

Modernisation Initiative

sexual health

Improving local healthcare

Sexual Health Competencies

For Registered Staff

Introduction

This competency framework has been developed and agreed by a multi-agency group, who are part of the Lambeth and Southwark Sexual Health Modernisation Initiative (SHMI). The SHMI, funded by Guys and St Thomas' Charity, set out to transform and improve services in three priority areas - sexual health, kidney disease and stroke.

Variation in service provision within and between services was identified by service users as one of the reasons they were confused about 'what they could get from where'. To improve the experience of service users and their sexual health it is essential that local services deliver consistent, high quality information, advice and care.

This framework has been developed to assist this improvement process and achieve the SHMI vision of 'enabling people to manage their own sexual health effectively by easy access to information, resources and excellent services'.

Special thanks are due to the multi-agency steering group which produced this document.

January 2008

Background Statement

This document is a learning and development resource to be used with an individual learning plan or personal development plan.

It has been designed to establish skills and build competencies essential for the delivery of sexual health services by a range of clinical and non-clinical staff in various settings.

The framework is not intended to replace more detailed internal competency documents or workbooks. However, there should not be any conflict or variation between the two.

This competency framework has been developed with reference to competencies from:

- Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
- British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH)
- Faculty of Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare
- Sandyford Initiative

Purpose Of Framework

- Improve communication, knowledge and skills
- Share best practice
- Increase awareness of the contribution made by each team member
- Provide guidance as to the agreed level of practice for qualified and non-qualified staff
- Facilitate an effective model to enable staff to deliver high quality care

Professional Responsibilities

The mentor must have post-registration mentor training ENB998, 997 or equivalent and be experienced as a mentor in the clinical area.

The mentee is responsible for contributing to their training. They must make their clinical mentor / line manager aware of issues blocking their development.

How to Use the Framework

The Competency Framework is designed to be used by both the manager and staff member to aid the appraisal process and to support any personal development plans around sexual health competency and skills assessment.

Step 1:

The manager and staff member identify a competency or standard of practice that needs to be achieved.

Step 2:

The manager and staff member identify and agree the most appropriate method to achieve and/or assess the identified competencies, and a reasonable timeframe for that.

Step 3:

The manager and staff member evaluate whether the competency has been achieved, and reflect on any further development and ongoing assessment.

Step 4:

The manager and clinical mentor should establish that when the competency is signed off, it reflects best practice at the time.

Examples of Learning and Assessment Methods

- Reflective practice
- Report by team members on observations/joint sessions
- Written assignments
- Review of written records
- Observation of practice
- Delivering training and presentation
- One to one review
- Developing a resource for the service
- Formal course attendance
- Evidence of previous learning and competence
- Client feedback if applicable
- Clinical supervision

Mandatory Reference Documents

(This list is not exhaustive)

- STI management guidelines
- Contraception guidelines
- Infection Control guidelines
- Child Protection guidelines
- Pregnancy testing and TOP guidelines
- Vulnerable Adult policy and guidelines

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Competence 1: Communication

Minimum Standard

The member of staff will be able to:

- Communicate effectively with clients
- Use appropriate health assessment to identify client sexual health needs
- Communicate effectively with colleagues, and multi-professional agencies

Knowledge and Skills Framework

- Core dimension 1: Communication
- Core dimension 6: Equality & Diversity

1.1 Communication Indicators

-
- a) Introduce self to client
 - b) Demonstrate rapport building, empathy and clear communication
 - c) Understand the barriers that individuals face when making decisions (e.g. language, learning difficulties, etc)
 - d) Provide information in a manner that is appropriate for the client
 - e) Access interpreting service when appropriate
 - f) Describe and demonstrate components of effective communication (listening skills, verbal skills, non-verbal skills, negotiating)
 - g) Demonstrate awareness of own communication style and attitudes toward sexual health
 - h) Manage situations effectively when communication breaks down or conflict arises
 - i) Obtain client permission to share information with other agencies
 - j) Communicate in a professional manner through various means (face-to-face, telephone, writing)
 - k) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of organisational and professional standards for confidentiality and information sharing
 - l) Record all client contacts and interventions
 - m) Comply with professional and organisational standards for record keeping
 - n) Communicate with team members when handing over clients or when shifts/sessions change
 - o) Access referral agencies for client pathways and client management
 - p) Provide appropriate, timely and accurate information to agencies
 - q) Ensure client contact details are correct at all times
-

