



# Core Competency Framework

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*For Healthcare Support Workers  
(Band 2 and Above)*

**Name:**

**Department:**

**Start Date:**

**End Date:**

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## *Introduction*

This document identifies generic skills and competencies expected of all Healthcare Support Workers (HCSW) working within Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust at Band 2 and above. Certain specialist clinical areas e.g. Critical Care, Accident & Emergency, Community may also have their own additional ratified clinical competencies which may supplement this generic document. Staff working at Bands 3 or 4 may also have additional competencies required for their role which are additional to this booklet.

These competencies are designed to encompass the trust values which should be embedded throughout all sections of this document.

On completion this document should be kept by the Health Care Support Worker for their personal portfolio; a copy of the final sign-off declaration should be submitted to the Matron and retained in their personal file.

### *Code of Conduct for healthcare support workers*

The Trust expects all healthcare assistants to adhere to the Skills for Health/Skills for Care Code of Conduct for Healthcare support workers and Adult Social Care workers in England.

Skills for Care/Skills for Health (2013) Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England [www.skillsforcare.org](http://www.skillsforcare.org).

### *Guidance Notes*

All of the skills identified within this document must be carried out in line with:-

- Current Trust policies, procedures and protocols
- Current legislation
- NMC guidelines

The HCSW undertaking these competences must also ensure that they:-

- Maintain the health and safety of the patient, their colleagues and themselves
- Use all equipment appropriately and safely
- Provide the patient with emotional and physical support throughout
- Seek appropriate advice and support if unsure of the action to take

### *Assessment*

Staff completing this booklet will be assessed by a Practice Assessor. This Assessor must be a Registered Nurse, Midwife, Nursing Associate or AHP who has been deemed competent by the Department Manager to undertake this role.

Whilst completing the competencies within this document the Practice Assessor must be aware that they will remain accountable for the delegation of any task and the supervision of the Candidate.

A HCSW is expected to demonstrate a minimum of Level 3 of Steinaker and Bell's taxonomy as identified below (Page 5) in all competences. The Practice Assessor must ensure that each outcome is reviewed, signed and dated indicating achievement or non-achievement.

The Practice assessor will:

- Meet the HCSW fortnightly, review competencies and set realistic timescales for achievement.
- Competencies should be reviewed at annual appraisal.
- Accurately and honestly assess the HCSW against the competence criteria, identify any competencies not being met and provide constructive feedback and guidance to support and enable the HCSW to become competent.
- Review progress midway through the programme and escalate to the Area Manager if timescales are not being achieved or other concerns identified.

Where competence cannot be demonstrated because that element of care is not delivered in a particular clinical setting this should be documented in this booklet by the manager of that clinical area. The HCSW is expected to ensure any competencies omitted because opportunities are not available, are achieved within a timely manner (usually 4-12 weeks) should they move to a clinical area where that skill is required.

### *Failure to progress*

Where areas of concern are identified or the HCSW fails to achieve competence in a timely manner this should be escalated to the Area Manager at the earliest opportunity. The HCSW, Manager and Practice Assessor must agree clear action plans to facilitate achievement within a defined timescale. These plans must be documented in the individual's personal file and progress regularly reviewed. Further failure to progress should then be managed under the Trust's Capability or Conduct Procedures.

### *Relevant Contact Details:*

These competencies have been developed by the Faculty of Research and Clinical Education with consultation from Trust senior nursing staff and the Trust Competency Group. The FORCE team may be able to offer support or identify appropriate training opportunities to Ward Matrons or Assessors for individual nurses who are failing to demonstrate competence and can be contacted as below:

- Faculty of Research and Clinical Education Phone – Ext 5794
- Faculty of Research and Clinical Education Email – [force@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk](mailto:force@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk)

## *Assessment Taxonomy*

The following taxonomy developed by Steinaker and Bell (1979) describes the sequence of levels of skills acquisition which individuals progress through as they learn and develop competence in a skill.

