Clinical Audit is a quality improvement process that seeks to improve patient care and outcomes through systematic review of care against explicit criteria and implementation of change. At SUHT we believe in Clinical Audit as a means to improve the quality of care we give to the patients resulting in improved patient safety, patient experience and patient outcomes.

If you are planning an audit the following steps are essential:

- Read the Clinical Audit Policy (see SUHTranet: http://suhtranet/policies).
- Liaise with your Care Group Clinical Effectiveness/Audit lead (see "Contacts" on the CE pages of the SUHTranet: http://suhtranet/ce) to agree a suitable topic. Where possible the audit topic should be picked from the Care Group Annual Clinical Audit Plan which can be found on the SUHTranet (see "Divisional Audit Plans": http://suhtranet/ce).
- Download and complete the Clinical Audit Proposal Form – (see “Audit Proposal Form” on the above link).
- Ensure it is signed by the Care Group Clinical Effectiveness Leads.
- If notes are required, complete the Casenotes for Clinical Audit Request form (see “Request for Clinical Casenotes for Audit Form” on: http://suhtranet/ce).
- Follow the instructions on the notes request form faxing or sending the patient list directly to the Health Records Centre.
- Send the Audit Proposal Form to the Clinical Effectiveness Team (address on form).
- On completion of the audit please email electronic copies of your report/presentation and data collection proforma (if available) to the CE Team at CE@suht.swest.nhs.uk and also to your Care Group CE Lead.

Making a Difference and Learning through Audit: Individual Care Groups have various mechanisms for the dissemination of audit results. Please contact your CE Lead for advice about the most appropriate place for dissemination. The Clinical Audit Policy includes a template for the “Action Plan” which should be developed following the presentation of results. The template includes space for timescales and agreed leads for each action. These actions should then be reviewed on a regular basis until they have been implemented. It is important to ensure that the audit loop is completed and this can be achieved by re-auditing the specific areas required for action saving time and providing evidence of change and improvement. It is recommended that this area of specific re-audit is undertaken shortly after agreed implementation of actions.