Chemotherapy Training and Assessment Framework for Registered Nurses

Document Control

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<tr>
<th>Prepared By</th>
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<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Comments/Amendment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane Beveridge</td>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>Chemotherapy Nurse Group</td>
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<td>Chemo Nurse Group</td>
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<td>Jane Beveridge</td>
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<td>Chemotherapy Group Chair</td>
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<td>Melanie Robertson</td>
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1. Introduction

Systemic anti cancer chemotherapy remains a major treatment modality in cancer care. More than half of all people diagnosed with cancer receive chemotherapy as part of their treatment regimen. It is the role of the nurse that has undertaken specialised preparation and training and has been assessed as competent for administration of chemotherapy to give this therapy (DH 2014).

This policy has been developed by the North of England Cancer Network (NECN) Chemotherapy Nurses Group to support best practice related to the training and assessment of nurses involved in the administration of anti-cancer cytotoxic chemotherapy. It provides the foundation for the development of theoretical knowledge and practical skills to improve clinical practice in the administration of chemotherapy.

The policy is supported by Northumbria University, Teesside University and the University of Cumbria.

For purposes of this policy, chemotherapy is deemed as all systemic anti cancer treatments; biological therapies; angiogenesis inhibitors and anti- growth inhibitors (excluding hormones).

This policy applies to all nurses involved in the administration of chemotherapy and should be read in conjunction with national standard documents and Network Policies:

- NMC Code of Professional Conduct
- UKONS 24 hour telephone helpline triage tool (2010)
- NECN Guidelines for managing Central Intravenous Access Devices
- NECN Administration policy
- NECN Cytotoxic guidelines
- NECN extravasation policy
- Local operational policies, guidelines and protocols

The Network policies and guidelines are available at http://www.nescn.nhs.uk/group/chemotherapy-group/
2. Criteria for anticancer cytotoxic chemotherapy administration
Chemotherapy in adults and paediatrics can only be administered by nurses who have been deemed competent according to the NECN training and assessment framework for nurses. In addition they should meet the following criteria:

- have undertaken the accredited formal training programmes as outlined in the education and training section, and assessed against the course competency framework
- be a registered nurse
- have undertaken training regarding cannulation skills and assessment of competence of these skills
- demonstrate competence in the management of peripheral and central venous access devices
- be competent in administering drugs via all routes excluding Intrathecal

3. Nurses new to chemotherapy services
All nurses appointed to areas where chemotherapy is administered (in-patient ward/outpatient clinic/chemotherapy unit) should have a period of induction in line with Trust policy and a nominated mentor to act as a role model and supervisor

- Newly registered nurses will have a 6 month preceptorship period in line with Trust policy to consolidate their skills & knowledge developed during their preregistration programme. The nurse will work with their mentor for at least 6 months following preceptorship to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies required to act independently as a chemotherapy nurse

- Nurses with no prior oncology/haematology experience, but at least 1 year’s post registration experience, will be supported by a mentor for a period of time until both the nurse and mentor feel that competence has been reached and the nurse has the knowledge, skills and competencies to act as an independent chemotherapy nurse

- Nurses with at least 1 year’s relevant oncology/haematology experience should work with their mentor for period of time until they are competent in the knowledge and skills to act as an independent chemotherapy nurse.

On the first working day, the health and safety issues regarding cytotoxic chemotherapy should be discussed. These should include procedures/policies and guidelines for:

- Transportation and Storage of all cytotoxic drugs
- Handling and spillage of cytotoxic drugs
- Clarification of role including limitations to practice
- The importance of recognising extravasation and the ability to summon assistance in the event of it occurring
- The importance of summoning assistance if patients become acutely unwell or complain of pain at the cannula site
4. Assessment

All nurses will be assessed on all aspects related to the administration of chemotherapy before being deemed competent and work independently. As a minimum the competencies should include:

- Blood Parameters
- Biology of Cancer
- Principles of Chemotherapy
- National directives related to chemotherapy
- Health & Safety
- Cannulation and venepuncture
- Side Effects of Chemotherapy
- Chemotherapy Administration
- Complications
- Holistic Patient Assessment
- Drug Calculation
- Pre Chemotherapy Assessment
- Patient Information
- Communication skills
- Management of patients who present with complications/side effects following chemotherapy
- Assessment using the UKONS 24 hour triage helpline
- Management of central lines

5. Education & Training Programmes

Accredited chemotherapy modules are provided by the following Universities across the North of England Cancer Network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Course Title &amp; Code</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Course Duration</th>
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<tr>
<td>Northumbria University</td>
<td>Chemotherapy Enhancing Practice – AC0310</td>
<td>2 x yearly</td>
<td>10 week course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teesside University</td>
<td>Chemotherapy – Enhancing Practice in Cancer Care AHH3088-N</td>
<td>1 x yearly (additional course may be run provided there is demand)</td>
<td>Over 6 month period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Cumbria (Carlisle and Lancaster)</td>
<td>HLLG 6007</td>
<td>As required – according to demand from North and South Cumbria</td>
<td>Over one semester (12 weeks)</td>
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All training courses/modules must contain the following as minimum standard in the programme specification:
6. Criteria for acting as a mentor or supervisor

Nurses who act as a mentor or supervisor should meet the following criteria:

The Nursing & Midwifery Council define a mentor as “a registrant who, following successful completion of an NMC approved mentor preparation programme – or comparable preparation that has been accredited by an approved educational institution as meeting the mentor requirements- has achieved the knowledge, skills and competence required to meet the defined outcomes.”

- Be competent in administering chemotherapy, with a minimum of 12 months experience
- Administer cytotoxic chemotherapy excluding Intrathecal on a regular basis
- Hold an accredited teaching and assessing qualification
- Have completed an accredited chemotherapy course which includes the required content as outlined in this policy
- They should have an annual review to assess their competency to undertake mentorship or supervision of those delivering chemotherapy administration
7. Criteria for ongoing assessment

All nurses involved in the administration of chemotherapy must have their clinical competence assessed on an annual basis (Manual for Cancer Services – chemotherapy measures National Cancer Action Team 2011) Annual assessment must review clinical practice and theoretical knowledge to meet the criteria outlined in the competency framework.

8. Training Records

All services must keep up to date records for all nurses working in their department. The minimum requirement for training records within each department is as follows:

- Individual record outlining the current list of areas of competence
- Departmental record of nurses currently documented as competent to practice
- The competency framework will be integral to the appraisal process

Please refer to NECN Assessment of competence policy for information on

- Assessment of initial and ongoing competence
- Criteria for acting as an assessor of competence

Available at http://www.nescn.nhs.uk/chemotherapy-documents/