Your competence will be assessed as you complete the HMA1 performance assessment for this course of study. This course of study represents 3 competency units and may take up to five weeks to complete.

**Introduction**

**Overview**
This course of study is designed to help you prepare for the Graduate Level Healthcare Management Case Study. The performance assessment requires you to write five essays on U.S. healthcare trends, healthcare governance, healthcare disparity, quality improvement, and risk management. You will need to review the assigned material in the textbooks, read and study the information, and answer the questions provided in the case instructions. When the case study essays are ready for submission they are submitted in TaskStream for grading. Once the essays are graded, students can access their grades and grader comments using their TaskStream account.

**Outcomes and Evaluation**
There are 5 competencies covered by this course of study; they are listed in the "Competencies for Graduate Level Healthcare Management Case Study (HMA1)" page.

You will complete the following assessments as you work through the course of study.

**Performance Assessment**
You will complete the following performance assessment in TaskStream:

- HMA1

Previews of task instructions and rubrics for this assessment are available in via the 'Assessment Preparation' box in the online course of study.

**Preparing for Success**

The information in this section is provided to help you become ready to complete this course of study. As you proceed, you will need to be organized in your studies in order to gain competency in the indicated areas and prepare yourself to pass the final assessments.

**Your Learning Resources**
Enroll in or order the learning resources for this course as early as possible so as to give them time to arrive and give you enough time to become familiar with them.

**Automatically Enrolled Resources**

You will be automatically enrolled at the activity level for the following learning resources.

**VitalSource E-Texts**
The following textbooks are available to you as e-texts within this course of study. You will be directly linked to the specific readings required within the activities that follow:


(Note: These texts are also used for HMC1.)

*Note: These e-texts are available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase hard copies at your own expense through a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition.*

**SkillSoft and Books 24x7**

You will access SkillSoft items at the activity level within this course of study. For more information on accessing SkillSoft items, please see the "[Accessing SkillSoft Learning Resources]" page.

The following Books24x7 e-texts will be used in this course of study:


**Other Learning Resources**

You will use the following learning resources for this course of study.

**WGU Library E-Reserves**

This course of study utilizes resources located in the WGU Library E-Reserves, with articles available for you to download. For instructions on how to access WGU Library E-Reserves, see the "[Accessing WGU Library E-Reserves]" page.

The following e-reserve materials will be used in this course of study:


**Additional Preparation**

There are many different learning tools available to you within your course of study in addition to...
the learning resources already discussed. Take the time to familiarize yourself with them and determine how best to fit them into your learning process.

**Message Boards, Learning Communities, Study Notes, FAQs**

Message boards, learning communities, study notes, and FAQs are available in every course of study.

Use the ["Additional Learning Tools"](link) page to review these tools.

**Course Mentor Assistance**

Course mentors are available to help you. Their job is to aid understanding in areas where you need to improve and to guide you to learning resources. Request their help as needed when preparing for assessments.

Course mentors cannot provide reviews of entire assessments. If you fail assessment attempts, review the provided feedback first, then ask the course mentor specific questions about what you can do to meet the competency standard. Request course mentor assistance as necessary in preparing for second attempts at objective assessments or performance task revisions. Mentors cannot guarantee you pass as they do not evaluate assessments; however, they can provide the assistance and advice necessary to help you succeed.

**Other Preparations**

Prior to submitting them, you should self-score your tasks using the scoring rubrics in TaskStream.

In TaskStream, each case has a posted scoring rubric. Review your work on each case study using the corresponding scoring rubric. The scoring rubrics in TaskStream are the same rubrics that the grader uses to score your task. Make sure that your cases meet the minimum requirements as set out by the scoring rubrics.


Using the business knowledge and skills to the fullest potential requires in-depth knowledge of the many unique and complex nuances within the healthcare context. This knowledge of the healthcare environment is essentially the understanding of the healthcare system and the environment in which healthcare managers and providers function. Healthcare leaders must master customers, staff, systems, and community/environment.

