

General Practice - Health Care Support Worker Protocols and Competency sheet

Taking Blood Pressure

This guidance is to enable level 3 and 4 Health Care Support Workers, who have been deemed competent by a registered Healthcare professional to carry out Blood Pressure measurement with individuals. Which will be used by a health care professional to make a clinical decision on completion of the task. The HCSW should have access to a supervisor when carrying out clinical tasks. Removing any need for the HCSW to make a standalone decision.

This protocol is offered as guidance and can be adapted by individual practices.

**AIM/OBJECTIVE OF GUIDELINE**

To take and record accurate blood pressure reading

To have knowledge of what constitutes a normal blood pressure

To have a basic knowledge of what a high/low blood pressure is

**Equipment**

Stethoscope

Appropriate BP measurement device (manual and/or automated)

Appropriately sized BP cuff

**Measuring blood pressure**

* Automated devices may not correctly measure a blood pressure if the individual has an irregular pulse. Therefore the pulse should be checked first. If individual has an irregular pulse, a manual monitor should be used. Document and inform GP/PN re irregular pulse.

* If blood pressure measured in the clinic is 140/90 mmHg or higher, or 130/80 in **‘High Risk’** individuals; carry out three blood pressures and record the average blood pressure **(The first Blood Pressure reading should not be used when calculating average)**  The below link takes you to BP average calculator

<https://binfy.com/blood_pressure_average_calculator.php>

* If doing a standing and sitting blood pressure - inform the GP/PN if the systolic blood pressure falls by 20mmHg or more when the person is standing

**Classifications of Blood Pressure**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Systolic (mmHg)** |  | **Diastolic (mmHg)** | **Action** |
| Optimal | <120 | and | <80 | Document in GP system and notify PN that BP has been taken |
| Normal | 120-129 | and/or | 80-84 | Document in GP system and notify PN that BP has been taken |
| High normal | 130/139 | and/or | 85-89 | Inform GPN/GP straight away |
| Grade 1 hypertension | **140-159** | and/or | **90-99** | Inform GPN/GP straight away |
| Grade 2 hypertension | **160-179** | and/or | **100-109** | Inform GPN/GP straight away |
| Grade 3 hypertension | **≥180** | and/or | **≥110** | Inform GPN/GP straight away |
| Isolated systolic hypertension | >140 | and | <90 | Inform GPN/GP straight away |

**Cautions:**

It is important that if the staff member and or the Health Care Support Workers are taking blood pressure measurements that they are aware if the individual is in the **‘High Risk’** category. The High risk categories include:

1. Target organ damage

2. Known cardiovascular disease

3. Previous stroke or TIA

4. Renal disease

5. Diabetes mellitus

**Competency rating scale**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| LEVEL | **HCSW** | **ASSESSOR** |
| **1.** | I have observed the skill and the theory has been explained to me. | The HCSW has observed this and had the theory explained to them. |
| **2.** | I can participate and assist in this skill. | The HCSW is able to participate and assist in this skill. |
| **3.** | I can link theory to practice and do this safely and competently with supervision. | The HCSW is able to link theory to the practice and do this safely and competently with supervision. |
| **4.** | I can deliver this skill safely and competently without supervision. | The HCSW can deliver this skill safely and competently without supervision. |

**Blood pressure competencies**

**Enter date & initials**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1a. | Define the following terms : | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  | Hypotension; Hypertension; Postural Hypotension. |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| b. | Define the following terms : | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  | Systolic; Diastolic. |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| c. | Be familiar with the normal range of measurements of Blood Pressure. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| d. | Can recognise slight deviations from normal, taking into account factors individual to each patient. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| e. | Discuss the importance of selecting the correct cuff size. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| f. | Can apply the cuff to the correct place on the arm. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

**(The Taking & Recording of an Individual's Blood Pressure - cont’d)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| g. | Can give the reasons for placing the patients’ arm at the same level as their heart, keeping the arm | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  | Relaxed and slightly flexed. |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| h. | Can prepare all pieces of equipment for use. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| i. | Can describe the procedure for taking the blood pressure and discuss its significance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| j. | Is aware of the need for accuracy with this measurement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| k. | Records the Blood Pressure in the patients’ electronic case file and reports any abnormal measurements to | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |
|  | the appropriate professional in accordance with  protocol |  |  |  |  | Staff member |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Assessor |

**Competency Achieved Date:** ………………………………………..

**Staff member** **Signature**: …………………………………………………………..……..

**Assessor/mentor** **Signature**: ………………………………………………………..........…..

**Mentor comments (if required):**