

NSW Collaborating Hospitals' Audit of Surgical Mortality

CHASM Redesign Update July 2026

Progress on the Redesign Project

The Collaborating Hospitals' Audit of Surgical Mortality (CHASM) Redesign Working Group is led by Dr Valerie Malka, together with Associate Professor Brett Courtenay OAM and Associate Professor Mark Sheridan, Professor Neil Merrett, Professor Mohamed Khadra AO, and Dr Pecky De Silva. Over the last few months, progress has been made in developing a comprehensive surgical mortality review model in consultation with Local Health Districts (LHDs) Clinical Governance Units, the Clinical Excellence Commission (CEC) Patient Safety and Safety Intelligence, Data Analytics business unit and Surgeons.

The CHASM Redesign model will be designed to identify system and process concerns and highlight key thematic opportunities for improvement in patient care. It is intended as an educational model which will include important aspects into mortality reviews such as human factors and reflective practice. These new metrics should enable surgeons to respond to shared challenges in ways that work locally.

What is the CHASM Redesign Concept?

The new model for surgical mortality review in NSW Health has its source data collected from the Quality Improvement Data System (QIDS) Death Review screening tool, which is used by LHDs. The new redesign will feature:

- An automated process of surgical triage to specifically identify cases requiring independent multi-specialist peer review for potential areas of concern.
- A standardised Surgical Review Form which includes local Morbidity and Mortality meeting outcomes and recommendations, as well as human factors and reflective practice questions.
- Improved feedback loops for the system with identification of trends and themes and timely reports for key stakeholders.

Mortality Review and the CHASM Committee

- The Working Group and the CHASM Committee is conducting a review of the 2026 deaths using the new CHASM+ triage process. Cases identified with potential areas of concern will be sent to individual surgeons to complete the surgical review form.
- Surgeons are asked to ensure their current NSW Health email details are communicated to the CHASM Office to facilitate this. Please note, only NSW Health emails will be used.
- Following this, cases will be peer reviewed by the appropriate specialty with feedback provided.

What does this mean for you?

The parameters for CHASM criteria **will not change** i.e. Reporting patient deaths within 30 days of surgery, or whilst under the care of a surgeon, regardless of whether an operation occurred.

Hospitals should **continue** to enter mortality data into the QIDS Death Review Database, as per usual.

For assistance with Continuous Professional Development (CPD) verification and compliance for 2025, surgeons can email the CHASM Office on CEC-CHASM@health.nsw.gov.au

For more information on QIDS contact your LHD's Clinical Governance Unit