Competence 2: Clinical Skills

Minimum Standard

The member of staff will be able to:

- Work within defined role and competency
- Work according to national and locally agreed guidelines and policies
- Refer or consult when the client's need is outside established competence and experience

Knowledge and Skills Framework

- Core Dimension 1: Communication
- Core Dimension 3: Health, Safety and Security
- Core Dimension 4: Service Improvement
- Core Dimension 5: Quality
- Core Dimension 6: Equality and Diversity
- Health & Wellbeing

2.1 Sexual history taking

Indicators

-
- a) Encourage the client's full participation in the assessment
 - b) Record new information regarding the clients sexual and reproductive health history
 - c) Assess risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infection (STI)
 - d) Demonstrate an awareness of HIV and blood borne infection risk factors
 - e) Record additional information on established patient
 - f) Assess vaccination history
 - g) Use Fraser Guidelines and other national guidance for under 16's
 - h) Demonstrate understanding of issues related to 'sexual consent' eg sexual bullying
 - i) Identify child protection/vulnerable adult issues and refer to relevant colleagues according to local policy
 - j) Demonstrate awareness of particular at risk groups e.g. Men who have sex with Men (MSM), young people, Black and Minority Ethnic communities (BME), sex workers
-

2.2 Asymptomatic STI screening Indicators

- a) Explain to clients the purpose of asymptomatic STI screening for specific infections
- b) Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate screening intervals according to local policy and STI management guidance
- c) Refer clients for full screen if risk is identified
- d) Explain to clients how to provide a urine sample
- e) Explain to female clients how to take a self taken vaginal swab
- f) Give a clear explanation of how results will be given and managed.

2.3 Condom education and distribution Indicators

- a) Distribute condoms and lubricant
- b) Provide condom demonstration
- c) Show awareness of different styles, types and sizes
- d) Demonstrate an awareness of the client barriers to using condoms
- e) Advocate screen for STI's when condom use is poor

2.4 Blood taking Indicators

- a) Explain procedure and obtain consent
- b) Demonstrate skill and competence in venepuncture as per local policy
- c) Document appropriately
- d) Explain results pathway
- e) Label specimens correctly
- f) Practice to local infection control policies and procedures

2.5 Chaperoning Indicators

- a) Ensure privacy and dignity throughout the examination
- b) Promote and advocate the rights of the individual
- c) Identify signs of discomfort during the examination and provide reassurance
- d) Assist colleagues in clinical examinations
- e) Show awareness of local policy and procedures e.g. infection control

2.6 Termination of pregnancy referral Indicators

- a) Take an adequate history including age, last menstrual period (LMP), pain, bleeding, health history and contraceptive history
- b) Describe self referral process if relevant or patient choice
- c) Book client directly via Central Booking Services
- c) Explain appropriate process and procedures
- d) Assess for vulnerable clients (age, mental health, learning disabilities or other vulnerabilities)
- e) Assess further contraception needs and offer follow-up

Competence 3: Clinical Examination

Minimum Standard

The member of staff will be able to:

- Recognise their own role in assessing clients' clinical needs, working with competency within their established role
- Follow national and local guidelines and policies
- Identify client risks for:
 - 1) Sexually transmitted infection (STIs) including blood borne infection
 - 2) Risk of pregnancy
 - 3) Pregnancy management and termination referral
 - 4) Contraception needs
 - 5) Genital tract infections

Knowledge and Skills Framework

- Core Dimension 1: Communication
- Core Dimension 3: Health, Safety and Security
- Core Dimension 4: Service Improvement
- Core Dimension 5: Quality
- Core Dimension 6: Equality and Diversity
- Health and Wellbeing
- Information & Knowledge 1-3