The U.S. healthcare system is complex due in large part because change is constant; there is also an increasing rate of change. Healthcare managers must be aware of the external factors that impact the industry. There are various trends that emerge throughout the healthcare system in response to and to be proactive in the change process.

**U.S. Healthcare Systems**

Healthcare systems are influenced by changes and trends at multiple levels. At the community
level, changes in the nature of the population, the local economy, and awareness and attitudes toward health will all affect healthcare delivery.

In this section, you will learn about the need for organizational and managerial expertise in the healthcare environment after reading the text and completing the task listed below.

**Healthcare Trends**

Read chapter 15 ("Globalization and Health: The World is Flattening") in the *Healthcare Management: Organization Design and Behavior* textbook.

This reading should help you to gain an understanding of the organization and the environment, individuals, and groups within the organization, the managerial role, and that health services organizations can influence their environment and create a future.

**Trends: What is Your Perspective?**

Visit the Healthcare Management Learning Community.

Add to the "U.S. Healthcare Systems: Trends" discussion thread by describing and discussing the trends you see occurring in the healthcare environment.

- Post your initial thoughts and read and respond to the ideas presented to other students. Interacting with other students is an excellent way to help you clarify your own understanding of these concepts.

**HMA1 Case 1: 701.1.1-01-05 Performance Task**

Draft an answer for each of the statements in sections A through H of Case 1: 701.1.1-01-05.

To help you with your draft, you may wish to review both your notes and chapter 15 of the *Healthcare Management: Organization Design and Behavior* textbook that you read in this topic.

Check your essay against the "Finalize Your Document" checklist.

Then, check your essay to be sure that you have completely and accurately

- defined model trends in the U.S. healthcare system,
- identified at least two current trends in healthcare delivery models,
- described how the transformation of healthcare impacts each of the identified trends,
- discussed the implications of an external force anticipated in the U.S. healthcare system,
- described the impact of current environmental trends on the healthcare delivery model,
- described an emerging contemporary trend in management in the U.S. healthcare system, including evaluating its effects on healthcare organization leadership, and
- evaluated how a concept related to an anticipated future development in healthcare may affect individuals and groups within healthcare organizations in the United States.
Please submit the case into TaskStream. Once you have submitted the case, please move on to the next section

**Knowledge of the U.S. Healthcare Environment and Strategic Management Principles, Part II**

Understanding the healthcare systems and the environment is a key component or framing tool for board-orientation processes, particularly for new board members with limited working experience in the hospital environment.

All hospitals and health systems share fundamental goals—to build healthier communities and to continuously improve financial, operational, and clinical performance. Today, however, our healthcare organizations face unprecedented challenges as they seek to achieve these goals. Increasing complexity of medical care, rising costs, competitive pressures, inadequate reimbursement, and the attempt to design a delivery system to meet these challenges have forever altered the healthcare landscape.

At the same time, the population is aging, the ranks of the uninsured are growing, and both payers and patients are demanding greater accountability for quality care. This is why there is a need to understand the healthcare system and its governance.

**Healthcare Governance**

Trustees, executives, and clinical leaders are at the crossroads of peril and opportunity. The obstacles are real—but so is the potential for hospitals to take the lead in creating healthier, more vibrant communities through collaborative, informed, and effective leadership at the highest levels of governance.

In this section, you will learn about the importance of governance in the healthcare environment after reading the text and completing the activities in this topic.

**Governing Board**


This reading should help you to gain an understanding of the major responsibilities of a healthcare governing board; these include ensuring the quality of care that the healthcare organization provides, being accountable for the performance of its physicians, and preventing liabilities.

**Board of Directors**

Read chapter 1 ("Who Leads and Who Follows?") in Building a Better Hospital Board.

This reading should help you to gain an understanding of how members can make their hospital boards stronger and more effective. It should also help you understand the leadership role of the hospital board.

**Healthcare Governance: What is Your Perspective?**
Visit the Healthcare Management Learning Community.

Add to the "U.S. Healthcare Systems: Healthcare Governance" discussion thread by identifying the role the board of directors plays in overseeing the CEO of a healthcare institution.

