
Overview

This standard is about gathering accurate family history information and may be undertaken by clinical or non-clinical healthcare workers.

You will need to manage information gathering with great care and sensitivity as some parts of the family history may evoke strong emotions. You may need to probe gently and ask questions that cover a range of subjects and you may need to ask individuals to find out further information from other sources.

As information is revealed, individuals may start to theorise about their health and you need to be prepared to deal with a situation that at this point has no confirmed outcome. This is a standard which may be generally applicable to healthcare staff in a wide variety of roles. 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 allocate sufficient time for the discussion to be completed
 - P2 explain the purpose of taking the family history
 - P3 seek agreement to take the family history and share it and/or a pedigree drawn from it, with relatives and health professionals if appropriate
 - P4 respect the individual's rights and wishes relating to their privacy, beliefs and dignity
 - P5 use appropriate questions to gather relevant multi-generational family history information
 - P6 encourage the individual to ask questions throughout the consultation
 - P7 recognise and adapt to the stresses and barriers to communication that result from the questions asked and the answers being given
 - P8 make sure sufficient information is taken so that a pedigree can be drawn if relevant
 - P9 accurately record the information in an appropriate format
 - P10 explain to the individual the next stages following the consultation
 - P11 ensure any genetic information you give to the individual is within the limits of your role, responsibility, knowledge and experience
 - P12 signpost the individual to sources of further genetic information if requested
 - P13 maintain the chain of confidentiality when passing information to other healthcare professionals

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the stages of gathering multi-generational family history information
- K2 the types of questions which elicit the required multi-generational family history information
- K3 the extent of the multi-generational family history required
- K4 that any medical history given may need to be clarified or confirmed using additional sources of information gaining appropriate consent as necessary
- K5 the value, use, advantages and limitations of multi-generational family history information and how this changes/informs future practice and treatment
- K6 social, psychological, emotional, cultural, linguistic factors which may emerge when taking a multi-generational family history
- K7 the use of effective communication skills and strategies consistent with the level of understanding, background, culture and preferred ways of communicating of the person giving the information
- K8 how to discuss sensitive issues with individuals
- K9 the family issues that may emerge as a result of taking multi-generational information
- K10 what makes an appropriate environment in which to capture and discuss confidential information
- K11 which information should be recorded
- K12 record keeping practices and procedures in relation to gathering and recording multi-generational family history information
- K13 consent and confidentiality guidelines particularly relating to genetics

Additional information

External Links

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

Dimension: HWB2 Assessment and care planning to meet people's health and wellbeing needs

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