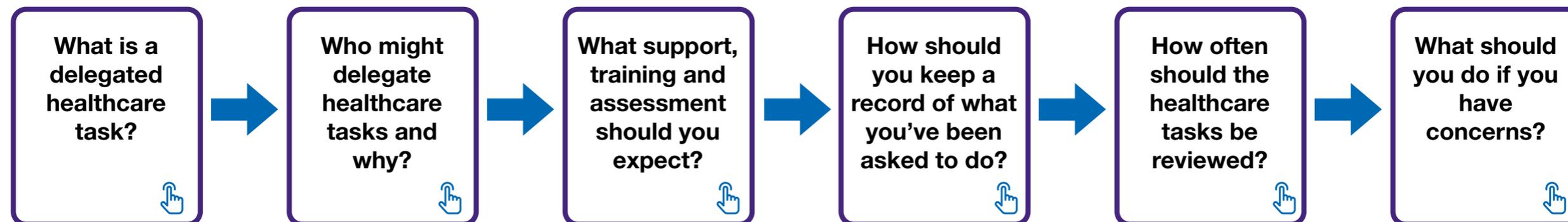
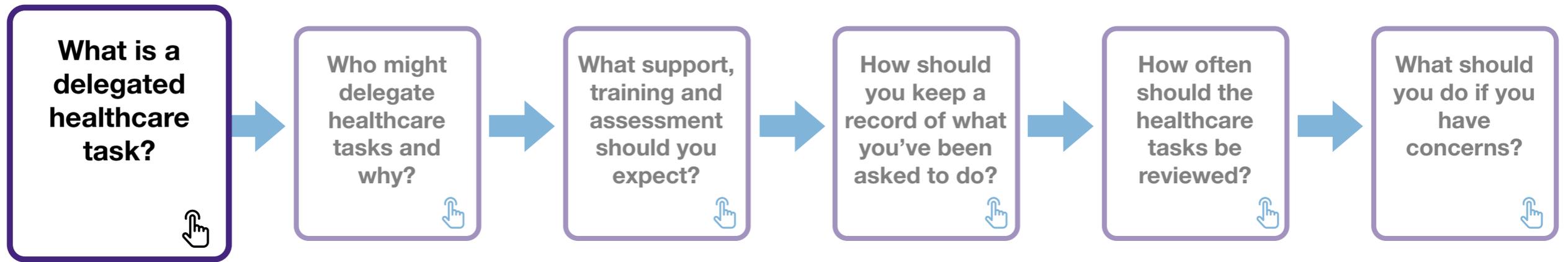


Delegated healthcare tasks

guide for social care employers and managers

This guide is aimed primarily at adult social care employers, managers and care workers working in care homes and may be useful to those working in other social care settings.





What is a delegated healthcare task?

A delegated healthcare task is a health intervention or activity usually of a clinical nature, that a registered healthcare professional delegates to a paid care worker.

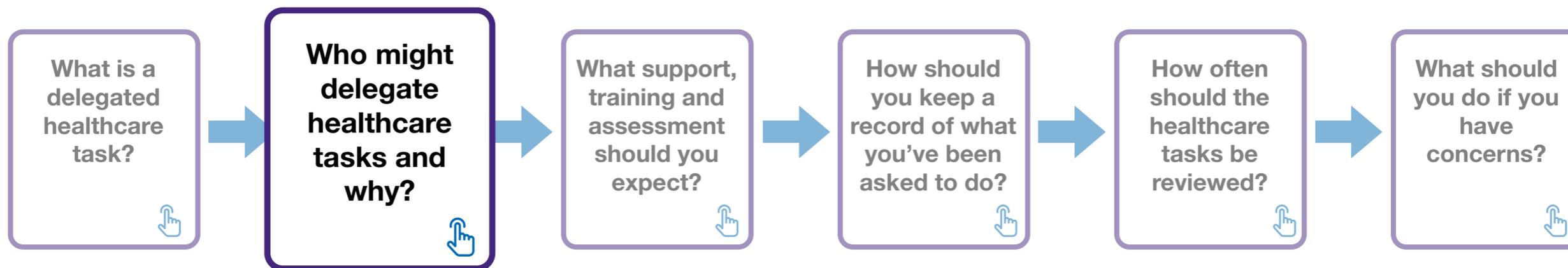
The type of delegated healthcare task will depend on the agreed protocol in your organisation and local health and care system.

A registered healthcare professional remains accountable for the appropriateness of the delegation and ensuring that the person they are delegating to can do the task.

Examples include:

- Supporting skin integrity and wound healing by changing dressings.
- Supporting a person's nutrition using a PEG (Percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy).
- Supporting a person to manage their diabetes through insulin administration and monitoring.





Who might delegate healthcare tasks and why?

Due to the increased complexity of some people's care needs, social care workers can be best placed to do healthcare tasks as they usually know people well and can deliver consistent person-centred care.

Tasks can only be delegated if in the best interests for the person and by a registered healthcare professional who has the relevant occupational competence relating to the task.

