
POSTER ABSTRACT**Hospital Governance Operating System (HGOS): Building Structural Clarity and Accountability for Integrated Hospital Management**

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Background: Hospitals are complex systems of interdependent professions and services. Without clear governance, this complexity creates inefficiencies, unclear accountability, and difficulties in aligning resources to performance. Effective governance is therefore central to care integration, financial stewardship, and sustainable performance management. This case study describes the development of the Hospital Governance Operating System (HGOS) in Khoo Teck Puat Hospital and Yishun Community Hospital, a hospital system in the National Healthcare Group (NHG Health) in Singapore. HGOS is a systemic leadership role-levelling framework to provide structural clarity for the Governance & Leadership subsystem of healthcare and hospital systems and therefore improve shared accountability across diverse professional and operational domains.

Approach: HGOS was conceived as an organisational backbone applying systemic design to hospital governance. A unified hierarchy was established across departments. Leadership tiers were defined from executive to frontline levels (L1–L6+), with responsibilities narrowing from strategic to operational focus. Each role was expressed using concise verb–object phrases to eliminate ambiguity (e.g. “approves plan,” “assigns control owners,” “implements change”). HGOS was co-designed with stakeholders through workshops engaging leaders across all domains to ensure inclusivity, relevance, and ownership.

Discussions on workplan, risk, budget, manpower, and learning identified responsibilities grounded in current practices and desired outcomes. The design balanced operational realities with governance principles whilst clarifying accountabilities, aligning departments, and strengthening shared responsibility across multidisciplinary councils.

The process also uncovered cost centre anomalies that had obscured ownership and distorted financial reporting. HGOS corrected these inconsistencies, aligning financial accountability with operational control and improving transparency in governance and resource use.

Results: The product was a systemic levelling of our organisation, with clearer accountability lines and more defined responsibility areas for delivery and enablement of integrated care. With leadership levels clarified, governance and management processes – from planning to execution – became more streamlined.

HGOS also strengthened our management and decision-making structures by defining participation in key forums: Chief Staff Meeting (L1/L2, institutional strategy), Senior Management Meeting (L2/L3, cross-divisional operations), and Heads of Department forum (L3/L4, departmental review). Clearer participation rules improved shared-decision quality, information flow, and timeliness.

Within the Integrated Planning Cycle, HGOS clarified how successive levels of leaders guide, develop, and approve all dimensions of planning e.g., workplans and budgets. Strategic direction from L2 now informs divisional and departmental planning at L3/L4, ensuring all workplans contribute to goals of our integrated hospital system. This synchronised planning cadence strengthened cascading accountability from NHG Health to hospital leadership and departmental levels.

Early feedback from leaders reported greater coherence, transparency, and confidence in governance.

Implications: HGOS demonstrates how systemic design can embed clarity and accountability as foundations of integrated care systems by clarifying governance roles with respect to vertically and horizontally integrated care at scale. It fosters inclusive, multidisciplinary collaboration, essential for integrated care systems. The framework is transferable to other health or hospital systems seeking to unify governance, align resources, and deliver value-based, equitable care. Through structured governance, hospital and healthcare systems can move from fragmented silos into more integrated systems delivering safer, more efficient, value-driven care.