



Foot and Nail Care Procedure

1. Guiding Principles

HACC Beliefs and Principles

Service providers employing support workers involved in support and provision of basic foot and nail care as part of personal care shall adopt the following beliefs and principles that have been endorsed by the WA Home And Community Care (HACC) Program.

Beliefs

Frail aged people, people with disabilities and their carers have a right to remain living in the community for as long as possible;
Clients should be encouraged to maintain their independence as long as possible.

Healthy feet and toenails are an important contributor to safe mobility and therefore, to client independence at home and within the community. For most people, maintaining healthy feet through regular nail clipping and basic foot care is a self-care task. Support workers should be able to provide basic foot and nail care as part of personal care. Support workers will have access to training to ensure that they have appropriate skills and knowledge to provide basic foot care. Specialised care is required when localised foot and nail pathologies exist that places the person at higher risk.

2. Procedure

The provisions of this service is based on the client having completed an assessment by the Coordinator or trained nurse as requiring basic foot and nail care and no specific health or foot and nail conditions such as diabetes are present.

- During an assessment or review, the client is to be asked by the Assessment Officer, how they manage their foot and nail care. If the client states that they are having difficulty maintaining their basic foot and nail care, further questions are to be asked to establish if there are any specific health or foot and nail conditions. If there are none, an assessment of the client's individual foot and nail care needs is to be initiated and a detailed support plan written stating their individual foot and nail requirements.
- The assessment is to be in consultation with the client, family or carer and if necessary, their doctor and other health professionals. This is to be completed on a Wellness Foot and Nail Care Support Plan.
- If the assessment identifies specific health or foot and nail conditions such as diabetes, or if there is any doubt regarding assisting a client with basic foot and nail care, the client, with their consent, is to be referred to their doctor before commencing any assistance.
- A client is not to receive basic foot and nail care without a specific and current basic foot and nail care support plan written by the coordinator or assessor.

- Support workers and clients are to have access to documentation that describes the correct procedures to provide basic foot and nail care in the support plan. These procedures are also to be kept in the site HACCC Policy and Procedure Manual.
- A record of the date, time of service, length of service, basic foot and nail care given and the support workers name and signature is to be documented in the client progress notes and kept in the client support plan. This record is also to be used to report on changes of foot conditions/health including any triggers for change. Notes written must be brought to the attention of the manager or assessment officer.

Personal Care Assessment and Support Plan

- Clients are to receive an individual personal care assessment to ascertain their individual foot and nail care requirements and where appropriate this assessment be in conjunction with the client, family, doctor and other health professionals.
- Clients have a clear, individual support plan based on their assessed need.

Referral to Other Health Professionals

Clients with more complex foot and nail care needs have access or are referred to an appropriate health professional to provide support as and when needed.

Staff Training

This basic Foot and Nail Care Procedure is supported by a competency based training program. Training is available through Community West Inc. Competencies include:

- written assessment and practical assessment at the end of the training day
- a second practical assessment within 6 weeks of the training in the workplace to complete the competency
- ongoing workplace competency assessment required on an annual basis. This will involve a workplace observational assessment by a HACCC Coordinator who has attended the foot and nail care training.

Equipment

Support workers must be trained in the use of all equipment required to provide basic foot and nail care. A list of equipment required will be clearly documented in the client support plan.

Resources required consist of:

- suitable chair for support worker carrying out foot and nail care
- a chair and footstool for client receiving foot and nail care
- towel and bath mat
- bowl and water
- medi-wipes/baby wipes
- disposable gloves
- sorbolene cream
- cotton wool/ cotton wool buds
- nail clippers- clients own
- disposable emery boards (various sizes)
- disposable towels.

