Mandatory Induction Standards for Healthcare Support Workers (HCSW)

Guidance for Reviewers
1. THE INDUCTION STANDARDS FOR HEALTHCARE SUPPORT WORKERS (HCSWs)

1.1 What they are – and why they have been introduced
All staff have a duty to ensure that the services being delivered by NHSScotland are safe and of a high quality. The HCSW induction standards provide a means for ensuring that all new HCSW staff have the knowledge and skills needed to contribute effectively to the delivery of healthcare and to protect the public from harm.

There are 14 standards which new HCSWs will need to meet within 3 months of starting their job (or part-time equivalent). The standards reflect many of the areas which a new member of staff can be expected to learn about during an induction period, which will include both corporate and on-the-job induction. These include:

- their role and responsibilities, and how they relate to other members of the team
- relevant legislation, policy and procedures, and how these relate to their work
- how to ensure that they play an effective part in making their work environment healthy, safe and secure
- what to do in case of problems or emergencies
- how to reflect on what they have learned and identify any additional training needed

Each standard is underpinned by a number of performance criteria. These outline the knowledge and skills which the individual needs to demonstrate in order to meet the standard in question.

By meeting the induction standards, the new HCSW:
- demonstrates to their employer that they have the basic knowledge and skills needed to work safely
- gathers evidence which they can use to support their further development through the KSF Personal Development and Review Processes (KSFPDP/PDR)

1.2 Who needs to meet the standards?
The term ‘healthcare support worker’\(^1\) covers a very wide range of roles, both clinical and non-clinical. It includes staff who

- work in a clinical role (either direct or indirect), under supervision of a health care professional\(^2\);
- work in a direct service provision role, with access to patients and members of the public;

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\(^1\) The definition of ‘healthcare support worker’ is included in Schedule 1/Appendix A of Chief Executives’ Letter (CEL) 23 (2010).
\(^2\) A “health care professional” is a member of a profession which is regulated by a body mentioned (at the time the agreement in question is made) in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002 (c. 17). The relevant regulatory bodies are the General Chiropractic Council (GCC), the General Dental Council (GDC), the General Medical Council (GMC), the General Optical Council (GOC), the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC), the Health Professions Council (HPC), the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) or the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPC). For the purposes of this Direction this includes Psychologists, Counsellors and Healthcare Scientists as these groups were identified as priorities for statutory regulation in the White Paper *Trust, Assurance and Safety.*
• deal with personal identifiable patient data;
• have responsibility for maintaining premises or equipment used by patients; or
• are involved in the preparation / delivery of goods or services directly for / to service users.

It does not include healthcare professionals, unpaid volunteers and staff working under certain specific contractual arrangements. Full details of the definition of ‘Healthcare Support Worker’ can be found in Chief Executives’ Letter (CEL) 23.

From 31st December 2010, anyone coming into a role which fits one or more of the categories above will be expected to demonstrate that they meet the standards within 3 months of taking up their post. For further details, please see CEL 23.

1.3 What a healthcare support worker needs to do to meet the standards
The HCSW induction standards have been designed so that they can apply to the range of roles covered by the definition above.

Information about many of the areas covered by the induction standards is likely to be included in induction programmes for new staff. A key aim of the induction standards is to ensure that new healthcare support workers know how to apply information within their own work context in order to protect the public.

To meet the induction standards, the individual needs to show that they have the knowledge and skills outlined in the performance criteria for each standard and they can apply these to their own work. The evidence needed to demonstrate achievement of a standard can take a number of forms, such as:

• on-the-job observation of their work by their reviewer
• discussions with their reviewer, where the individual answers questions related to the performance criteria
• written evidence, such as accounts of what they do and why

More guidance on how the individual can demonstrate how they will meet the standards is contained in the HCSW Workbook. A more detailed version of the workbook has been produced for reviewers to show the type and level of evidence needed.

As a reviewer, your role will be to ensure that the healthcare support worker can demonstrate knowledge and skills appropriate to their role and the requirements of the performance criteria, and to help them identify where they might need additional training or support to meet the standards. More information about how the standards are reviewed is contained in Being a Reviewer.

1.4 How the standards link to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework
The Induction Standards set out the minimum level of knowledge and skills required in core areas which relate to protecting the public. The 14 induction standards have been linked to the NHS KSF to ensure that the two processes are joined up for new healthcare support workers. The performance criterion for each standard has been referenced to level 1 of the NHS KSF Core dimension. By demonstrating that they meet the induction standards, new staff can gather relevant evidence which can be used in KSF development review meetings.
1.5 How the standards link to the Code of Conduct for HCSWs and the Code of Practice for Employers

The induction standards are supported by two new codes: a Code of Conduct which applies to all healthcare support workers, and a Code of Practice which applies to NHSS Employers.