All HCSW's are expected to demonstrate skills at a minimum of Level 3 of the taxonomy to be deemed competent.

<b>Taxonomy level</b>	<b>Learners performance</b>	<b>Criteria for accepted performance</b>	<b>Implications for mentors / assessors</b>
Level 1 (L1)	Exposure	Gain understanding through exposure of the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for professional competence.	Selects and presents information. Demonstrates appropriate task. Acts as a motivator to reduce anxiety and maintain confidence. Observes trainees willingness to learn.
Level 2 (L2)	Participation	Completes competence only with substantial supervision and support. Student is unable to relate theory to practice	Offers guidance and supportive feedback. Questions the trainees understanding. Promote further thought and learning from situation. Observes level of learner participation.
<b>Level 3 (L3)</b>	<b>Identification</b>	<b>Perform competency safely with minimal supervision / support, is able to relate theory to practice.</b>	<b>Less supervision and intervention. Provides advice and feedback. Reinforces good practice. Asks questions of the trainee, relating theory to practice.</b>
Level 4 (L4)	Internalisation	Able to explain the rationale for nursing action, is able to transfer knowledge to new situations. Seeks and applies new knowledge and research findings.	Requires less supervision whilst caring for a group of patients/clients, demonstrates ability to use problem solving skills, critical analysis and evaluation.
Level 5 (L5)	Dissemination	Capable of independent nursing practice. Advises others, teaches junior colleagues and demonstrates ability to manage care delivery by junior staff.	Requires minimal supervision to plan, implement and evaluate care for a group of patients. Demonstrates critical analysis, evaluation and decision-making skills

Steinaker, N. and Bell, M (1979), The Experiential Taxonomy: A New Approach to teaching and learning.

## *Competency Statements of Practice*

*Statement of Practice One: The CSW consistently demonstrates the ability to maintain patient safety and a safe environment at all times.*

	Date and level achieved. Assessor Signature	Assessor comments
<i>Organisational Competence</i>		
Statutory, mandatory and risk management training is up to date in accordance with Trust Statutory, Mandatory and Risk Management Training policy.		
Local induction checklist has been completed and is documented.		
Demonstrates knowledge of location of fire alarms, exits, assembly points and fire equipment within local area and awareness of emergency evacuation procedures.		
Demonstrates knowledge of location, use and checking procedures for all emergency equipment.		
Demonstrates ability to locate Trust policies and procedures.		
Completes incident/near miss reports in accordance with Trust Incident reporting policy.		
Demonstrates ability to respond appropriately to address simple complaints and can discuss methods of reducing complaints within own clinical area.		
Demonstrates awareness of initiatives to improve patient safety, how they are being implemented within own clinical area and can discuss how they affect practice.		
Demonstrates an understanding of “duty of care” and can discuss how this affects the role of the HCSW.		

<i>Behavioural Competence</i>		
Demonstrates ability to identify and report equipment fault or failure.		
Can discuss situations where it may be necessary to disclose information to maintain safety and in accordance with the law.		
Acts without delay to address any situation which may put a person at risk. Can identify how to escalate concerns about anything which prevents working in accordance with Trust policies.		
Identifies appropriate actions to take when concerned about possible abuse/neglect of a vulnerable person.		
<i>Clinical Competence – Knowledge / Skills</i>		
Consistently ensures the environment is clean, clutter free and appropriately prepared for clinical care.		
Demonstrates ability to appropriately prepare a bed or working space for a patient; ensuring all equipment required is clean and in good working order and discussing any safety checks required.		
Demonstrates ability to identify a vulnerable patient and take appropriate steps to maintain their safety, escalating any concerns in a timely manner to an appropriate person.		
Contributes to improving quality by participating in data collection for clinical audit.		
Demonstrates the ability to quickly and effectively recognise and respond to deterioration in a patient's condition, escalating concerns appropriately and in accordance with Trust guidelines.		
Maintains the patient safety after providing care by ensuring the clinical environment is clean, obstruction and clutter free, the patient's personal items are within reach and the patient has the means to call for assistance if required.		
Can discuss possible signs of dementia, confusion and other types of cognitive issues in patients they may care for and identify what actions they should take if these signs develop.		





