



Delegated healthcare activities sample policy

This document is a supporting resource, developed as part of a suite of resources to support the guiding principles of delegated healthcare activity for health and social care in England. The principles promote a person-centred approach to delegation with the person’s wishes, preferences and needs at the heart of decision-making.

The purpose of this **sample** policy is to support decision-making when considering the delegation of

healthcare activities to care workers and should be aligned to your own organisational policies.

Important to note

This sample policy does not explain how to carry out specific activities. Delegated activities are person-specific, not activity-specific. Due to this, each delegated activity requires specific information and guidance relating to the person accessing care and support, their needs and the type of activity being carried out.

Insert the specific information relating to the type of delegated healthcare activity in Section 2. We have provided supporting policy information on wound care, clinical observations and catheter care that you can use.



The delegation of

from regulated healthcare professionals to care workers

## Why is this policy needed?

In care settings, teams may be asked to carry out healthcare activities that are usually undertaken by a regulated healthcare professional and are delegated to a care worker. Ensuring delegation

is done safely is paramount; for the person accessing care and support, the care worker undertaking the activity, the regulated healthcare professional, and the setting in which the activity is being carried out. As there can be risks around delegation, it is important that all parties understand their roles and responsibilities clearly.

## What is a delegated healthcare activity?

A delegated healthcare activity is a health intervention or task, usually of a clinical nature, that a regulated healthcare professional delegates to a paid and competent care worker in social care.

It is important to remember that a **regulated healthcare professional will be delegating an activity to an individual staff member(s) within a provider organisation, not to the care provider as a whole.**

A **regulated healthcare professional remains accountable for the appropriateness of a delegation and for ensuring that the person they are delegating to can do the activity** (Nursing & Midwifery Council, 2018).

## A person-centred approach

Person-centred care and support should be a thread woven through all aspects of the delegation. This means that a person’s needs, wishes and aspirations should be taken into consideration when delegation occurs. Likewise, the views of family, friends and carers as appropriate.

People accessing care and support should be involved in consenting to the delegation and decision-making. This should include the reasons for delegating the activity and the benefits to the person, their health outcomes and quality of life.

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**Section one**

# Roles and responsibilities

This section can help care providers understand the roles and responsibilities of the delegator, their role as providers and of the care workers they employ. It can support and inform the decision-making process when accepting a delegated activity.

## The care provider

It is important to remember that a regulated healthcare professional will be delegating an activity to an individual staff member within a provider organisation, not to a care provider as a whole.

Despite this, care providers are ultimately responsible for determining whether or not care workers in their settings should carry out delegated healthcare activities. Due to this, providers have a number of responsibilities to consider before enabling the delegation of a healthcare activity in their setting.

The care provider is responsible for ensuring that those within their teams have received sufficient training, support and supervision from a regulated professional to carry out activities safely and competently. Providers should also be confident that their current insurance arrangements cover them for the undertaking of a specific delegated healthcare activity and the equipment required to deliver it.

Before agreeing to deliver a delegated activity, it is a provider’s responsibility to ensure that a care worker carrying out the activity in their setting:

fully understands the activity they are being asked to do and why they are doing it

will operate within what they are permitted to do under a local authority’s care and support contract, which often defines what social care providers are ‘allowed’ to do (if applicable)

note, this may not be relevant if the person is privately funding their care

has received the relevant initial and ongoing training from a regulated healthcare professional to complete the activity safely and competently

is confident that they can perform the activity as part of their role and has sufficient support has supervision from the healthcare professional that has delegated the activity.

Providers have the right to refuse to carry out a delegated activity if they feel:

the worker doesn’t have the skills, knowledge and experience to carry it out safely.

there is insufficient support and supervision from the individual who has delegated the activity for the worker to do the activity safely and competently.

Note that documentation for all of the above will be essential for the safe delegation of a healthcare activity.

**Section one**

## The delegator roles and responsibilities

A regulated healthcare professional must follow their code of professional standards when delegating healthcare activity, taking into consideration consent, education, training and competency to meet an individual’s needs and outcomes. Activities must only be delegated that are within the care worker’s scope of competence.

## The care worker

Will understand and agree to the delegation arrangements.