Infection Control and OSH

- The provision of this service must be performed in accordance with WACHS Infection Control and OSH Policies
- Support staff are to practice Standard Precautions and utilise appropriate PPE
- Support staff are to implement the 5 moments of Hand Hygiene
- Transmission based precautions may need to be implemented in some cases on advice from the CNM, GP or Infection Control
- Single use items are to be used and disposed of after each use
- Staff are to complete the Hand Hygiene Learning Package annually
- Support staff are to report any Infection Control or OSH issues to the coordinator and submit the required Clinical Incident Management form and / or the Safety Risk Report Form

Reporting Changes and Concerns

In the event of an incident while assisting a client with basic foot and nail care, the support worker is to:

- administer basic first aid if necessary
- remain calm and acknowledge that an incident has occurred
- identify the nature of the incident e.g. cut to the skin, equipment required not available or not in house client support plan
- call your manager/coordinator to seek further advice
- observe the client for changes in behaviour or well-being as a result of the incident and report to your manager
- record the incident in the client's progress notes
- complete a Clinical Incident Management Form and provide this report to your manager
- reassure the client, and do not leave the client until instructed to do so by your manager/coordinator.
- In the event of an exposure to the staff member, administer self first aid and present to the ED department at your nearest site as soon as possible. Follow the WACHS Midwest Biohazard Occupational Exposure Management Procedure.

In the event of an incident while assisting a client with basic foot and nail care, the manager/coordinator is to:

- remain calm and acknowledge that an incident has occurred
- identify the nature of the incident
- contact the General Practitioner for information and instructions if necessary
- follow the advice provided by the General Practitioner (get this advice confirmed in writing as soon as possible after the event and include it as part of the Clinical Incident Report)in accordance with the General Practitioner Centre instructions, instruct the support worker to observe the client for changes in behaviour or well being as a result of the incident and report these to the General Practitioner as advised
- instruct the support worker to call an ambulance if the client is in distress or showing signs of being unwell

- advise the support worker when they can leave the client
- assist the support worker to complete a Clinical Incident Form
- advise the client's carer or significant other of the incident
- ring to check on the client later in the day/next day (if appropriate)
- undertake an investigation of the specific incident with emphasis on the process associated with the incident not on the people involved
- develop an action plan to prevent re-occurrence of the incident and share the decided actions.

3. Referral to Other Health Professionals

Clients with complex foot and nail care needs are referred to an appropriate health professional (e.g. podiatrist) to provide support as and when needed.

4. Definitions

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5. Roles and Responsibilities

- The Clinical Nurse Manager (CNM) is responsible to ensure this procedure is reviewed every five years and more often when processes change.
- The CNM is responsible to ensure that this procedure and requirements documented within this procedure are available to staff, and that staff comply with them.
- Staffs undertaking roles covered by this procedure are responsible to ensure they are informed and comply with this procedure.

Support Workers:

- Before commencing basic foot and nail care training, a support worker must have a current certificate in basic or senior first aid.
- A support worker involved in basic foot and nail care will have basic foot and nail care training prior to assisting eligible clients with the support and provision of basic foot and nail care.
- Support workers must have necessary competency and skills to provide basic foot and nail care for clients. Competency of a support worker is to be assessed by the manager, coordinator or assessment officer on completion of the initial basic foot and nail care training. A support worker is not to deliver basic foot and nail care to a client without supervision until they are deemed competent by the manager.
- A support worker is required to read all records written in the progress notes kept in the house client support plan before commencement of basic foot and nail care.
- If the support worker has any concerns, they must clearly document these concerns in a case note and escalate these verbally to the manager.

6. Compliance

It is a requirement of the WA Health [Code of Conduct](#) that employees “comply with all applicable WA Health policy frameworks.”

A breach of the Code may result in Improvement Action or Disciplinary Action in accordance with the WA Health [Discipline Policy](#) or Breach of Discipline under Part 5 of the *Public Sector Management Act*.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

7. Evaluation

- Evaluation is to be based on the number of ‘near miss’ reports, number of incident reports, staff and client satisfaction surveys that may highlight issues not currently covered by this procedure.
- Incidents or near misses must be reported to the line manager on the appropriate Forms and entered into Datix.

8. Standards

- [National Safety and Quality Health Care Standards](#)
3.1.1; 3.5.1; 3.12.1; 3.15.1; 3.16.1
- [Aged Care Accreditation Standards](#)
2.5; 2.11; 2.14

9. References

- The WA HACC Program [Policy and Framework on the Provision of Basic Foot and Nail Care](#).

10. Related Policy Documents

- WACHS [Infection Prevention and Control Policy](#)

11. WA Health Policy Framework

- [Public Health Policy Framework](#).

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

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