Delegated Healthcare Activities
Short guide for regulated healthcare professionals

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This guide refers to a 'delegated healthcare activity' as an activity that a regulated healthcare professional, such as a nurse, occupational therapist or speech and language therapist, delegates to a care worker in adult social care. For the purpose of this document, the term 'care worker' refers to care workers, support workers and personal assistants.

The purpose of this guide is to set out the necessary steps to support regulated healthcare professionals in making decisions about delegated healthcare activities in adult social care. This should be used alongside, not in place of, regulatory standards and codes of practice and organisational policies. Before carrying out the delegated healthcare activity, there should be a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in place setting out roles and responsibilities agreed with all parties involved. There should also be documentation, accessible to all, setting out clear escalation routes for raising a concern.

Delegated healthcare activities must be person-centred, respecting individual preferences, dignity, and autonomy. All parties involved, including people who draw on care and support, should be recognised and respected as partners throughout the process.

The regulated healthcare professional remains accountable for the clinical decision to delegate, and the ongoing, appropriate supervision and support in relation to the delegated healthcare activity.

Checklist for delegating healthcare activities

- [ ] **I have discussed and documented the delegated healthcare activity with the person drawing on care and support and they have given consent for the activity to be delegated, where appropriate I have followed the Mental Capacity Act.**
- [ ] **There is a completed risk assessment in place and I believe, at this time, this activity is safe and appropriate to delegate.**
- [ ] **The delegation of this activity aligns with the standards and code of my regulatory and professional bodies.**
- [ ] **The care worker has agreed to carry out the delegated healthcare activity.**
- [ ] **The care worker I am delegating to has received training, has demonstrated competence, and this can be evidenced.**
- [ ] **The delegated healthcare activity is clearly documented in the individual's care plan and recorded after each intervention.**
- [ ] **There is documentation in place for supervision, ongoing review and a plan for escalation of the delegated healthcare activity.**

Roles and responsibilities

Regulated healthcare professionals

- Delegate only within their scope of practice and the care worker's competence.
- Accountable for the clinical decision to delegate.
- Document the rationale, including risk assessment and expected outcomes.
- Provide regular supervision, support, and ongoing review. Consider the frequency and method required in relation to the activity.
- Follow professional standards/codes and seek guidance where needed.

Care workers

- Are not required to undertake a delegated healthcare activity (unless contractually obliged) and have the right to refuse.
- Receive training and regular competency assessments to ensure they carry out the delegated healthcare activity to the agreed standard.

Providers (including individual employers)

- Record and monitor competency assessments of each care worker to ensure the delegated healthcare activity is carried out to the agreed standard.
- Provide insurance coverage for the specific delegated healthcare activity.
- Consider Treatment of Disease, Disorder or Injury (TDDI) registration where appropriate.
- Ensure appropriate levels of staff who are trained to carry out the delegated healthcare activity, including contingency planning for absences.

People drawing on care and support

- The individual (or a named representative where appropriate) has given consent before the delegated healthcare activity begins.
- Involved in ongoing decisions related to the delegated healthcare activity.
- Are not required to accept delegated healthcare activities and can decline.

Training, support, and supervision

- Training must be specific to the delegated healthcare activity and the individual.
- Training should include practical assessment, ideally in the care workers regular working environment.
- Competence should be reassessed as directed by the delegator.
- Supervision must be planned and documented.
- There is a clear, accessible escalation plan to support all involved to raise concerns.

Monitoring and review

- The delegated healthcare activity should be reviewed, and documentation updated regularly, particularly if needs change.
- All parties should be involved in feedback and review discussions regarding the delegated healthcare activity.
- Agreed adjustments should be made by the regulated healthcare professional based on outcomes and observations.

Further Information

HCPC – www.hcpc-uk.org/standards

NMC – Delegation: The Code in Action: www.nmc.org.uk/standards/

RCN – Accountability and Delegation Guide: www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/

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