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| cheshire training hub |
| Healthcare Assistants Education & Training Support Pack for Primary Care |
| Sub-category of Governance Framework for Training and Education in Primary Care |
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| **Heather Glover Cheshire Training Hub** |
| **5/15/2020** |

**Introduction**

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| Healthcare Assistants and Assistant Practitioners are a vital part of the multidisciplinary team working within primary care. General Practice and Primary Care have become increasingly complex. Training and development of this group of the workforce is vital for future success. |

**The Cavendish Review (2013)**

**Competence and Development**

**Personal Development and Career Progression**

**General Practice Assistant**

**Healthcare Assistants Education & Training Support Pack for Primary Care**

**Introduction**

From 2018, through the development of [The Cheshire Training Hub](https://www.cmthub.co.uk/) (CMTH), the 5 Training Hubs in Cheshire and Merseyside have been working collaboratively. The [Training Hubs](https://www.cmthub.co.uk/cheshire-merseyside/)  are a resource of further information and guidance for each of the primary care networks, in order to engage and develop their workforce to ensure future success and sustainability. The purpose of this training support pack is to guide and direct practice managers and employees, and assist in the successful development of the growing number of roles within primary care.

With General Practice and Primary Care becoming increasingly complex, development of the multidisciplinary team is vital for future success. Meeting the health needs of the population through training and developing the workforce is crucial to ensure a sustainable primary care service. For the purpose of this document Health Care Assistants (HCA) will be referred to, although Health Care Support Worker is often used interchangeably. HCAs and Assistant Practitioners (AP) are a vital part of the team.

Assistant practitioners are a growing part of the healthcare workforce across the NHS. They take on more responsibilities than HCAs, under the delegation of registered colleagues in a range of different clinical settings. This role is a relatively new member of the health care team in England and is designed to help bridge the gap between healthcare assistants and registered nurses.

**The Cavendish Review (2013)**

The unregistered HCA nursing workforce however, is required to meet standards to improve care across all health settings. The Cavendish Review investigated poor care in some hospitals and care home settings and listed recommendations to ensure that all people using services are treated with care and compassion by unregistered healthcare assistants and support workers in the NHS and social care settings. The [Care Certificate](https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/images/projects/care_certificate/Care%20Certificate%20Standards.pdf) was developed in response to this and can be accessed at Skills for Health via this link.

The Care Certificate gives everyone the confidence that health and care professionals have the same introductory skills, knowledge and behaviours to provide compassionate, safe and high-quality care and support, in their own particular workplace setting. Health Education England, Skills for Care and Skills for Health have worked together to develop the Care Certificate. The Certificate has been designed to meet the requirements set out in the Cavendish Review and is based on 15 standards. Individuals need to meet these standards in full before they can be awarded their certificate and work unsupervised with patients.

**Competence and Development**

Together with local induction programmes, HCA competencies are available on the Royal College of General Practice website <https://www.rcgp.org.uk/membership/practice-team-resources/~/media/Files/Practice-teams/HCA%20Competencies_02.ashx> and provide an example of a comprehensive competency framework for health care assistants to work through in primary care.

**Personal Development and Career Progression**

Further training and development will be guided by the PCN or business need and the individual’s PDP. For example, a HCA must have at least 2 years’ experience, and ideally be working at level 3 in their role, if they are required to have involvement in immunisation programmes. It is a mandatory requirement that each health care assistant involved directly or indirectly with immunisation programmes will undertakes the National Minimum Standards and Core Curriculum for Immunisation Training for Healthcare Practitioners. Guidance can be located within the Learning Governance Framework.

Table 1 provides a visual illustration as to some examples of the different tasks / capabilities expected of an HCA. The career progression possibilities in PC from an HCA, General Practice Assistant (GPA), Assistant Practitioner (AP) through to Nursing Associate (NA), development of capabilities and responsibilities, and how the role expands, is demonstrated for some clarity. Some nursing associates may continue on to undertake their Registered Nurse Training. Different levels of study are required at each level depending on the job role as indicated below.

**TABLE 1**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training Requirements / Capabilities / Tasks** | **HCA L2** | **HCA L3** | **GPA** | **AP** | **NA** |
| Care Certificate | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |
| B-tech National Diploma, Level 5 apprenticeship |  |  | √ | √ |  |
| 2 year University Apprenticeship, Entry onto NMC Register |  |  |  |  | √ |
| Clinical tasks: BP, ECG, Phlebotomy, Urinalysis, Height & Weight etc | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| New patient checks |  | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Administration of vaccines (\* only with PSD) |  | √\* | √\* | √\* | √ |
| Diabetic foot check |  | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Diabetic management |  |  | √ | √ | √ |
| Processing of samples | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Ordering of supplies / stock control management | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Equipment Sterilisation | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Supervision of junior apprenticeships, new HCAs |  |  | √ | √ |  |
| Supervision of student nurses |  |  |  | √ | √ |
| Clinical post sorting, prioritising, arranging appointments, outside agency liaising |  |  | √ | √ |  |
| GP support with immunisations and wound care |  |  | √ | √ |  |
| Brief patient history taking and basic readings |  |  | √ | √ |  |
| Complex wound care |  |  |  | √ | √ |
| Delivery and monitoring of holistic patient care |  |  | √ | √ | √ |
| Revalidation requirement same as registered nurse, outcomes to meet in the CODE |  |  |  |  | √ |
| Collaborate, contribute and communicate with the multidisciplinary team |  |  | √ | √ | √ |
| Identify risks, take appropriate action and improve quality of care |  |  | √ | √ | √ |
| Cervical screening |  |  |  |  | √ |
| NHS Health checks |  | √ |  | √ |  |
| GPA training |  | √ |  |  |  |
| Infection control | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |

**Resources**

Cavendish Review (2013) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/236212/Cavendish_Review.pdf>

Health Education England GP Assistants <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/gp-assistant>

Standards for Nursing Associates <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-nursing-associates/>