

FAQ about Clinical Skills for Student Nurses or Midwives

This document has been created by academic and clinical staff to provide some guidance for students, mentors and the Practice Team about clinical skills in relation to students and what students can and cannot do whilst on clinical placement. We hope you will find this a useful resource.

If you have a question that you would like answered, please contact Caroline Wood (c.a.wood@rgu.ac.uk) who will be happy to try and help.

FAQ: What are Essential Skills Clusters?

Answer: The Essential Skills Clusters (ESCs) are skills statements that complement some of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)'s outcomes and proficiencies contained within the Standards of proficiency for pre-registration nursing education (NMC 2010). The ESCs were introduced for all students starting the programme from September 2008 onwards and are integrated in the Ongoing Achievement Record (OAR). Please follow this link:

[Essential Skills Clusters \(ESCs\)](#)

FAQ: Can student nurses undertake male and female urethral catheterisation?

Answer: Yes, students can undertake female and male catheterisation according to NHS Grampian's (NHSG) Adult Catheterisation and Catheter Care Guidelines (2017). The policy states that: "It is appropriate that students are given opportunities to participate in various clinical skills." The student nurse may participate in the initial urethral catheterisation of female patients, and **re-catheterisation** of male patients, under the **direct supervision at all times** of a registered mentor competent and confident in these procedures. Prior to undertaking catheterisation procedures, the student must demonstrate an appreciation of the theoretical and practical aspects underpinning the procedure of urinary catheterisation to the mentor. The mentor, having an up to date knowledge of the content of respective Urinary Catheterisation education programmes within NHS Grampian will be responsible for ensuring that the student's current level of underpinning theory reflects what is taught in the organisation

Students must not:

- **Participate in urinary catheterisation in acute/emergency situations**
- **Participate in supra-pubic catheterisation re-insertion**
- **Administer *instillagel* without an individual patient prescription and not rely on a PGD (see further notes on PGD below)**

NHS G's Urinary Catheterisation and Catheter Care Guidelines policy (2017).

FAQ: Can students administer medication prescribed via a Patient group Directive (PGD)?

Answer: No. Students cannot supply or administer under a PGD but would be expected to understand the principles and be involved in the process". Students can only administer medication if it is prescribed on an individual prescription sheet. As this is a requirement for registration, mentors should be prepared to discuss this with the student and sign off if the student is knowledgeable.

FAQ: Where can I find information about undertaking indirectly supervised visits on a community placement in Stage 3?

Answer: Please follow this web link;
[Indirectly Supervised Visits in a Community Placement -May 2013](#)

FAQ: What parts of the SIPCEP do I complete for which stage of my training?

Answer: Students are required to complete SIPCEP before they can commence their first placement in stage 1. Submission dates for SIPCEP are set for November.

FAQ: Are students allowed to administer controlled drugs?

Answer: Yes. To achieve competency in the administration of medicines for registration, students need to be given the opportunity to participate in the process; under the supervision of a registered nurse. They also emphasize that the second signatory required for controlled drug administration can be a student nurse.

FAQ: Can student nurses check the stock of control drugs?

Answer: Yes, as a second checker under the supervision of a registered nurse, provided they have the knowledge to undertake the task.

FAQ: When can a student start assisting on a drug round?

Answer: A student can be involved in administration of medicines from their first clinical placement under the supervision of a registered nurse.

FAQ: What happens if a student is involved with an error with medication whilst on placement?

Answer: On discovering the incident a member of staff within the placement location would contact a member of the Practice Team. The Placement Location Manager will meet with the student and other individuals concerned normally within 24 hours of the incident to complete the required documentation (e.g. Datix electronic forms). The personal tutor should also be notified. Copies of the completed documentation should be forwarded to the Course/Programme Leader. A member of the Practice Team will meet with the Placement Location Manager, student and mentor normally within 48 hours of the incident to review and critically reflect on the incident and complete the RGU documentation. The full document can be accessed via the link below:

[Medication Incident Guidelines 2013](#)

FAQ: Can students be involved in checking blood components / products?

Answer: Yes, students may be the second checker but only from Stage two of their programme when they have completed Module 1 of the Better Blood Transfusion programme via Learnpro Community and can show evidence of completion.

FAQ: Can students collect blood components from satellite fridges?

Answer: No, unless they are supervised by a trained member of staff.

FAQ: Can students administer Intravenous Infusion (IV) medication?

Answer: No. Students can be involved **only as an observer**, the third person, in the preparation, checking and administration of IV medicines. Standard 20: Intravenous medication wherever possible, two registrants should check medication to be administered intravenously, one of whom

should also be the registrant who then administers the intravenous (IV) medication.

FAQ: Can students check and administer IV fluids?

Answer: Students cannot connect IV fluids to a patient. They can be involved in checking a pre-prepared bag of IV fluid against the prescription chart with a registered nurse. If any additives are required students **can only act as an observer**. They can also with appropriate supervision run IV fluids through the giving set and pump.

FAQ: Can students flush a Hickman or a peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC) line?

Answer: No, because students cannot be involved in any intravenous medication administration.

FAQ: Can students undertake cannulation and venepuncture?

Answer: Nursing students at Robert Gordon University can be involved in venepuncture or cannulation but **only** once they have completed specific training in the University. Currently the training is only offered to students in Stage 2.

Student Midwives can undertake venepuncture only whilst on clinical placement and only if they have received the training and are adequately supervised.

FAQ: What is the correct procedure when a student nurse sustains a needle stick injury?

Answer: The flow chart identifying the correct procedure can be accessed via the following web link:

[Management of Occupational Exposure to Blood Borne Viruses - Feb 2014](#)

FAQ: How are students taught to measure Blood Pressure (BP)?

Answer: Students are taught to do a manual BP according to the British Hypertensive Society Guidelines which can be accessed via the following link: [British Hypertension Society](#)

FAQ: Are students taught to use an electronic machine to perform urinalysis as some wards no longer use manual method?

Answer: No, at present students are shown the manual method in the

university; please show them how to use the electronic machine in your clinical areas.

FAQ: Can students visit patients unaccompanied whilst on a community placement?

Answer: Yes, stage three and four students only. Please see the guidelines:

[Indirectly Supervised Visits in a Community Placement -May 2013](#)

FAQ: Can a student use a bike on a community placement?

Answer: Yes, following a formal local risk assessment by the student's mentor.

FAQ: Can a student apply a compression bandage?

Answer: Not in Stage 1. However, after Semester 2 teaching in Stage 2 (April placement), Adult Field student nurses have been taught the principles of leg ulcer assessment and been introduced to compression bandaging. Following demonstration by a practitioner skilled in compression bandaging in clinical practice and **only** under **direct supervision** they can practice compression bandaging.

FAQ: Can a student be involved in the administration of percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) feeds and administration of medications?

Answer: Students from stage 2 will have had theory on administration of PEG feeds and can participate under direct supervision, the same applies for drug administration.

FAQ: Can a student undertake an International Normalised Ratio (INR) procedure?

Answer: No. Students should not undertake this procedure as changes to the medication regime should only be undertaken by a trained member of staff.

FAQ: Can a student undertake ear syringing?

Answer: No. Students cannot undertake ear syringing as this is an advanced skill requiring additional training for trained staff.