

## **HSC358 Identify the individual at risk of skin breakdown and undertake the appropriate risk assessment (Imported unit)**

### **Elements of Competence**

- HSC358a** Identify individuals at risk of skin breakdown
- HSC358b** Prepare for and carry out risk assessment
- HSC358c** Report on, review and update the risk assessment

### **About this unit**

For this unit you need to undertake risk assessment in relation to pressure area care and the risk of skin breakdown. This assessment will take place across a variety of health and social care settings, throughout hospitals, including operating departments, hospices, nursing and residential homes, day centres, and individuals' own homes. Risk assessment will include the use of different assessment tools selected for use to fit the individual and the environment. The assessment could be undertaken by a variety of staff within the varied care settings and is an ongoing process demanding constant review and evaluation.

### **Scope**

The scope is here to give you guidance on possible areas to be covered in this unit. The terms in this section give you a list of options linked with items in the performance criteria. You need to provide evidence for any option related to your work area.

**Changes in the individual's condition** may include: improvement; deterioration; discharge; transfer

**Documents** may include: assessment tool; care plan; the individual's care notes including patient held records

**External factors** may include: pressure; shearing; friction

**General conditions** may include: dry; moist; red; broken; swollen

**Other carers** may include: co-workers; informal carers such as family members

**Others** may include: registered practitioner; team leader; social workers; tissue viability nurses; GPs

**Pre-disposing factors** may include: medication; moisture to the skin

**Standard precautions and health and safety measures** including handwashing/cleansing before during and after the activity; the use of **personal protective clothing** and **additional protective equipment**; handling contaminated items; disposing of waste; safe moving and handling techniques and untoward incident procedures.

Your **knowledge and understanding** for this unit will relate to legal requirements and codes of practice applicable to the scope of your work and others with whom you work; the nature of the work you are undertaking; your role and level of responsibility within your organisation (e.g. whether you have responsibility to support the work of others); the individuals, key people<sup>1</sup> and others with whom you are required to work and the degree of autonomy you have for the management of your own work activities.

### **Values underpinning the whole of the unit**

The values underpinning this unit have been derived from the key purpose statement<sup>2</sup>, the statement of expectations from carers and people receiving services, relevant service standards and codes of practice for health and social care in the four UK countries. If you are working with children and young people they can be found in the principles of care unit HSC34. If you are working with adults they can be found in HSC35. To achieve this unit you must demonstrate that you have applied the principles of care outlined in either unit HSC34 or HSC35 in your practice and through your knowledge

This unit is directly transferable to Health national occupational standard CHS4

---

<sup>1</sup> If you are working with children and young people the term “individuals” covers children and young people and key people” covers parents, families, carers, friends and others with whom the child/young person has a supportive relationship

<sup>2</sup> The key purpose identified for those working in health and social care settings is “to provide an integrated, ethical and inclusive service, which meets agreed needs and outcomes of people requiring health and/or social care”

## Key Words and Concepts

This section provides explanations and definitions of the key words and concepts used in this unit. In occupational standards it is quite common to find words or phrases used which you will be familiar with, but which, in the detail of the standards, may be used in a very particular way. **Therefore, we would encourage you to read this section carefully before you begin working with the standards and to refer back to this section as required.**

---

<b>Additional protective equipment</b>	Types of personal protective equipment such as visors, protective eyewear and radiation protective equipment
<b>Assessment tool</b>	A process of assessment using a variety of risk factors including continence, weight, nutritional status etc against which a score is identified clarifying the degree of risk that individual will have in relation to the breakdown of skin. Tools have various names according to their authors or developers
<b>Contaminated</b>	Includes items contaminated with body fluids, chemicals or radionucleatides. Any pack/item opened and not used should be treated as contaminated
<b>Individuals (at risk)</b>	Include: unconscious, reduced mobility or immobility due to surgery, stroke etc, malnutrition, dehydration, skin conditions, sensory impairment, acute illness, extremes of age, vascular disease, severe chronic or terminal illness, previous history of pressure damage, incontinence, people with diabetes, altered <b>mental state</b>
<b>Mental state</b>	The mental condition of an individual. It can include the individual being withdrawn, depressed, agitated, confused
<b>Personal protective clothing</b>	Items such as plastic aprons, gloves - both clean and sterile, footwear, dresses, trousers and shirts and all in one trouser suits. These may be single use disposable clothing or reusable clothing
<b>Standard precautions and health and safety measures</b>	A series of interventions which will minimise or prevent infection and cross infection including: hand washing/cleansing before during and after the activity; the use of personal protective clothing and additional protective equipment when appropriate

