

---

### Overview

For this standard you need to test individuals to see if they have been using alcohol and other substances. This standard relates to substances which may include alcohol, prescription and over-the-counter medicines, controlled or currently legal drugs, and new psychoactive substances. This includes preparing to test for substance use, taking samples for testing, communicating and recording the results of testing. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

---

**Performance  
criteria**

- You must be able to:
- P1 accurately identify those individuals to be tested for substance use
  - P2 schedule tests in accordance with requirements
  - P3 confirm that the environment in which the tests are to be carried out, and the procedures to be used comply with health, safety and security policies
  - P4 make arrangements for tests to be witnessed, where required
  - P5 confirm that those involved in carrying out tests are competent and fully understand their roles and the procedures to be followed
  - P6 confirm the availability of all necessary equipment for testing
  - P7 confirm that individuals being tested understand the purpose of the tests, their rights, and any consequences of not submitting to the testing procedures
  - P8 obtain any necessary consent for testing procedures from individuals, or from their carers or guardians where required
  - P9 explain clearly and precisely to individuals what they are required to do to provide their samples
  - P10 provide opportunities for individuals to describe their substance use and explain possible false positives before they are tested
  - P11 take samples according to clinical and organisational policies and procedures
  - P12 ensure that the samples are authentic and have not been contaminated
  - P13 promptly refer to relevant people if you suspect that samples are not authentic or have been contaminated
  - P14 test samples, or refer them for testing, in accordance with clinical and organisational policies and procedures
  - P15 follow supplier's/manufacturer's instructions for use of equipment, where appropriate
  - P16 dispose of samples safely, in accordance with clinical and organisational policies and procedures
  - P17 communicate the outcomes of the tests to individuals, and their carers or guardians where required, and ensure they understand the outcomes
  - P18 respect individuals' rights and the required standards of confidentiality
  - P19 keep full and accurate records of testing and results and make reports in accordance with your organisation's policy and procedures

---

**Knowledge and understanding**

**You need to know and understand:**

- K1 legal, organisational and policy requirements relevant to your role and the activities being carried out
- K2 health, safety and security policies and how to ensure the testing environment and procedures meets these
- K3 how to adapt communication styles in ways which meet the individual's needs, strengths and capabilities
- K4 the rights of the individual, the testing regime and process and possible consequences of both positive and negative results
- K5 who and how to refer to if you suspect that samples are not authentic, have been contaminated
- K6 the principle of confidentiality and the implications for your practice
- K7 the purpose of testing and the consequences of non-compliance for individuals
- K8 the importance of accurately identifying those individuals to be tested for substance use and how to do so
- K9 clinical and organisational procedures for testing for alcohol or other substance use
- K10 the range of tests available and which type of tests are used by your organisation
- K11 when sample giving needs to be witnessed and how to make appropriate arrangements
- K12 the importance of obtaining consent for substance testing, how to do so and when carer and/or guardians need to be involved
- K13 the limits of testing and the possible causes of false readings in the types of tests carried out
- K14 the equipment required for testing for substance use and how to use this in accordance with supplier's/manufacture's instructions and organisational procedure
- K15 how to dispose of samples and sampling equipment safely
- K16 the principles of equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice and how they are applied
- K17 the individual's rights when being tested for substance use

---

K18 the importance of keeping full and accurate records, and how to do so in line with organisational requirements

---

**Additional information**

**External Links**

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB6 Assessment and treatment planning

SFHAE1  
Test for alcohol and other substance use



---

<b>Developed by</b>	Skills for Health
<b>Version number</b>	2
<b>Date approved</b>	March 2014
<b>Indicative review date</b>	March 2019
<b>Validity</b>	Current
<b>Status</b>	Original
<b>Originating organisation</b>	Skills for Health
<b>Original URN</b>	SFHAE1
<b>Relevant occupations</b>	Health Professionals; Health and Social Care
<b>Suite</b>	Drugs and Alcohol
<b>Key words</b>	Drugs; alcohol; substance; misuse; abuse; commissioning; sample

---