- **Code of Conduct for HCSWs**
  
The new Code of Conduct for HCSWs will apply in due course to all healthcare support workers – not only those who are new in post. The Code of Conduct outlines the values which should underpin the work of all staff in HCSW roles, and all are expected to adhere to it.

  Once a new healthcare support worker has demonstrated that they have met the induction standards, they will be expected to recognise how they carry forward the values in the Code in their work. To support this, the standards have been referenced to the Code of Conduct.

- **Code of Practice for Employers**
  
Employers in NHSScotland have an obligation to ensure that healthcare support workers are supported to meet the induction standards and the requirements of the Code of Conduct. The Code of Practice for Employers outlines what employers are required to do to ensure that their HCSW staff are supported to work safely and contribute to the delivery of high-quality patient care.
2. **BEING A REVIEWER**

2.1 **Why review is needed**

The introduction of the new induction standards creates a change of emphasis in the induction process. The focus is now on the new member of staff to show that they understand and can apply what they have learnt during their period of induction to their own work role. The aim is to ensure that all new healthcare support workers are working consistently at or above the minimum standards required to protect the public and contribute effectively to the work of healthcare teams.

To ensure this consistent level of working, it is important that each new healthcare support worker is reviewed against the standards by someone in their workplace. The person responsible for this review is the reviewer. In this section, we look at some of the key issues involved in the review of healthcare support workers against the induction standards.

2.2 **Who the reviewer is**

As a reviewer, you will be responsible for reviewing the new healthcare support worker’s achievement of the standards. You might be:

- the individual’s workplace supervisor or
- the individual’s KSF reviewer or
- a KSF reviewer or SVQ reviewer working in a relevant area of the service or
- an individual who has been delegated by the employer to carry out the review

Whatever your overall role in relation to the individual healthcare support worker, your role as a reviewer is the same: to identify how the healthcare support worker meets the induction standards, and where additional support might be needed. All reviewers should receive appropriate local support to undertake this review.

Many reviewers will carry out reviews as an addition to their current work. Therefore the guidance and resources created for reviewers try, as far as possible, to look at how the review can be integrated as part of the induction process.

2.3 **What the reviewer needs to do**

As a reviewer, you have 3 main tasks. You need to:

- ensure that the new healthcare support worker understands what they need to do to meet the standards, and help them plan how to do this
- review their achievement against the standards, identifying where they meet the requirements and where they might need additional support
- ensure that, when the individual has met all of the standards, this achievement is recorded appropriately.

a) **Planning to meet the standards**

Before they begin to gather evidence towards the induction standards, the new healthcare support worker needs to know:

- the role of the standards, and how they relate to their own work context
- how they can plan to meet the standards
- how the standards will be reviewed
- how the standards relate to the KSF outline for their post
If you are the individual’s workplace supervisor, you are likely to have responsibility for supporting the individual through the induction period, and you will be able to help them plan how they will address the standards. As you work closely with the healthcare support worker on a day-to-day basis, you may also be able to integrate review - such as observation of their work – into your regular schedule. It is important however, that work which is being reviewed is also recorded and discussed with the individual.

If you aren’t the individual’s workplace supervisor, you are less likely to be closely involved with the individual’s daily work. As a result, you will need to schedule times when you can speak with the healthcare support worker about their progress, achievement and the additional support they might need. You may also need to liaise closely with the individual’s supervisor to plan how that additional support can be provided.

b) Reviewing achievement
It is important to remember that the aim of review is to ensure that new healthcare support workers reach a consistent minimum standard, irrespective of the area of service they are working in. The role of the reviewer is to ensure that the standards are applied consistently and fairly.

As a reviewer, you need to:
- understand how the performance criteria in each standard relates to the area of service the healthcare support worker is working in
- identify what – and how much – evidence is needed for the individual to demonstrate that they meet the standard
- identify where there are gaps in the individual’s knowledge and skills relating to the standards, and how these gaps can be filled

It is important to remember that new healthcare support workers will demonstrate that they meet the standards within 3 months of taking up their role. This has important implications for reviewers – you cannot expect the individual to be an expert in their role in this length of time.