3.1 Anatomy and Physiology

Indicators

- | | |
|----|--|
| a) | Knowledge of male anatomy |
| b) | Knowledge of female anatomy |
| c) | Knowledge of menstrual cycle |
| d) | Recognition of abnormal menstrual history |
| e) | Recognition of signs and symptoms of genital skin lesions and genital infections |

3.2 Collecting swabs

Indicators

- a) Prepare the clinical room
- b) Explain all procedures and address queries
- c) Obtain consent
- d) Maintain privacy and dignity
- e) Ensure client is in a comfortable position
- f) Identify any physical barriers or disability needs
- g) Detect any anxieties and respond appropriately
- h) Keep client informed and minimise discomfort
- i) Take appropriate swabs relevant to signs and symptoms or clinical history
- j) Ensure that specimens and request forms are clear, and accurately labelled
- k) Record the exam and consultation, impressions, and any follow-up
- l) Explain results process
- m) Ensure that client contact details are correct
- n) Interpret sexual history and screen appropriately to risk
- o) Work to established Health & Safety and Infection Control standards for specimen collection
- p) Demonstrate skills for speculum examination and genital examination (male and female) relating to expected level of competency
- q) Take appropriate swabs according to site
- r) Manage patient collected swabs

3.3 Differential diagnosis

Indicators

- a) Show awareness of differential diagnosis or disease that may have overlapping signs or symptoms
- b) Refer to appropriate colleague when a client's need falls outside clinical boundaries

3.5 Referral pathway

- a) Show awareness of referral pathways for referring clients internally and externally

3.6 Guidelines

- a) Work to existing service guidelines
- b) Practice to agreed local STI guidelines, community contraception guidelines, pregnancy testing and termination of pregnancy

Competence 4: Clinical Management of Contraception & Sexually Transmitted Infections

Minimum Standard

The member of staff will be able to:

- Hold and maintain current professional qualifications in contraception management (Nurses: University qualification, STI Management course or equivalent course or experience. Doctors: DFFP, Dip GUM, Dip HIV)
- Define and treat sexually transmitted infections in line with local guidelines

Knowledge and Skills Framework

- Core Dimension 1: Communication
- Core Dimension 3: Health, Safety and Security
- Core Dimension 6: Equality and Diversity
- Health & Wellbeing

4.1 Contraception Indicators

- a) Work to current local guidelines and Patient Group Directions (PGDs) if not an independent prescriber, and supply according to local formulary
 - b) Work within national framework set by the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare
 - c) Be able to conduct an effective contraception choice consultation
 - d) Accurately document consultation and record client information
 - e) Be able to identify any individual needs that would have impact or influence on choice
 - f) Manage complications with chosen method or refer to a colleague regarding management issues
 - g) Assess any cultural, religious or individual needs
 - h) Consult on, initiate and maintain care for women considering or using the following:
 - Combined oral contraception
 - Contraceptive patch
 - Progesterone only contraception
 - Contraceptive injection
 - Implant
 - Intra uterine device (IUD)
 - Intra uterine system (IUS)
 - Diaphragm or caps
 - Condoms
 - Sterilisation consultation
-

Competence 4: Clinical Management of Contraception & Sexually Transmitted Infections

i) Refer for termination of pregnancy and effectively manage a termination consultation

j) Refer for emergency gynaecology when urgent care is needed

k) Refer for natural family planning and domiciliary care when need is identified

4.2 Sexually transmitted infection treatment

Indicators

a) Work to current local guidelines and Patient Group Directions (PGDs) if not an independent prescriber, and supply according to local formulary

b) Work within national framework set by the British Association for Sexual Health & HIV (BASHH)

c) Be able to conduct an effective sexual health consultation

d) Accurately document consultation and record client information

e) Be able to identify any individual needs that would have impact or influence on choice

f) Manage complications or refer to a colleague regarding management issues

g) Assess any cultural, religious or individual needs

h) Undertake or update a full sexual and medical history if not done already

i) Ensure appropriate culture is taken before treatment where this applies

j) Supply medication with appropriate patient information leaflets and information

k) Identify any potential barriers or risk behaviours that would prevent treatment

l) Initiate partner notification where it applies

Competence 5: Generic Sexual Health

Minimum Standard

The member of staff will be able to:

