

Congenital Heart Disease Development Package

A development package of competencies for link nurses/nurses with an interest in cardiology in the CHD Networks

Name:

Clinical area:

Mentor (see below for guidance):

Date:

The aim of this development package is to help you structure, organise and record your continued learning. It is expected that in the first year of a Link Nurse role, you use the competencies to guide your learning. The adoption of these competencies is recommended as a way to increase expertise and understanding in Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) particularly for those in a link nurse role. The recommendation is that these should be completed within twelve months. The package outlines some of your expected learning outcomes and suggestions for how to address these.

To complete the competencies relevant to your role you may need the support of wider members of the Cardiac Nursing and Medical team. This may be the Cardiac Nurse Specialist (CNS) associated with your geographical area, the Network Lead Nurse, a Nurse Educator in your area of practice, one of the Adult CHD Cardiologists or one of the Paediatricians with Expertise in Cardiology (PEC) in your local centre. There is an expectation that you will organise external and internal meetings to aid your learning. It is recommended that you arrange local meetings with your line manager to support you in your development as well.

A certificate will be awarded when you have completed your Link Nurse competencies and an evaluation sent out.

The assessment can take place using any of the methods below.

Key: types of evidence that may be used to support verification of achievement

PO – Practice Observed
Q&A – Question and Answer

PCFF – Patient/Carer Feedback Form
SDS – Skills Development Sheet

N – Narrative
SoLD – Supervision of Learning Days

R – Reflection

Specific Outcomes for the first 12 months

The Cardiac Link Nurse can:	N/A	Type of evidence	Mentor sign-off
CLINICAL KNOWLEDGE			
Participate and discuss the assessment of patients with CHD in the clinical area they work: vital sign monitoring, fluid balance, ECG - recognition of abnormal heart rhythm and saturations.			
Undertake, interpret, and explain individual non-invasive vital signs and monitoring including oxygen saturations and blood pressure on the correct arm.			
Understand the various tests and investigations that are offered to patients with CHD, and the reasons and appropriateness for undergoing the tests.			
Develop a knowledge of the different pathways for each condition and an understanding of those patients that can be categorised as “simple” or “complex” congenital heart disease.			
Describe the advice and information which you give to patients about endocarditis prophylaxis and dental care.			
Describe the signs and symptoms of endocarditis which a patient may present with, the initial tests, necessary blood tests and the first line of treatment.			
Develop knowledge of and can explain common cardiac drugs – diuretics, angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, anticoagulants.			
Describe the care of cyanotic patients and complex patients and what is a normal SPO2 for them.			
Describe red flags in cyanotic patients, use of air filters for IV infusions (adults), hydration, use of O2.			

Specific Outcomes for the first 12 months

The Cardiac Link Nurse can:	N/A	Type of evidence	Mentor sign-off
Describe complications and the risk factors for Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome/Fontan patients.			
Describe the 5 common emergency admissions and how you access advice from Level 1 e.g., endocarditis, arrhythmia, heart failure, stroke, and infection.			
Describe the 8 common lesions.			
Describe the common cardiology intervention procedures e.g., ASD, Coarctation stenting, valvuloplasty, baffle stenting, percutaneous PVR.			
Describe the common cardiac surgery procedures e.g., VSD, ASD, Fallot Tetralogy, Transposition, Coarctation.			
Describe the indications for mechanical valve replacement versus biological valve replacement and anticoagulant management in adults.			
Describe the indications and management of patients on Warfarin.			
Describe the management of heart failure in CHD patients.			
Describe the management of patients at the End of Life and use of the Network End of Life pathways and hospice directory.			
Describe the importance of exercise for patients with Congenital Heart Disease and the positive impact this may have. Describe some resources which you would direct patients to for advice (ESC, AHA, ACC).			
Describe the contraception advice you would give to young women and what information you would direct them to read.			

Specific Outcomes for the first 12 months			
The Cardiac Link Nurse can:	N/A	Type of evidence	Mentor sign-off
Describe the advice about pregnancy risk you would give and the resources you would use.			
Describe the patients which you would advise were highly vulnerable in the context of COVID-19.			
SUPPORT			
Describe the process of transition and transfer in your local service and support given from the Level 1 and Level 2 centre paediatric and adult CNS team.			
Describe the process you adopt if you have a patient who DNAs outpatient appointments regularly but needs lifelong follow-up.			
Demonstrate how you are actively involved in providing appropriate information and support and signposting to patients and their families.			
Describe the discharge advice you would give to patients to ensure they have the contact details of the CNS team and local community nurse if appropriate for support at home.			
Discuss what you have learned about family dynamics , stress, and coping – how would you recognise signs of poor coping, and how would you refer on to services within the Network as appropriate (psychology).			
COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF MEMBERS IN THE CHD NETWORK			
Understands the role of the Cardiac Link Nurse (see job description)			

Specific Outcomes for the first 12 months

The Cardiac Link Nurse can:	N/A	Type of evidence	Mentor sign-off
Demonstrate awareness and use of the guidelines specific to CHD that are uploaded on the Network website CHD Network Guidelines and promote within their clinical area.			
Describe the role of the PEC / Cardiologist in the District General Hospital (Level 3) and Level 2 and Level 1 team.			
Participate in Level 1 MDT, and visits Level 1 or Level 2 twice a year to participate in clinics and visit wards and other clinical areas to gain experience.			
Understands the CHD Network and cardiac pathways between the Level 1 specialist centre, Level 2 centre and Level 3 local cardiology centre and community.			
Can describe how to refer to the Cardiac Nurse Specialist (CNS) team in the Level 1 or Level 2 centre.			
Can demonstrate knowledge of the CHD support groups in the Network and nationally.			
Can demonstrate support literature from charities is provided to patients and families.			
Describe their database/caseload/how many patients they have in their area.			
Can demonstrate knowledge of complex patients in the local service.			
EDUCATION OF SELF & OTHER STAFF			
Attend the regional and national CHD/ACHD study days, conferences, and on-line training minimum once a year.			

Specific Outcomes for the first 12 months

The Cardiac Link Nurse can:	N/A	Type of evidence	Mentor sign-off
Demonstrate active participation in teaching sessions with ward staff on a regular basis, to assist the nurses to care for patients with CHD.			
Promote teaching and learning sessions from the staff from the Level 1 specialist centre with their own staff in Level 2 or Level 3 in their own clinical areas.			
Demonstrate the use of learning resources such as files on the wards, websites in clinical areas. Complete the local CHD/ ACHD resource pack.			

Progress review (6 months & 12 months)

Cardiac Link Nurse Comments

--

Mentor comments

--

Full name

Signature

Date

Cardiac Link Nurse

Mentor

References:

- Benner, P. (1984). From novice to expert: Excellence and power in clinical nursing practice. Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley
- Adult Congenital heart disease nursing: RCN guidance on role, career pathway & competence development (2015)
- Children & Young People's Cardiac Nursing: RCN guidance on role, career pathway & competence development (2014)
- European Society Cardiology Guidelines
- www.swswchd.co.uk South Wales and South West CHD Network
- <https://leedscongenitalhearts.com> Leeds Congenital Hearts Network

This draft document has been developed to assist Level 3 link nurses and nurses with an interest in cardiology in their development and training, as a way of evidencing their progress which can be used for revalidation and appraisal purposes.

We would be grateful for any constructive feedback (negative or positive) for those of you who use this documentation via this survey link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/F7yKfzbiGM>

Or via email to Network Lead Nurses: jessica.hughes@uhbw.nhs.uk Sheena.Vernon@uhbw.nhs.uk jo.quirk@nhs.net

Many thanks.