Examples of registered health professionals:

- registered nurses
- nursing associates
- occupational therapist.

The clinical responsibility and accountability for the person remains with the registered health professional who delegated the task, their organisation and their professional regulatory body.

[Royal College of Nursing \(RCN\) 2017\) Accountability and Delegation](#)

The employer is responsible for making sure that the care worker has received sufficient training, support and supervision to carry out tasks safely and competently and should be within the care workers job description. The employer **must not** allow staff to accept tasks that they are not competent to deliver and without sufficient training and support.

A care worker must not carry out any delegated healthcare tasks that they do not feel they have the skills for or sufficient training.

Before agreeing to deliver a task, make sure the worker:

- understands fully what they are being asked to do and why
- has the skills, knowledge, experience and had relevant training to complete the activity
- is confident to perform the activity as part of their role
- has sufficient support and supervision.

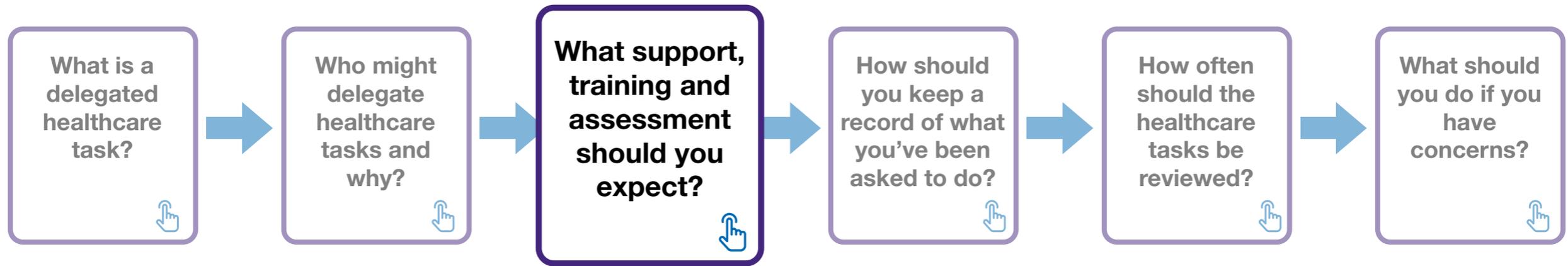
It can be hard to refuse to carry out a delegated task, but you **must** refuse if you feel:

- the worker doesn't have the skills, knowledge and experience to carry it out safely
- there is not sufficient support and supervision for the worker to do the task safely and competently.

If you refuse the task, it doesn't mean that it won't get done; it will be delegated to someone else.

The whole process must be carefully considered and assessed within the care planning process with a partnership approach with you as the social care provider, the care co-ordinator, the registered healthcare professional (if different to the care co-ordinator) and the person and or/their representative including any identified risks. This should include an assessment of the stability of the person, the complexity of the task being delegated, and the expected outcome of the delegation.

There should be a shared understanding of those involved to create a positive and collaborative culture in the best interests of the person and with the person and/or their representative's agreement.



What support, training and assessment should you expect?

Training assessment and review will depend on several factors including:

- the type of task
- how often the care worker is supervised and observed
- how often the task is carried out
- if the task has changed
- if there is extra training needed at any point.

Training should be accessible and proportionate to the task and generally should include:

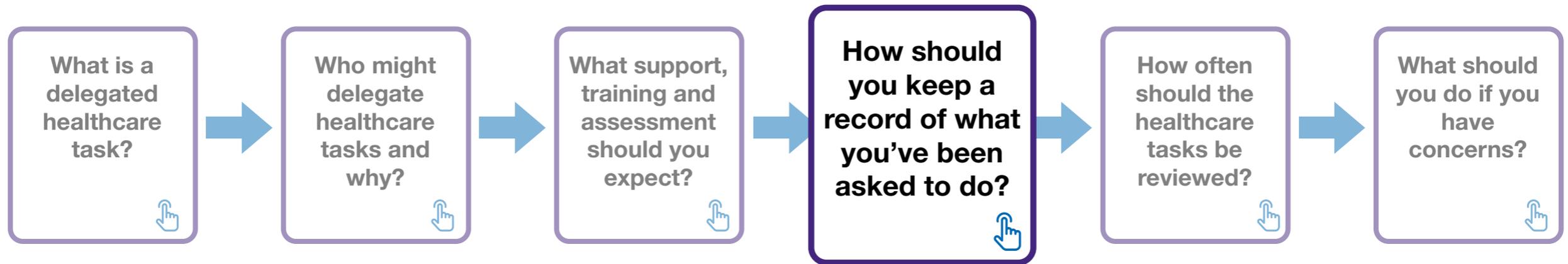
- relevant new knowledge
- a demonstration of how to do particular tasks
- safe use and/or disposal of any equipment
- opportunity to practice with the person who has delegated the task to supervise and observe the staff member's ability, confidence and competence before they are approved as being competent and can work unsupervised
- a signed record of competence
- on-going support and supervision to ensure the care worker remains competent and confident to carry out the delegated task.