- Sign-post clients to a range of services
- Enable self management where the opportunity exists
- Enable informed choice
- Manage vulnerable adults and children in accordance with local policy

Knowledge and Skills Framework

- Core Dimension 1: Communication
- Core Dimension 3: Health, Safety and Security
- Core Dimension 6: Equality and Diversity
- Health and Wellbeing

5.1 Sign-posting

Indicators

-
- a) Refer clients to local services as per their needs and choices
 - b) Provide information to clients on how to access local GPs if a client is not registered
-

5.2 Child protection

Indicators

-
- a) Complete child protection training and updates as per local policy
 - b) Work to Fraser Guidelines when managing clients under 16
 - c) Seek help managing vulnerable adults or young people
 - d) Share information with appropriate services or teams when faced with a child protection issue (social services, police, local Looked After Children teams)
 - e) Awareness of local named nurse/ named doctor for child protection and how to access
-

5.3 Vulnerable adults

Indicators

-
- a) Able to access help for vulnerable adults
 - b) Access training and updates where appropriate as per local policy
-

5.4 Psychosexual wellbeing

Indicators

-
- a) Identify client need for support, advice or referral
 - b) Show awareness of psychosexual needs or issues that may arise during consultations
 - c) Assess basic psychosexual wellbeing and refer any client needing more complex management
-

- d) Show awareness of psychological links to sexual dysfunction
- e) Asses any sexual abuse history
- f) Recognise the need for empathy and give sufficient time in a consultation where this issue has arisen

5.5 Sexual assault

Indicators

- a) Consult with the Haven Speciality Unit for advice and management
- b) Manage consultations sensitively
- c) Show awareness of medico-legal requirement for specimen collection
- d) Offer emergency contraception, after taking advice from Haven, or when a client chooses not to disclose
- e) Show awareness of post exposure prophylaxis and vaccines that decrease risk of infection post assault

Competence 6: Health Promotion & Prevention

Minimum Standard

The member of staff will be able to:

- Provide holistic information about sexual health and general health
- Help to identify areas to reduce or prevent risk

Knowledge and Skills Framework

- Core Dimension 1: Communication
- Core Dimension 3: Health, Safety and Security
- Core Dimension 4: Service Improvement
- Core Dimension 5: Quality
- Core Dimension 6: Equality and Diversity
- Health & Wellbeing

6.1 Holistic information, health promotion and prevention

Indicators

-
- a) Demonstrate understanding of transmission for STIs, genital infections and blood borne infection

 - b) Help build skills with clients to enable decision making

 - c) Help encourage clients to manage partner notification and understand its impact

 - d) Discuss individual attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and motivation for using condoms and contraception

 - e) Integrate individual behavioural, physical, social and environmental risks into health discussions and informed choice

 - f) Teach negotiation skills and assertiveness skills

Learning Plan for:	Work Place	Mentor/supervisor/assessor
<p>INITIAL ASSESSMENT:</p> <p>Competent in:</p> <p>Some experience of:</p> <p>New to:</p> <p>Evidence seen:</p>		<p>Contact details:</p> <p>Assessor Signature:</p> <p>Trainee Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Next Assessment Date:</p>

Appendix: Learning Plan Template

Learning Plan for:	Work Place	Mentor/supervisor/assessor
<p>INITIAL ASSESSMENT:</p> <p>Competent in:</p> <p>Some experience of:</p> <p>New to:</p> <p>Evidence seen:</p>		<p>Contact details:</p> <p>Assessor Signature:</p> <p>Trainee Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Next Assessment Date:</p>

Appendix: Learning Plan Template

Learning Objective	Planned Activity	Achieved Date & Assessor Signature
Learning Objective	Planned Activity	Achieved Date & Assessor Signature
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