7.0	External Expert advice	Advice maybe sought from external experts where required eg. Infection Control, Occupational Health and Safety. Centre for Health Assets Australasia (CHAA)

Process Ref	Process Title (as per process map)	Comments
8.0	Variation review by NSW AusHFG Steering Committee	Variations will only be endorsed by the NSW AusHFG Steering Committee if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting documents are provided - The requested variation improves the safety of staff and community - It improves the design of the standard component - It does not impact on the allocated budget - It (you then need to quantify what significant is so suggest delete) improves service delivery and future 'proofs' for facility design - It achieves a cost or benefit that is acceptable to NSW Health - It improves efficiency or effectiveness of service delivery.
9.0	Advise outcome of request for variation.	If the variation request has been submitted to the NSW AusHFG Steering Committee for endorsement, Health Infrastructure will provide written advice to the Project Director.
4.0	Advise User Group	The Project Director will then advise the User Group accordingly. Transparency of the process is a pre-requisite of the management of user groups.
10.0 11.0	Monitor variations and advise Steering Committee of trends	The Project Planning Committee will monitor all variations occurring within NSW and monitor trends. The Project Planning Committee will provide advice to the Steering Committee regarding a submission to CHAA to consider a change to the relevant guideline. Variations affecting safety in design will be considered with the UNSW Project Manager as a matter of urgency.
12.0	Request amendment to AusHFG.	Where variations result in a requirement to amend the AusHFG a request will be submitted to initiate the required process.
13.0	Amended AusHFG and HFBS posted on website, public advised.	Where variations result in amendments to the AusHFG, the HFBS will be updated and the amendments will be posted on the guidelines website and the public (including industry) advised.

HEALTH FACILITY GUIDELINES & RELATED SERVICES REQUEST FOR MAJOR/MATERIAL VARIATION

Area Health Service:

NSW Health Revision Ref:

Project Name:

Stakeholder/promoter:

Project Status: *(eg % sign off)*

Component/Item for Variation: *(eg Proposed change to standard component or other item in HFG database, include guideline & where appropriate relevant clause no. or reference)*

Variation applicability: *(please tick)*

This project only*

For all Health projects i.e. amendment to AusHFG/HFBS

* Note: All requests for variations must be supported by **qualitative and quantitative** evidence.

NSW Health will assess all submitted variations in terms of the following parameters relating to the perceived impact of the variation on:

1. Safety of patients, staff and community
2. Efficiency or effectiveness of service delivery
3. Quality of service delivery
4. Quality of facility design
5. Direct financial benefit to NSW Health

Principal Reason for Variation:

(Please provide summary here and detailed evidence in next section of form)

COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING SECTION IS ESSENTIAL FOR ASSESSMENT OF THE VARIATION REQUEST:

The following information must be provided for assessment of the requested variation:
(please tick item supplied or issue addressed)

Please list supporting documentation provided:

1 SAFETY OF PATIENTS, STAFF AND COMMUNITY

Please comment on how the proposed variation:

1.1 Improves the safety of patients, staff and community

Evidence/justification:

2 Efficiency or effectiveness of service delivery

Please comment on how the proposed variation:

2.1 Improves the efficiency or effectiveness of service delivery

Evidence/justification:

3 QUALITY OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Please comment on how the proposed variation:

- 3.1 Improves the quality of service delivery
Evidence/justification:

4 QUALITY OF FACILITY DESIGN

Please comment on how the proposed variation:

- 4.1 Improves the design of the standard component/item
e.g. may improve flexibility of use/'future proof'/streamline construction of this facility.
Evidence/justification

5 DIRECT FINANCIAL BENEFIT

Please comment on if, how and to what extent the proposed variation:

- 5.1 Impact of variation on the allocated capital budget,
(estimated cost variation for component/item of > 10%)
Evidence/justification:

5.2 Impact on recurrent budget.

Evidence/justification:

SUMMARY OF IMPACT OF PROPOSED VARIATION

Please address the potential for this variation to improve the quality of facility design &/or service delivery and provide details of all significant net time and cost impacts for this project.

Where a change to the AusHFG standard component/item is sought, please provide as much information as possible regarding the resulting impact of this variation on all future NSW Health projects should it be approved. Where a variation is being requested for application in a specific project, please indicate how the financial impact on the project has been calculated and where this involves additional cost, indicate how this variation will be funded.

Please attach additional pages as required.

IMPACT ON PROGRAM:

Please comment on the impact of the variation on the project program:

Name of person co-ordinating variation:

Contact Phone:	Email:
User Group Chairperson:	Name:
	Signature:
Project Director:	Name:
	Signature:
Area Chief Executive:	Name:
	Signature:
Chair Project Executive Steering Committee or Planning and Development Committee:	Name:
	Signature:
Priority of variation: High / Medium / Low	Date Submitted: ___/___/___
FOR NSW HEALTH USE ONLY:	
Review initiated: ___/___/___	Review completed: ___/___/___
<input type="checkbox"/> Referred for advice to:	___/___/___

OUTCOME OF VARIATION REQUEST:

Request **endorsed** by NSW AusHFG Steering Committee: ___/___/___

Reason for endorsing the request for variation:

Request **not endorsed** by NSW AusHFG Steering Committee: ___/___/___

Reason for not endorsing the request for variation:

Variation requires amendment to AusHFG:

Yes/No

Signed:

(for Steering Committee)

___/___/___

Action List - advice provided to:

SPBDB /HI

___/___/___

Shared Services Cluster

___/___/___

Project Director

___/___/___

Other _____

___/___/___

Distribution: SP&BDB_SSDB_HI_CHAA_Other _____