The healthcare professional delegating the activity must ensure that an appropriate level of supervision is available.

Care workers must have ongoing development and refresher training to make sure their competency is maintained.

Please note: delegated healthcare tasks are person-specific, not task-specific. Further agreement, training and assessment would be needed for the care worker to deliver a healthcare task that they have been trained for, to other people supported.





How should you keep a record of what you've been asked to do?

Ensure there are clear procedures for the care worker to follow in the person's care plan which are agreed with the healthcare professional delegating the task.

This should include the management of any risks, the limits of the delegation, what to do and who to contact if there are any concerns including out of hours support. It should be clear in the person's care plan that the task has been delegated, by whom and include contingency arrangements for when the care worker is absent.

Keep full records of training given, including dates and when refresher training is required. Refresher training frequency will depend on the task and the person's changing need.

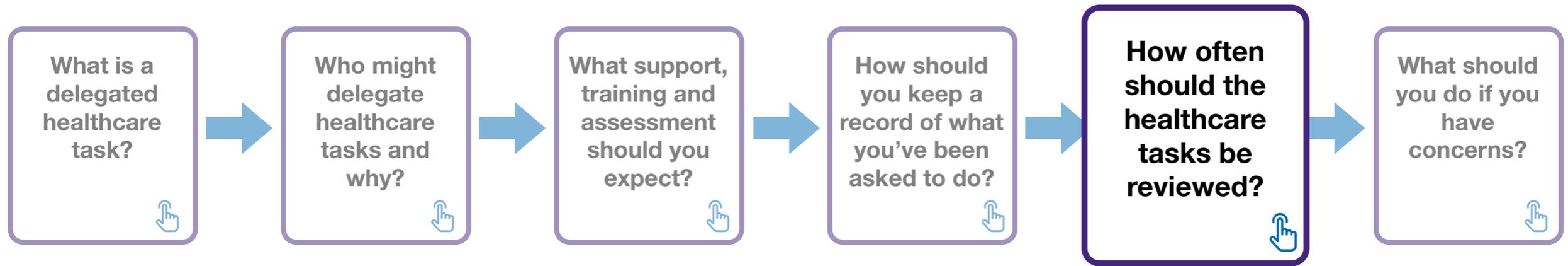
It is the delegated professional's responsibility to identify sufficient refresher training and how this will be delivered.

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that care workers do not carry out healthcare tasks if they have not received sufficient refresher training.

Evidence that care workers competence has been assessed should be recorded, preferably against recognised standards.

Ensure there are clear record keeping procedures in place and the worker understands any additional record keeping, as agreed with the healthcare professional. For example, this could be the completion of a specific chart, how to monitor and when and how to raise concerns.



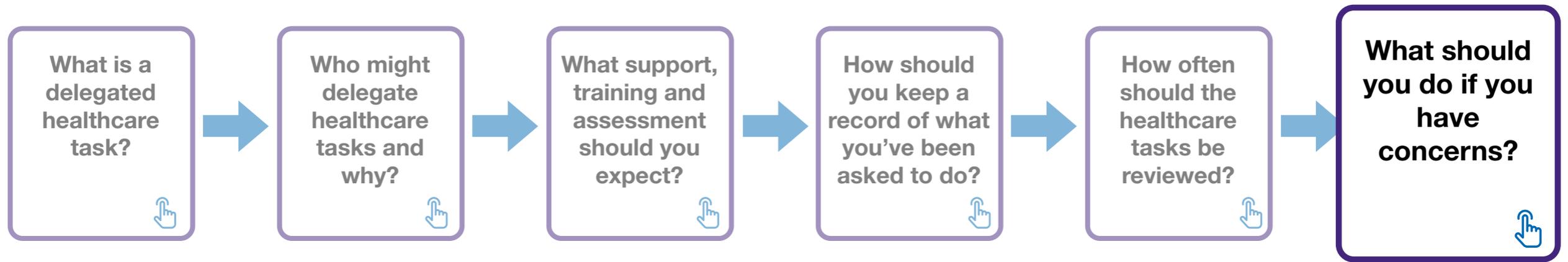


How often should the healthcare tasks be reviewed?

The delegating professional is responsible for ongoing clinical review arrangements. This should be documented clearly in the care plan along with who to contact for advice and reassessment, particularly if the person's needs are known to regularly change or fluctuate.

Review arrangements including frequency, roles and responsibilities should be clearly identified, recorded and communicated to the person and/or their representative and the care provider.





What should you do if you have concerns?

A delegated healthcare task is a shared responsibility and requires clear guidelines, protocols and escalation plans in place, so that the manager or the care worker is not required to make a standalone clinical judgement.

The care plan should include how to contact the relevant healthcare professional for advice and guidance, including out of hours support if required, for situations when you or the worker has any concerns and how to escalate a concern.

Arrangements should include how you raise concerns as a manager about training, ongoing support and competence of the care worker, including where tasks should cease and retraining and/or review is required.