### **HSC358a** Identify individuals at risk of skin breakdown

#### **Performance Criteria**

You need to show that,

1. you identify **individuals** in your care environment/case load who may be at risk of impaired tissue viability and skin breakdown
2. you identify any pre-disposing factors which might exacerbate risk
3. you identify any external factors which you should consider in your assessment
4. you involve the individuals concerned, asking them to assess their risk where possible and appropriate, and communicating with them in a manner which they understand and respond to

### **HSC358b** Prepare for and carry out risk assessment

#### **Performance Criteria**

You need to show that,

1. you collect the relevant documentation, including agreed **assessment tool** for use before starting the assessment
2. you work within your own sphere of competence and involve the individual or other carers in the assessment as appropriate, referring to others when the assessment is outside of your remit
3. you obtain the individual's permission before undertaking the assessment
4. you apply **standard precautions** for infection control and other appropriate **health and safety measures** when carrying out the assessment
5. you undertake risk assessment within an appropriate timescale after admission/referral of the individual to the care environment in which you work
6. you assess the individual's risk of tissue breakdown using criteria specified by the assessment tool
7. you inspect the general condition of the individuals skin, identifying risk factors, using safe handling techniques when assisting the individual to move during the assessment
8. you inspect specific areas of skin for pressure or risk of pressure, identifying risk against the tool and "scoring" the risk of pressure area damage

**HSC358c** Report on, review and update the risk assessment

**Performance Criteria**

You need to show that,

1. you document and/or pass all findings to others involved in the care of the individual, including the individual themselves
2. you incorporate the risk assessment into the overall plan of care for that individual
3. you agree, in consultation with others, how often the risk assessment should be reviewed and record the frequency of assessment in the care plan and other relevant records
4. you undertake the review, as necessary, using, where appropriate, the criteria involved in the initial assessment
5. you identify when the current assessment tool, or the frequency of review are no longer appropriate due to changes in the individual's condition or the environment
6. you record and report your findings if appropriate, and pass on to others all information

## **Knowledge Specification for the whole of this unit**

Competent practice is a combination of the application of skills and knowledge informed by values and ethics. This specification details the knowledge and understanding required to carry out competent practice in the performance described in this unit.

When using this specification **it is important to read the knowledge requirements in relation to expectations and requirements of your job role.**

You need to show that you know, understand and can apply in practice:

### **Legislation and organisational policy and procedures**

1. a factual awareness of the current European and National legislation, national guidelines and local policies and protocols which affect your work practice relevant to pressure area care and risk assessment
2. a working understanding of your responsibilities and accountability in relation to the current European and National legislation, national guidelines and local policies and protocols relevant to pressure area

### **Theory and practice**

3. a working understanding of the importance of working within your own sphere of competence when undertaking assessment of risk of skin breakdown and seeking advice when faced with situations outside your sphere of competence
4. a working understanding of the application of standard precautions to undertaking assessment of risk of skin breakdown and the potential consequences of poor practice
5. a working understanding of relevant research that has been undertaken in respect of risk assessment for pressure area care
6. a working understanding of how you might involve the individual and their carers

### **Care and support**

7. a working understanding of the risk assessment in relation to the holistic care of individuals
8. a working understanding of other health and social care staff who might be involved in the assessment of risk in the context of this competence
9. an in-depth understanding of what you will look for when you assess the skin
10. a working understanding of when initial assessment should take place and why
11. a working understanding of the frequency of review and re-assessment
12. a working understanding of the degree of help needed by the individual

### **Applied anatomy and physiology**

13. an in-depth knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the healthy skin
14. an in-depth knowledge of the changes that occur when damage caused by pressure develops
15. an in-depth knowledge of what is meant by "shearing forces"
16. an in-depth understanding of the pre-disposing factors to pressure sore development

17. an in-depth knowledge the sites where pressure damage may occur

***Materials and equipment***

18. an in-depth understanding of the assessment tools available for use in the assessment of risk of pressure sore formation

***Procedures and techniques***

19. an in-depth knowledge of safe handling techniques

***Records and documentation***

20. a working understanding of the importance of sharing your findings with other care staff and the individual concerned

21. a working understanding of the importance of accurately reporting and recording required information related to pressure area care and risk assessment

22. a working understanding of the information which should be recorded in relation to pressure area care and risk assessment

23. a working understanding of the types of change in patients' condition which should be reported and/or recorded

24. a working understanding of the importance of immediately reporting any issues which are outside your own sphere of competence without delay to the relevant member of staff