Consistency in review depends on being able to identify what is enough evidence to meet the standard. The guidance provided in the HCSW Reviewer Workbook is designed to help you with this task.

c) Recording achievement
It is mandatory for all new healthcare support workers to meet the induction standards, and information about achievement will be recorded by your NHS Board. You should check within your NHS board for local procedures which will be used alongside this national guidance.

Your NHS Board will be responsible for establishing local procedures for recording this information. As a reviewer, you need to be sure that you understand the procedures you need to follow to record the new healthcare support workers’ completion of the standards.

2.4 Gathering evidence for review
To meet the standards the new healthcare support worker showing that they have the appropriate level of knowledge and/or skills to meet the performance criteria. The
role of the reviewer is to decide whether or not the knowledge and skills being demonstrated meet the criteria.

Some of the performance criteria lend themselves to specific ways of demonstrating evidence. For example, in discussion, the new healthcare support worker might describe the required policy in an area, and how they follow this policy in their work. For other criteria, it may be more appropriate to observe the individual in the workplace. It is important that you decide with the new healthcare support worker how you are going to review each performance criterion, and what evidence is required. The HCSW Workbook contains a series of tasks to support the healthcare support worker to provide the evidence which is needed.

In all cases, it is important to record what the individual has demonstrated and how it meets the performance criteria. You should sign, date and store the record safely, in accordance with local procedures.

2.5 Ensuring consistency in review
The HCSW Induction Standards are national standards which will apply to all new healthcare support workers in NHSScotland from 31st December 2010. It is therefore important to ensure that, wherever the healthcare support worker is employed, the standards are being applied consistently and fairly.

As a reviewer, you have a vital role in ensuring the consistency of review of the standards. Consistency of review means being sure that all those involved in reviewing healthcare support workers are applying the standards in the same way, and asking for the same level of evidence, regardless of the service area in which they are working.

Contacting and working with others involved in the review will help you be confident that you are applying and reviewing standards consistently and fairly. You might do this in a number of ways. Here are some examples:

- work with another reviewer to ‘double mark’, comparing your views on the same piece of evidence
- create a network of HCSW reviewers in your NHS Board to help provide support for each other. This could be particularly useful to help you compare the application of the standards across different service areas.
- contact your in-house SVQ centre staff for advice or support. Most Boards in NHSScotland have an in-house centre for the provision of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), and staff in these centres have experience of supporting reviewers. Information about your in-house SVQ centre may be available on your NHS Board intranet, or via the NHS VQ Network.

These are only a few of the ways for supporting consistency. If you have any other ideas for the types of resources or support which might be useful for reviewers, please contact NES via www.hcswookit.nes.scot.nhs.uk/contact-us

2.6 Reflecting on your role and skills as a reviewer
As a reviewer for the HCSW Induction Standards, you are likely to have a wide range of experience which will help you in your role. Your experience and understanding of the individual’s work context will be essential in helping you to review their performance against the standards. You may also be building on previous experience of having reviewed an individual’s work (e.g. as part of an
SVQ assessment process) or reviewing their performance (e.g. as part of the KSF PDP/PDR process).

However, it is important to recognise that your role of reviewer of the HCSW Induction Standards requires you to learn new knowledge and skills: understanding the new standards, and how these apply to the individual; being able to guide the individual through those standards; and reviewing the individual’s performance against the standards.

Your role in implementing new national standards is very important. It can also help you reach some of your own development goals. Think about:

- **contributing to your own KSF PDP/PDR:** How does your experience link to your own PDR requirements? Remember that you can use your experience as a reviewer as evidence within your own PDR, and to help you identify further learning needs in your own PDP.
- **meeting CPD requirements:** If you are a member of a professional body which asks you for evidence of CPD, think about how you can use your new experience of reviewing the HCSW Standards to provide evidence of this development.
- **identifying other review opportunities:** If this is your first experience of reviewing individuals against standards, you may wish to build your skills in this area. Your NHS Board may be able to provide further opportunities for this. For example, you may be able to undertake training as an SVQ assessor or as an assessor for other programmes of learning used within your Board. For more information, speak with your manager and/or representatives of your Board’s Learning & Development department.
3. PREPARING FOR THE REVIEW

3.1 Before you begin
Before starting to work with a new healthcare support worker, it is important that you understand fully the standards, and how they are being implemented in your NHS Board. In particular, make sure that you:

- know where to access the HCSW standards, HCSW Code of Conduct and the Code of Practice for Employers
- have read and understood the performance criteria within each standard
- have read and understood the materials used to support review
- know about the procedures used in your NHS Board for reviewing and recording an individual’s achievement of the standards
- know who to speak with if you need extra support with the review process

3.2 The initial stages of review
The induction standards apply to a very wide range of roles across NHSScotland, including clinical and non-clinical services. The fact that they are induction standards indicates that most of the knowledge the individual needs will come through induction and orientation to their role. However, in order to meet the standards, the individual needs to be able to apply that knowledge to their own work context.