Will receive and document approved training from a regulated healthcare professional prior to conducting a delegated activity relating to the person and their health needs. Some aspects of education and training may be provided through other methods such as eLearning, and face- to-face learning.

Will demonstrate competence. It is recommended the delegator completes and records a competency assessment alongside an accurate record of decision-making when delegating healthcare activities.

Will update training and competencies as required by the activity or to refresh knowledge and skills. Will have access to appropriate support, advice and know how to escalate concerns with their manager and the regulated healthcare professional delegating the activity.

It is the responsibility of the care worker to work within the scope of their practice and job description.

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**Section one**

# Training, education and support

Care workers should always have ongoing training and support as required from the regulated professional delegating the activity.

However, the exact support, training and assessment care workers require depends on several factors, including:

the type of activity

how often the care worker is supervised and observed how often the activity is carried out

if best practice/the activity has changed

if there is extra training needed at any point.

Care managers and care workers should not be expected to provide training to other care workers or delegate the activity to another care worker who hasn’t received sufficient training.

## Training

Training should be clear and proportionate to the delegated activity. It may include:

a person-centred approach

any relevant new knowledge

clear demonstrations of how to do particular activities

instructions on the safe use and/or disposal of any equipment

how to use digital monitoring systems and technology (where required)

what to record and when to escalate concerns

written documentation to support the delivery of the delegated healthcare activity (for example, the care plan)

supervision and observation of the staff member’s ability, confidence and competence prior to a care worker being approved as competent

ongoing support and supervision to ensure the care worker remains competent and confident to carry out the delegated activity.

## Training records

There needs to be evidence that the care worker’s competence has been assessed by the regulated professional delegating the activity.

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

Full training records need to be kept, including dates and when refresher training is required.

**Section one**

# Raising concerns

## Raising concerns about the person accessing care and support

Care managers and care workers should know how to contact the relevant healthcare professional for advice and guidance, including out-of-hours support and escalation if required. Delegating healthcare professionals should ensure that the person’s written care plan includes protocols and escalation plans between the delegator, the care workers’ manager and the care worker.

Having protocols and escalation plans in place is a priority. They ensure that the care worker is not at any point making a standalone clinical judgement or ongoing clinical assessment.

## Raising a change in the needs of a person accessing care and support

Where a person’s needs have changed, or where a care worker/provider feels or suspects a person’s needs have changed, it should be clear **who they should contact to raise concerns**.

## Concerns about training and support

Arrangements established prior to the delegation of a healthcare activity should include how to raise concerns about the level of training, ongoing support and competence of the care worker, including where activities should cease and retraining and/or when a review is required.

**Section two**

# Insert activity

Insert the specific policy information here for the type of delegated healthcare activity. See the supporting policy information on wound care, clinical observations or catheter care.

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the care providers who came together and contributed towards this project. Providers helped with the development of the sample policy; throughout the project the National Care Forum received roughly 40 example policies, protocols, and competency frameworks from providers of social care committed to advancing best practice in delegation.

We also had fantastic attendance at our roundtables and workshops, in which providers engaged with clinical experts and stakeholders from the NHS and Skills for Care to shape the scope and direction of the project and the contents of policies.

### Thank you to:

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Persona Sanctuary

Green Square Accord Coverage Care Services MHA (Methodist Homes) EMH Homes

Friends of the Elderly Hestia

HICA Group

St Monica Trust Anchor Abbeyfield Brendon Care Active Prospects MTVH

Mencap Choice Support

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**Delegation checklist**

This checklist may be useful for ensuring that everything is in place for the safe delegation of healthcare activities. You may want to turn this into a checklist to follow internally.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Provider name:** |  | **Name of person accessing care and support:** |  |
| **Location name:** |  | **Manager name:** |  |
| **Name and role of regulated healthcare professional delegating the activity:** |  | **Care worker name:** |  |
| **Activity being delegated:** | *e.g. Clinical observations* | **Date:** |  |