*Statement of Practice Two: The HCSW consistently demonstrates professional behaviour and adheres to the HCSW Code of Conduct*

	Date and Level achieved. Assessor Signature	Assessor comments
<i>Behavioural Competence</i>		
Demonstrates understanding of the HCSW role by discussing main duties and responsibilities and how these support the patient, relatives, visitors and the provision of multidisciplinary patient care.		
Demonstrates understanding of the roles of others in the multidisciplinary team and can discuss why teamwork is important in healthcare.		
Consistently maintains a smart and professional appearance, adhering to Trust Uniform policy.		
Consistently demonstrates professional behaviour and acts as a role model for other staff.		
Consistently ensures high standards of clinical care by challenging or reporting unacceptable standards of practice in an appropriate manner.		
Demonstrates ability to respect cultural diversity by providing care which reflects an individual patient's choices.		
Consistently demonstrates effective time management through punctuality, good attendance and adherence to Trust absence reporting procedure.		
Demonstrates a commitment to personal and professional development by identifying learning needs and maximising learning opportunities.		
Can discuss the Trust values and how these apply to clinical practice.		
Can discuss ways in which concerns about the standards of care can be raised both at ward/department level and externally.		

Demonstrates ability to take steps to address simple complaints or concerns or refer these to an appropriate person when necessary.		
<i>Clinical Competence – Knowledge / Skills</i>		
Consistently treats all people as individuals, with dignity, consideration and without discrimination		
Consistently delivers quality care to the best of their ability to patients, relatives and carers.		
Always practices within the scope of own competence, seeks advice and support when required and takes steps to appropriately develop clinical knowledge and experience.		
Can discuss accountability and how this applies to the practice of the HCSW.		
Can discuss situations where an individual's choice and rights may conflict with the healthcare professional's duty of care.		
Demonstrates the ability to organise and prioritise the own workload, works effectively and collaboratively with others to meet that workload and escalates appropriately factors or concerns which mean the clinical workload cannot be met.		
Responds appropriately and effectively to changes in the clinical environment or workload.		
<i>Action Plan to Achieve Statement of Practice Two</i>		

*Statement of Competence:*

I declare that I believe I have demonstrated competence in this Statement of Practice. I understand that I am required to ensure that I maintain this level of competence and practice in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.

Signature of HCSW: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that I have assessed the above individual against this Statement of Practice and found them to be competent according to the above criteria and in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.

Signature of Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Statement of Practice Three: The HCSW demonstrates the ability to communicate effectively at all times using a variety of different methods and to work collaboratively within a team.*

	Date and Level achieved. Assessor Signature	Assessor comments
<i>Behavioural Competence</i>		
Is open, honest, polite and courteous in all communications.		
Consistently demonstrates effective verbal, non-verbal and written communication skills when communicating with patients, visitors, family/carers and other members of the multidisciplinary team.		
Establishes and maintains collaborative working relationships with members of the multidisciplinary team and others.		
Maintains confidentiality in line with Trust guidelines both during verbal discussions and by appropriate storage and management of patient records and documentation.		

Identifies how to recognise signs of stress in self and others and discusses how this may affect communication.		
Can discuss ways to support patients, visitors or relatives to communicate by using appropriate communication aids/technologies.		
Demonstrates ability to recognise and avoid potential conflict situations and can discuss different strategies to diffuse and manage conflict should it arise.		
Effectively uses Trust IT systems including: Trust Intranet and email systems.		
<i>Clinical Competence – Knowledge / Skills</i>		
Always introduces self to patients and visitors by name and establishes how patients and relatives prefer to be addressed.		
Consistently demonstrates the ability to explain all clinical interventions to patients and relatives, answering queries or concerns and using alternative means of communication where required.		
Demonstrates ability to identify potential barriers to effective communication and how these may be overcome.		
Demonstrates ability to use Trust telephone and bleep systems effectively to access other wards, departments and members of the multidisciplinary team.		
Consistently demonstrates concise, timely, legible and accurate documentation of care using appropriate Trust documentation.		
Demonstrates the ability to accurately hand over information about care to the rest of the multidisciplinary team, using SBAR techniques where appropriate.		

