

Heart Failure Nurse Team

Supporting People with Chronic Heart Failure

Professional Development Toolkit

August 2009

As a Heart Failure Nurse it is essential that you are able to assess and track your learning needs and be able to demonstrate the required core competencies of the role. The type of activities and nursing performance level may differ from previous roles. There will be areas where you feel more confident than others and this toolkit will assist you to apply the novice to expert model of development.

This toolkit will help you map your short and long-term goals allowing you to focus on the required priority core competencies. This toolkit will formalise your professional development plan (PDP) and meet the ongoing KSF review process of Agenda For Change (AFC).

The toolkit assumes that you have insight into your learning needs and level of clinical competence. If you would appreciate input then your line manager, clinical supervisor and colleagues can offer an objective assessment.

The initial step of this toolkit approach requires you to use the following core competency grid (CCG) to map the competencies with the following statement:

1. I am **not** competent in this area; I would need further training to do this. (Level 1)
2. I **am** competent in this area; I am confident and comfortable doing this. (Level 2)
3. I am **expert** in this area; I use this competency regularly and could teach it to others. (Level 3)

Make sure you think about the evidence you can use to support each statement and core competency. How will you collect the evidence? Some of the competencies are listed together for ease.

Step 2

Using the CCG mark down your current competencies and highlight those requiring support and training in the first instance and then highlight those areas that can be achieved long-term. The competencies should then be summarised in the PDP form and signed by your line manager.

Sound knowledge and understanding of CHF

Nursing management of CHF
Interpretation of tests/investigation skills

Date:

Nurse:

Self Assessment	Competency Levels:1,2,3	Learning Needs	Action Plan
Do you have experience in nursing HF patients specifically?			
Are you aware of the several pharmacological therapies used in HF?			
Are you aware of the several non-pharmacological interventions used in HF?			
Can you describe what HF is to others including patients/carers with ease?			
Are you sure of the role of device therapy?			
How confident are you in regards diagnostic tests used in HF?			
Can you record, interpret and act on ECG results?			
Can you interpret blood chemistry results/other tests without immediate supervision?			

Are you aware of the key guidance documents/frameworks used in HF management?			
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Evidence:



**Advanced Clinical Assessment Skills
Independent Nurse Prescribing**

	Competency Level 1,2,3	Learning Needs	Action Plan
Do you have a relevant advanced clinical assessment qualification?			
Do you feel competent to carry out a holistic assessment including history taking & physical assessment?			
Are you able to describe the causes of HF, the pathophysiology & the common causes of decompensation in symptoms?			
Are you able to state the common causes of rehospitalisation? How can secondary improve on this?			
Are you confident in making decisions related to clinical findings at assessment?			
Do you use tests appropriately and are			

you able to interpret results? Are you aware of the local systematic approach to patient review?			
Are you an independent nurse prescriber? Do you review medications regularly? Are you confident in prescribing? Can you suggest treatment changes confidently to the prescriber?			
Do you keep accurate, clear records, which can be accessed by others involved in the patient's care?			
Are you aware of your limits and confident to ask for help?			
Are you able to discuss the key documents related to clinical decisions made?			

Evidence:

Excellent Communication Skills

Team Working Skills

Ability to adapt to inevitable changes to meet the HF service needs

	Competency Levels 1,2,3	Learning Needs	Action Plan
Have you had any communication skills training?			
Have you had experience of dealing with difficult situations? This includes clinical and non-clinical examples.			
Can you describe what fosters effective communication?			
Can you discuss the different types of communication and explain why such approaches can be problematic?			
Can you discuss what is it that makes a team work effectively?			
What are your team-working contributions/traits? What can you do to			

ensure these are further developed?			
How can you ensure you work as a flexible team player?			
Do you know the different communication channels available to you? Do you use these appropriately?			
How can you maintain effective communication with the primary care HFNSs?			
Are you able to explain the issues that can support or restrict the patient centred approach to care?			
Are you able to collaborate with the MDT, patients/carers, and voluntary agencies to develop care plans?			
Are you able to manage risk when planning HF discharge to ensure patient safety is met? Can you demonstrate risk assessment skills in the			

clinic setting?			
Have you advocacy skills to enable patients, carers and colleagues' views/concerns are supported?			
Do you have the confidence to broach difficult conversations related to patient clinical status/decline? Do you address patients/carers fears, hopes and expectations? Are you realistic with them?			

Evidence:



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Ability to deal with end of life care decisions (EOLCD)

Ability to deal with complex care cases

	Competency Levels 1,2,3	Learning Needs	Action Plan
Are you aware of the issues surrounding HF access to palliative care services?			
What are the frameworks used to enable improved EOL care?			
Do you feel comfortable discussing end of life care with patients/carers/families?			
How would you approach a patient/family when asked a question about prognosis? What are the issues?			
Are you aware of the relevant documentation/guidance that should be used to record resus status, advance care decisions, GP out of hours notification and ambulance service forms?			
Are you familiar with the			

medications used in the terminal stages			
Can you empower patients to make informed choices? What skills are needed?			
Are there any other conditions, which you need to become more knowledgeable about?			
How do multiple co-morbidities affect the patient's wellbeing and prognosis?			
Do you know where to access information regarding benefits, grants and social care resources? Are you aware of the relevant financial forms specific to patients thought to be in the last 6 months of life?			

Evidence:



Personal Development Plan (PDP)

To be completed in conjunction with line manager

Priorities for development	Action plan	Completion date

HFNS Signature & Date		Line Manager Signature & Date	