

Governance in Emergency Care: The African perspective

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What is governance?

Governance encompasses the system by which an organisation is controlled and operates, and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to account. Ethics, risk management, compliance and administration are all elements of governance.

What is good governance?

- Operational management:
 - Effective processes (do the right things)
 - Efficient process (do things the right way)
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Leadership
- Value driven
- Equitable and inclusive
- Responsive
- Follows the rule of law

Governance vs Quality management

- Quality assurance/control – structured systems to monitor, report and improve
- Process driven
- Includes tools such as audits and adverse incident reporting

Who is responsible for good governance in EMS?

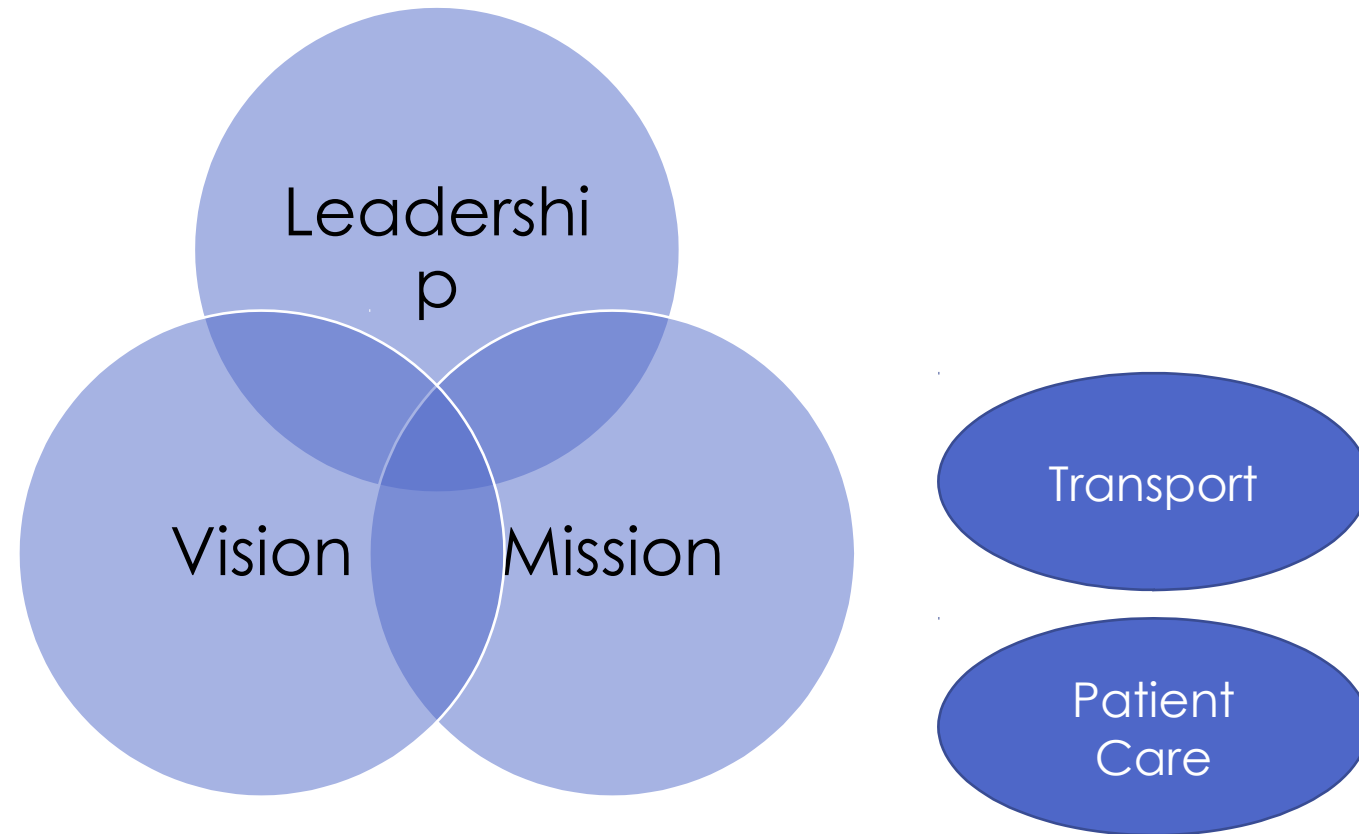
- Leadership
- Everyone

Good governance happens at multiple levels

What are the challenges to creating governance structures in EMS?

- Independent practitioners
- Geographical separation
- Multiple components to organization
- Continuously challenged
- Limited integration into other components of the health system
- resources

What guides our active governance processes in EMS?



Governance at multiple levels

Case study: Western Cape EMS governance structure

- Clinical governance
- Operational governance



Operational governance

- Time targets
- Equipment and shortages
- Infection control
- Staff safety
- Communication and dispatch
- Quality management



Clinical Governance

What is worth reviewing?

- Complex clinical cases
- Use or allocation of resources
- Documentation/Information management
- Complaints from within and outside the health system
- Patient outcomes
- Health system outcomes
- Referral patterns and pathways
- High value services – AMS, Special events, Rescue



Clinical Governance

- Pre-hospital emergency care is the interplay of scene management and patient care with the operational demands of communication and transport as well as the link into facility based care
- Affected by geographical factors; system factors and resources
- Has clear protocols and regulations



Clinical governance panel



Multi-disciplinary teams –
paramedics, EMS doctors,
managers, in-hospital staff

Need context knowledge

Need to know the standards
and regulations for EMS
practice

Outcomes of clinical governance meetings

Changes to
internal SOPs and
clinical protocols

Patient flow and
referral pathways

Training and
education

Communication
initiatives –
community,
facilities, providers

Audits

Case
investigations and
reporting

JUST Culture

- Borrowed from aviation industry
- Acknowledge that humans make errors and if we want to improve systems, we need organisations where people feel comfortable to report their own errors or that of others without reprisal. So that instead the focus is on fixing the system, so that those errors do not happen again



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Summary

- Good governance is critical in EMS
- Governance involves leadership, accountability and responsibility
- Keep the vision and mission in mind
- Develop a culture of safety
- Involve multiple stakeholders in clinical governance – integrated into health system, transparent