### *Action Plan to Achieve Statement of Practice Three*

### *Statement of Competence:*

I declare that I believe I have demonstrated competence in this Statement of Practice. I understand that I am required to ensure that I maintain this level of competence and practice in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.

Signature of HCSW: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that I have assessed the above individual against this Statement of Practice and found them to be competent according to the above criteria and in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.

Signature of Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Statement of Practice Four: The HCSW consistently demonstrates the ability to meet a patient's essential care needs safely and effectively, taking account of individual patient choice and promoting self-care where possible.*

	Date and Level achieved. Assessor Signature	Assessor comments
<i>Behavioural Competence</i>		
Maintains the patient's privacy and dignity at all times.		
Consistently demonstrates the ability to support and encourage patient choice and independence.		
Ensures consent is obtained before all care interventions.		
<i>Clinical Competence – Knowledge / Skills</i>		
Demonstrates the ability to meet the patient's hygiene needs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing full bed bath</li> <li>• Supporting with assistance during washing as required</li> <li>• Providing bath or shower and assisting as required</li> <li>• Following Royal Marsden clinical guidelines and taking into account patient preference throughout, promoting self-care where possible.</li> </ul>		
Demonstrates ability to check a patient's skin for pressure damage or abnormalities and escalate concerns appropriately.		
Demonstrates ability to ensure a patient's mouth and teeth/dentures are clean and provide oral care.		
Demonstrates ability to ensure a patient is appropriately dressed, promoting privacy, dignity and patient choice at all times.		
Demonstrates ability to assist a patient with facial shaving.		

Demonstrates ability to ensure a patient's hair is clean and well-groomed, including whilst the patient's mobility may be restricted.		
Demonstrates ability to assess and maintain patient comfort through appropriate positioning and support with pillows both in bed and in chair at bedside.		
Consistently ensures a patient has the ability to summon assistance by ensuring buzzers are appropriately positioned and their use explained.		
Maintains patient dignity and independence by ensuring a patient has glasses/hearing aids and false teeth clean and in place when needed.		
Assists the patient with toileting needs according to patient choice, promoting privacy, dignity and self-care at all times.		
Demonstrates ability to appropriately fit continence aids to promote patient's hygiene, comfort and skin integrity whilst maintaining privacy and dignity.		
Demonstrates ability to provide hygiene care for an indwelling urethral catheter and promote good urinary catheter drainage whilst minimising the risks of infection.		
Demonstrates ability to support a patient with a stoma to meet their elimination needs and keep the stoma site clean and comfortable.		
Demonstrates ability to undertake urinalysis, record results and report to Registered Nurse.		
Demonstrates ability to accurately weigh patients, measure height and calculate body mass index (BMI).		
Can discuss how to identify patients who are at risk of poor nutrition or who have specific nutritional needs e.g. pureed diet or thickened fluids.		
Demonstrates ability to support patients with their menu choices and ordering appropriate food.		
Can identify how to obtain snacks, nutritional supplements and hot food for patients outside normal mealtimes.		