- Interacting with other students is an excellent way to help you clarify your own understanding of these concepts.

HMA1 Case 2: 701.1.2-02, 03 Performance Task

Draft an answer for each of the statements in sections A through C of case 2: 701.1.2-02, 03.

Check your essay against the "Finalize Your Document" checklist.

Then, check your essay to be sure that you have completely and accurately

- explained the purposes of group governance in the healthcare industry and describe at least two common characteristics of group governance and
- described how the structure and duties of boards of directors in for-profit hospitals have changed over the last 50 years.

Please submit the case into TaskStream.


If all people could obtain unlimited healthcare, perceived need-by both patient and provider-might be the only determinant of the use of healthcare services, but unfortunately barriers to needed care, such as availability or supply of services, ability to pay, or discrimination, have an impact on overall care and access.

There is a need to understand the contemporary issues relating to disparities in the healthcare system. Disparities are most easily identified when there is a clear reference point for what is appropriate and reasonable to expect.

While there may be uncertainty regarding many aspects of clinical care, the quality measures presented here have been developed around healthcare interventions for which there is sound scientific evidence of effectiveness and for which there is a professional consensus and expectation that these services would be provided to all patients.

Healthcare Disparity

Access to healthcare is a prerequisite to obtaining quality care. However, dimensions of access vary in predicting an individual's likelihood of receiving care that has been shown to improve health outcomes.

In this section, you will learn about how social and cultural inequities impact treatment in the
healthcare environment after reading the text and completing the task listed below.

**Inequity in Healthcare**


This reading should help you to gain an understanding of what healthcare providers need to know about racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare and unequal treatment individuals receive.

**Healthcare Disparity: What is Your Perspective?**

Visit the [Healthcare Management Learning Community](#).

Add to the "U.S. Healthcare Systems: Healthcare Disparity" discussion thread by identifying key inequalities in the healthcare environment. What can you do to eliminate these factors?

**HMA1 Case 3: 701.1.3-01 Performance Task**

Draft an answer for each of the statements in sections A through C of case 3: 701.1.3-01.

Check your essay against the "[Finalize Your Document](#)" checklist.

Then, check your essay to be sure that you have completely and accurately

- described one type of disparity in the U.S. healthcare system and
- discussed the need to eliminate disparities in the U.S. healthcare system.

Please submit the case into TaskStream.

**Risk Management, Part I**

Risk management should be a common thread throughout the entire organization. Each employee and volunteer should be charged with risk management, and someone must be responsible for integrating all components of the program. In hospitals, this is typically the risk manager; in other inpatient settings, it may be the quality manager; in outpatient settings, it is often the head nurse or office manager.

Due to deteriorating malpractice litigation trends, the medical malpractice insurance crisis, and heightened expectations about patient safety, all healthcare providers must focus on enhancing the effectiveness of their risk management programs. Those who fail to do so will find themselves exposed to greater risk for failing to implement appropriate patient safety protections and will definitely have difficulty securing adequate professional liability coverage.

**Dashboards**

A dashboard is an executive information system user interface that is similar to an automobile's dashboard and is designed to be easy to read.
In this section, you will learn about how data and dashboards impact the decision making process in the healthcare environment after reading the text and completing the task listed below.

**Dashboards and Scorecards**

Read the following chapter in *Healthcare Quality Book: Vision, Strategy, and Tools* from SkillSoft Books24x7:

- chapter 10 ("Dashboards and Scorecards: Tools for Creating Alignment")

This reading should help you to gain an understanding of the application of scorecards and dashboards in healthcare organizations and to examine the use of measurement to align organizational effort and achieve higher levels of organizational performance.

**Quality Improvement**

Read chapter 4 ("Conceptualizing and Improving Quality: An Overview") in the *Quality Solution* text.

This reading should help you to gain an understanding of the techniques used in improving healthcare quality and the various healthcare stakeholders and their individual perspectives on quality.

**Quality Data**

Read chapter 5 ("Analyzing Quality Data") in the *Quality Solution* text.

This reading should help you to gain an understanding of the challenges of collecting, organizing, and interpreting information about quality healthcare.

**Quality Improvement: What is Your Perspective?**

Visit the [Healthcare Management Learning Community](#).

Add to the "Risk Management: Quality Improvement" discussion thread by describing various tools that help healthcare managers make decisions. Consider the following questions:

- What is the benefit of the use of the dashboard?
- What other tools help in effective decision making?

**HMA1 Case 4: 701.4.2-07-11 Performance Task**

Draft an answer for each of the statements in sections A and B of Case 4: 701.4.2-07-11.

Check your essay against the "Finalize Your Document" checklist.

Then, check your essay to be sure that you have completely and accurately

- described two common characteristics of healthcare performance dashboards,
identified common healthcare performance dashboard data dimensions,
explained how healthcare performance dashboards help to create alignment in a healthcare organization,
interpreted the healthcare performance data indicators found in the St. Joseph Hospital case study,
discussed at least one inference that can be drawn from the clinical outcomes quality improvement data in the St. Joseph Hospital case study, and
discussed at least one inference that can be drawn from the patient satisfaction quality improvement data in the St. Joseph Hospital case study.

Please submit the case into TaskStream.

**Risk Management, Part II**

Risk management for healthcare institutions involves the protection of the assets of the organizations, agencies, and individual providers from liability. A strategic approach can result in significant cost savings.

The issue of cost effectiveness is critical to the development of quality control programs because many risks may be prevented only at a cost greatly in excess of the cost of their occurrence. A provider that tried to prevent these risks would go bankrupt even if its interventions were successful.

Regulatory compliance describes the goal that corporations or public agencies aspire to in their efforts to ensure that personnel are aware of and take steps to comply with relevant laws and regulations.

**Government Policies**

In this section, you will learn about how standards and statutes impact patient care in the healthcare environment after reading the text and completing the task in this topic.

**Regulations**

Read chapter 10 ("Statutes, Standards, and Regulations") in *Risk Management Handbook for Healthcare Organizations*.

This reading should help you to gain an understanding of the regulations, federal and state laws, mandates that govern the healthcare organization, and the intent of a law or regulatory requirement.

**Regulatory Compliance: What is Your Perspective?**

Visit the Healthcare Management Learning Community.

Add to the "Risk Management: Regulatory Compliance" discussion thread by identifying the rules and regulations that are most prominent in the healthcare industries.

**HMA1 Case 5: 701.4.3-01 Performance Task**

Draft an answer for each of the statements in sections A through D of case 5: 701.4.3-01.
Check your essay against the "Finalize Your Document" checklist.

Then, check your essay to be sure that you have completely and accurately

- explained one government statute, standard, or regulation that affects patient healthcare,
- described how the statute, standard, or regulation that you provided affects patient healthcare, and
- discussed the risk management implications of the statute, standard, or regulation you provided.

Please submit the case into TaskStream.

**Final Steps**

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course of study! This section will guide you through the assessment process.

**Assessment Information**

This section will help you to complete the HMA1 performance assessment.

**Accessing Performance Assessments**

You should have completed the following tasks as you worked through this course of study. If you have not completed the tasks in TaskStream, do so now.

- HMA1: 701.1.1-01-05
- HMA1: 701.1.2-02, 03
- HMA1: 701.1.3-01
- HMA1: 701.4.2-07-11
- HMA1: 701.4.3-01

For directions on how to receive access to performance assessments, see the "Accessing Performance Assessments" page.

**Feedback**

WGU values your input! If you have comments, concerns, or suggestions for improvement of this course, please submit your feedback using the following form:

- Course Feedback

**ADA Policy**

Western Governors University recognizes and fulfills its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and similar state laws. Western Governors University is committed to provide reasonable accommodation(s) to qualified disabled learners in University programs and activities as is required by applicable law(s). ADA
Support Services serves as the principal point of contact for students seeking accommodations and can be contacted at ADASupport@wgu.edu. Further information on WGU’s ADA policy and process can be viewed in the student handbook at the following link:

- [Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities](#)