As a result, it is important that each healthcare support worker understands how the standards apply to their work context, what they need to do to meet the standards, and where they will get the knowledge they need to do this.

As the reviewer, you need to be able to guide and support the individual through this process. To do this, it is important to be well prepared.

Before you start to work on the standards with the new healthcare support worker, make sure that you:

- have a copy of their job description and KSF outline
- understand how each standard applies to their work role
- (if you are not their workplace supervisor) have explained your role to their workplace supervisor, and arranged how you will:
  - liaise with the supervisor
  - schedule time for progress meetings with the healthcare support worker

At your first ‘standards’ meeting with the new healthcare support worker, make sure that they understand:

- how the standards apply to their work context, and their link with the KSF PDP/PDR process
- what they need to do to demonstrate they meet the standards
- how induction will help them get the knowledge they need
- how you will review their progress
- what you will do if they need further support in specific areas
- how you will record their achievement of the standards
- when and where you will meet for your discussions
3.3 Reviewing progress
You may arrange a number of meetings with the individual to review their progress against the standards. The number of meetings required will depend on your own context and the individual’s needs. However, at each meeting you should make sure that you:

- identify the performance criteria which you have reviewed
- record what the healthcare support worker has done to meet the criteria
- record your own review notes:
  - has the individual met the criterion?
  - If not, what more needs to be done in order to meet it?
- discuss with the individual what they need to do next in order to meet all the standards
- (if appropriate) inform the individual’s workplace supervisor of the next steps which are needed

3.4 Completing the review
Once the new healthcare support worker has demonstrated that they meet all of the performance criteria in the induction standards, make sure you:

- complete all required sign-off documentation
- record completion in accordance with local procedures
- discuss next steps with the healthcare support worker, including:
  - how they are going to use the evidence they have collected to inform their KSF PDP/PDR
  - how they are going to show that they are adhering to the HCSW Code of Conduct
- (if appropriate) inform the individual’s workplace supervisor that they have met all of the standards

All of the guidance in this section has been summarised in the Preparataion Checklist for Reviewers on the following pages.
Preparation Checklist for Reviewers

The following checklist is designed to support you through the review process. It outlines the steps you can take to ensure that the process is well planned and effective.

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**BEFORE YOU BEGIN:** Make sure you….

- know where to access the HCSW standards, HCSW Code of Conduct and the Code of Practice for Employers
- have read and understood the performance criteria within each standard
- have read and understood the materials used to support review
- know about the procedures used in your NHS Board for reviewing and recording an individual's achievement of the standards
- know who to speak to if you need extra support with the review process

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO WORK WITH THE NEW HEALTHCARE SUPPORT WORKER:** Make sure you…..

- have a copy of their job description
- understand how each standard applies to their job role
- know how the HCSW’s induction and orientation to their role links with the standards
- *(if you are not their workplace supervisor)* have explained your role to their workplace supervisor and arranged how you will:
  - liaise with the supervisor
  - schedule time for progress meetings with the healthcare support worker

**AT YOUR FIRST ‘STANDARDS’ MEETING WITH THE NEW HEALTHCARE SUPPORT WORKER,** make sure that they understand:

- how the standards apply to their work context, and their link with the KSF PDP/PDR process
- what they need to do to demonstrate they meet the standards
- how induction will help them get the knowledge they need
- how you will review their progress
- what you will do if they need further support in specific areas
- how you will record their achievement of the standards
- when and where you will meet for your discussions

**REVIEWING PROGRESS.** At each meeting, make sure you:

- identify the performance criteria which you have reviewed
- record what the healthcare support worker has done to meet the criteria
- record your own review:
  - has the individual met the criterion?
  - if not, what more needs to be done in order to meet it?
- discuss with the individual what they need to do next in order to meet all the standards
- *(if appropriate)* inform the individual’s workplace supervisor of the next steps which are needed

**COMPLETING THE REVIEW.** Make sure you:

- complete all required sign-off documentation
- record completion in accordance with local procedures
- discuss next steps with the healthcare support worker, including:
  - how they are going to use the evidence they have collected to inform their KSF PDP/PDR
  - how they are going to show that they are adhering to the HCSW Code of Conduct
- *(if appropriate)* inform the individual’s workplace supervisor that they have met all of the standards

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