



Clinical Pathways Course: Care Process Design, Variance Tracking and Pathway Governance



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Introduction:

Clinical pathways, care process design, variance tracking and pathway governance are the subject of this 5-day course for quality, clinical governance, nursing and medical leaders, ending with a Clinical Pathway Design Package for a case condition. Hospitals see wide differences in how the same condition is treated across wards and shifts, guidelines stay on shelves, and nobody records why patients leave the agreed plan. Nominees already lead clinical services or quality work and learn through case studies built on pathway documents, order sets and variance logs. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this clinical pathways course.

Course Objectives:

- Select conditions and procedures suited to a clinical pathway using volume, risk, cost and practice variation evidence
- Adapt published guideline recommendations into local pathway steps through a multidisciplinary pathway team
- Map the patient journey and write a pathway document with timeframes, progression criteria and variance fields
- Specify electronic order sets, EHR pathway templates and a patient-facing version of the pathway
- Code, aggregate and analyse pathway variances and report pathway process, outcome and balancing indicators
- Run pathway pilots and set up a governance committee with version control and scheduled review cycles

Target Audience:

- Managers responsible for clinical quality, clinical effectiveness and practice standardisation across services
 - Clinical governance leads responsible for policies, guidelines and approval of clinical documents
 - Nursing managers responsible for ward practice standards, nursing documentation and pathway adherence
 - Medical service leads responsible for specialty care standards and multidisciplinary team decisions
 - Clinical informatics leads responsible for order sets and structured EHR documentation
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Course Outline:

Day 1: Clinical Pathway Concepts, Condition Selection and Baseline

- Five-Criterion Clinical Pathway Definition and Pathway Synonyms
- Pathways Versus Protocols, Guidelines, Order Sets and Care Bundles
- Condition Selection Matrix by Volume, Risk, Cost and Variation
- Pathway Scope Statement With Entry and Exit Criteria
- Baseline Practice Variation Audit From Sampled Patient Records

Day 2: Evidence Adaptation and the Multidisciplinary Pathway Team

- Guideline Retrieval and Appraisal of Recommendation Strength
- Local Adaptation Grid Linking Recommendations to Pathway Steps
- Multidisciplinary Pathway Team Charter and Clinical Lead Role
- Nominal Group Technique for Contested Pathway Recommendations
- Pathway Development Lifecycle From Proposal to Approved Version

Day 3: Care Process Mapping, Pathway Documents and EHR Build

- Swimlane Process Mapping of the Patient Journey by Discipline
- Time-Based and Criteria-Based Progression Steps in the Pathway
- Pathway Document Layout With Goals, Interventions and Variance Fields
- Electronic Order Sets and EHR Pathway Template Specification
- Patient-Facing Pathway Leaflet With Expected Recovery Milestones

Day 4: Variance Analysis, Pathway Indicators and Pathway Governance

- Variance Coding by Patient, Clinician and System Cause
- Variance Aggregation Reports and Pareto Review of Deviations
- Pathway Indicator Set With Process, Outcome and Balancing Measures
- Pilot Ward Rollout, Pathway Training and Adherence Audits
- Pathway Governance Committee, Version Control and Review Cycles

Day 5: Case Study on Pathway Design With Variance Tracking for a Case Condition

- Case Condition Data Pack and Selection Rationale Review
 - Case Pathway Map With Timeframes and Progression Criteria
 - Case Order Set and Patient Information Draft
 - Case Variance Tracking Sheet and Indicator Targets
 - Clinical Pathway Design Package Completion and Panel Defence
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Skills You Will Gain:

- Pathway Condition Prioritisation
- Guideline Adaptation
- Care Process Mapping
- Pathway Document Writing
- Order Set Specification
- Variance Coding and Analysis
- Pathway Indicator Design
- Pathway Version Control

Why Attend This Course:

- Present a Clinical Pathway Design Package to the clinical governance committee and the service clinical lead
- Decide which conditions merit a pathway and which deviations call for a pathway revision rather than staff retraining
- Avoid pathways that sit unused because they conflict with order sets, documentation or ward routines
- Share variance codes, pathway templates and adaptation grids with ward teams and pathway authors

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant hands the Clinical Pathway Design Package to the clinical governance committee, the service clinical lead and the clinical informatics team. They use it to approve the pathway for a pilot ward, build its order set and documentation in the EHR and start variance recording from the first patient. After the first review cycle, the committee should compare adherence, variance patterns and the pathway indicators with the baseline audit, then revise the steps, timeframes or order set entries that generate the most avoidable deviations.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants know before the clinical pathways and care process design course?

Participants should already lead clinical services, quality work or nursing practice and be familiar with clinical documentation. No clinical treatment is taught. Bringing an anonymised existing pathway, order set or audit of practice variation helps them apply the case work to their own service.

How does a clinical pathways course differ from a healthcare quality improvement or change management course?

It concentrates on building and running pathways for defined conditions: selection, guideline adaptation, process mapping, order sets, variance coding, pathway indicators and review cycles. Quality improvement and change management courses cover improvement methods and organisational change across services and treat pathways as one example.

What is variance tracking in clinical pathways and why does it matter?

Variance tracking records each time a patient's care departs from the pathway, with its cause coded as patient, clinician or system. Aggregated variances show whether the pathway, the organisation or the case mix needs to change and guide each scheduled pathway revision.

What do participants take back from the clinical pathways and care process design course?

Participants take back a Clinical Pathway Design Package for a case condition: selection rationale, adaptation grid, pathway map with timeframes, order set outline, patient information draft, variance tracking sheet and indicator set, ready to adapt for a pathway in their own organisation.