**Key questions to ask for delegated healthcare activities**

**Yes No N/A Key factors to confirm, do, or consider**

**Actions taken:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Does the regulated healthcare professional delegating have the authority to delegate the work? |  |  |  | Is the person delegating the activity a regulated healthcare professional and has the authority to delegate a healthcare activity to you?  **If no:** Refuse the delegation and liaise with the relevant clinical team/professional (e.g. a GP, hospital, community nursing team).  Consent should be sought from the person accessing care and support for a care worker to undertake the activity. |  |
| Is it reasonable for a care worker to undertake the delegated activity? |  |  |  | The activity should be carefully considered and assessed in partnership with the regulated healthcare professional, the person accessing care and support and their representative. A summary of factors you should consider before accepting delegating includes:  the delegated activity’s complexity identified risks of delegation  the expected outcome of the delegation a care worker’s training  a care worker’s competence undertaking the activity a care worker’s capacity and confidence.  **If no:** Refuse the delegation and liaise with the relevant clinical team/professional (e.g. a GP, hospital, community nursing team) |  |
| Has the degree of risk been considered? |  |  |  | Risk assessment for delegated activity should be led by the regulated professional delegating the activity. It should include:  views of the person and their representatives potential benefits and risk  the health of the person accessing care and the associated risks the complexity of the activity being delegated  the range and complexity of activities that are already being undertaken in a setting a care worker’s capacity in respect of the delegated activity  care worker training and competence scope and limits of the delegation  what to do, and who to contact if concerns are identified (including out-of-hours support) contingency arrangements for when trained staff are absent  how to raise concerns about training, ongoing support and competence of the team including when activities should cease and retraining and/or review is required. |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Has the care worker been trained to carry out this activity safely and competently?** |  |  |  | Have care workers had specific training to carry out the delegated activity safely and competently?  Do they have the required competence to undertake this activity?  Does the care worker have the skills and knowledge to undertake the activity?  **If no:** Do not accept the delegated activity until a care worker has received the appropriate training and been signed off as competent by the regulated healthcare professional delegating the activity. |  |
| **Has a care worker demonstrated competence?** |  |  |  | A regulated healthcare professional must assess care workers as competent before delegating an activity.  Have they been assessed as competent by a regulated healthcare professional? Do you have a record of the assessment? |  |
| **Is the care worker sufficiently supervised and supported to carry out the activity safely and competently?** |  |  |  | Care workers should have ongoing support as agreed from the regulated professional delegating the activity and their organisation. This should consider:  Do you have a full record of training and assessed competency and when this will be reviewed?  the type of activity  how often the care worker is observed how often the activity is carried out  if best practice/the activity has changed  if there is extra training needed at any point support through their managerial supervision. |  |
| **Is the care worker able to deliver the activity safely?** |  |  |  | Can the delegated activity be consistently delivered?  Are there a suitable number of trained and competent staff to undertake a delegation safely? Have staff had the appropriate training?  **If no:** do not accept the delegated activity. |  |
| **Has the activity changed since training was given?** |  |  |  | **If yes:** Has the care worker been supported to update their training?  Have care and support plans, protocols and risk assessments been updated to reflect the change? |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Could accepting this activity affect performance?**  **Do care workers have the capacity to take on additional work?** |  |  |  | Consider:  time to undertake the delegated activity resources  additional staff capacity – and what funding would be required for this. |  |
| **Will other people accessing care and support be affected by**  **accepting the delegated activity?** |  |  |  | Consider:  the impact on other people accessing care and support  will other people accessing care and support be safe whilst the delegated activity is being undertaken? |  |
| **Are written procedures, policies, and protocols available for the activity being delegated?** |  |  |  | A protocol should include but not be limited to: health need and any relevant information  the procedure- preparation/undertaking and completion cycle  roles and responsibilities  when and how to escalate  training expectations – competencies and ongoing training  support and guidance  referral/review pathway.  There should also be:  clear guidelines, protocols and escalation plans in place  plans agreed and overseen by the regulated delegating health professional clear clinical decision-making and leadership  any additional records that may need to be in place as agreed e.g. monitoring charts. |  |
| **Have the delegating healthcare professionals made it clear to care workers what and how**  **to record, including any digital recording?** |  |  |  | Regulated healthcare professionals should provide clear instructions to care workers to make sure they record all necessary information in the correct manner.  They should also make clear how to report information they have recorded and how often, as well as when and how to escalate changes and/or concerns.  Has the care worker been provided with the necessary skills to use digital technology if  required? |  |