Demonstrates ability to prepare patients for meals ensuring appropriate patient hygiene, positioning and table preparation.		
Demonstrates the ability to encourage and assist patients with their meals and assist patients unable to feed themselves.		
Demonstrates ability to document patient's nutritional and fluid intake on the appropriate charts and report any concerns to the Registered Nurse.		
Ensures that patients drinking independently are provided with regular oral fluids of their choice, ensuring that any fluid restrictions are adhered to. Ensures patients requiring support with fluid intake are assisted to drink regularly.		
Can discuss possible signs that a patient is developing difficulty swallowing and identify actions to take if this occurs.		
Effectively maintains protected mealtimes within wards/departments.		
Can discuss reasons why a patient may be nil by mouth and identify what steps should be taken to maintain good oral hygiene and patient comfort in these circumstances.		
Demonstrates the ability to thicken fluids to an appropriate consistency as identified by a Speech and Language Therapist.		
Demonstrates effective moving and positioning of a patient using aids as appropriate according to Trust guidelines following Moving and Handling training. Demonstrates the ability to document the repositioning of a patient using Trust documentation.		
Demonstrates ability to undertake a simple assessment of pain then to document, take steps to alleviate pain and escalate this assessment appropriately.		
Delivers compassionate, appropriate and effective care to the dying patient and their family/carers.		
Demonstrates Last Offices procedure in accordance with the Trust's Care of the Deceased Adult Policy maintaining privacy and dignity at all times.		



Can discuss situations when special considerations apply to Last Offices procedure – e.g. infection control measures, cultural and religious considerations and how these may affect practice.		
<p><i>Action Plan to Achieve Statement of Practice Four</i></p>		
<p><i>Statement of Competence:</i></p> <p>I declare that I believe I have demonstrated competence in this Statement of Practice. I understand that I am required to ensure that I maintain this level of competence and practice in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.</p> <p>Signature of HCSW: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>I declare that I have assessed the above individual against this Statement of Practice and found them to be competent according to the above criteria and in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.</p> <p>Signature of Assessor: _____ Date: _____</p>		

*Statement of Practice Five: The HCSW consistently demonstrates good infection control practices in all aspects of care.*

	Date and level achieved. Assessor Signature	Assessor comments
<i>Behavioural Competence</i>		
Consistently demonstrates good hand hygiene and infection control techniques within clinical practice.		
<i>Clinical Competence – Knowledge / Skills</i>		
Consistently uses personal protective equipment, e.g. gloves, aprons appropriately in clinical practice.		
Identifies the correct procedures for decontamination of equipment and ensures all equipment is cleaned appropriately.		
Challenges others where appropriate to ensure everyone within the clinical setting follows Trust infection control policies.		
Consistently demonstrates correct procedures for safe segregation, handling, storage and disposal of clinical waste including bodily fluids.		
Consistently ensures correct procedures for management of sharps and can discuss action to be taken in case of inoculation injury.		
Consistently demonstrates correct procedures for management of linen.		
Demonstrates appropriate care and management of patients with known or suspected communicable infections, including consideration of psychological care.		
Demonstrates good practice in transport of clinical specimens.		

Educates colleagues, patients, relatives and carers where appropriate on effective methods of infection control.		
<p><i>Action Plan to Achieve Statement of Practice Five</i></p>		
<p><i>Statement of Competence:</i></p> <p>I declare that I believe I have demonstrated competence in this Statement of Practice. I understand that I am required to ensure that I maintain this level of competence and practice in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.</p> <p>Signature of HCSW: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>I declare that I have assessed the above individual against this Statement of Practice and found them to be competent according to the above criteria and in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.</p> <p>Signature of Assessor: _____ Date: _____</p>		



## *Final Competency Sign-Off*

I declare that I have assessed the above individual and found them to be competent in all the above Statements of Practice as judged by the above criteria and in accordance with current Trust policies and procedures.

Signature of Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that I have read and understood relevant Trust policies/guidelines and I am competent in all the above Statements of Practice within my role within Walsall Healthcare NHST.

I understand that it is my professional responsibility to ensure I maintain on-going competence through appropriate clinical development.

Signature of HCSW: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*PLEASE RETURN A SCANNED COPY OF THIS PAGE ONLY TO THE FORCE FACULTY  
AT EMAIL:*

[Force@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk](mailto:Force@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk)