



Australian Government

HLTAHCS014 Provide ear health care

Release: 1

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Modification History

Not applicable.

Application

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to complete ear health assessments, treat minor and emergency ear health issues and support clients with ongoing conditions. It also covers skills to provide resources and information about ear health to clients.

The unit does not cover skills for completing hearing assessments.

This unit is specific to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people working as health workers or health practitioners. They work as part of a multidisciplinary primary health care team to provide primary health care services to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients.

The skills in this unit must be applied in accordance with Commonwealth and State or Territory legislation, Australian standards and industry codes of practice.

No regulatory requirement for certification, occupational or business licensing is linked to this unit at the time of publication. For information about practitioner registration and accredited courses of study, contact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia (ATSIHPBA).

Pre-requisite Unit

Nil

Competency Field

Health Care and Support

Unit Sector

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENTS

Elements describe the essential outcomes

1. Complete ear health assessments.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

- 1.1. Use culturally safe and effective communication in all interactions to establish and maintain positive relationships.

- 1.2. Obtain client health history and review client records and health plans to establish individual ear care requirements.
 - 1.3. Use client questioning and observations to identify signs of possible hearing deficit.
 - 1.4. Follow procedures for infection control and correct and safe use of otoscope.
 - 1.5. Complete routine ear examination according to scope of practice and organisational standard treatment protocols.
 - 1.6. Recognise abnormalities in ear canal and eardrum from otoscopy.
 - 1.7. Identify the need for prescription medication, further examination or hearing test and refer clients to medical practitioners or specialist services according to organisational procedures.
 - 1.8. Accurately document details of client history and assessments in client records according to organisational policies and procedures.
2. Treat minor ear health conditions.
 - 2.1. Explain the reason and procedures for the treatment, confirm client understanding and obtain informed consent.
 - 2.2. Implement required infection control precautions according to treatment requirements.
 - 2.3. Administer treatments according to scope of practice and organisational standard treatment protocols.
 - 2.4. Recommend and demonstrate correct use of ear medications for clients with ear infections and symptomatic ear wax.
 - 2.5. Follow first aid procedures and organisational standard treatment protocols to address acute ear problems and injuries.
 - 2.6. Recognise situations requiring immediate emergency medical care and organise prompt assistance according to organisational policies and procedures.
 - 2.7. Update client records accurately and according to organisational procedures.
3. Support clients with ongoing ear health conditions.
 - 3.1. Work within scope of practice and according to guidance provided by medical practitioner, audiometrist or audiologist, to provide continuity of care.
 - 3.2. Facilitate links and discussions between clients and ear specialists using culturally appropriate communication and information sharing.
 - 3.3. Identify and provide practical support that assists clients to access specialist ear health services.
 - 3.4. Update client records accurately and according to organisational procedures.
4. Provide resources and
 - 4.1. Provide culturally appropriate education resources about ear

information about ear health.

health to clients and their families.

- 4.2. Inform clients about ear health care resources and services available in the community and state or territory.
- 4.3. Provide information about the importance of healthy lifestyle and protection and monitoring of own ear health.
- 4.4. Explain to clients the nature of potential complications of diseases and their impacts on ear health and hearing.
- 4.5. Use visual aids and explain basic aspects of common ear conditions and how they are treated and managed.
- 4.6. Update client records accurately and according to organisational procedures.

Foundation Skills

Foundation skills essential to performance in this unit, but not explicit in the performance criteria are listed here, along with a brief context statement.

SKILLS

DESCRIPTION

Reading skills to:

- interpret familiar detailed organisational policies and procedures
- interpret sometimes complex and unfamiliar standard treatment protocols and client records involving medical terminology and abbreviations.

Writing skills to:

- use fundamental sentence structure, health terminology and abbreviations to complete forms and reports that require factual information.

Oral communication skills to:

- provide unambiguous information to clients using plain language and terms easily understood
- ask open and closed probe questions and actively listen to elicit information from clients and determine understanding of information provided.

Numeracy skills to:

- interpret and document medical numerical abbreviations and terminology in client records.

Technology skills to:

- select and use medical equipment suited to purpose of ear health assessments and treatments.

Unit Mapping Information

No equivalent unit.

Links

Companion Volume implementation guides are found in VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=ced1390f-48d9-4ab0-bd50-b015e5485705>

Assessment Requirements for HLTAHCS014 Provide ear health care

Modification History

Not applicable.

Performance Evidence

Evidence of the ability to complete tasks outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit in the context of the job role, and:

- complete an ear health assessment of four different Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients including:
 - two children
 - two adults
- for each of the four clients, and according to their individual needs, provide clear information and explanations about:
 - ear health conditions and treatments
 - self-care preventative practices that support good ear health
 - available ear health resources and support services
- treat each of the following on two occasions:
 - outer ear infections including cleaning and medication administration
 - middle ear infections
 - symptomatic ear wax by administration of cerumenolytic softening agents
- document in client records, accurate details of each client contact:
 - health history
 - observations, examinations and tests completed
 - treatments, information and referrals provided
- from assessments personally completed or from case study assessment documentation, identify signs of and report on two different ear conditions which require referral.

Knowledge Evidence

Demonstrated knowledge required to complete the tasks outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit:

- organisational policies and procedures for:
 - maintaining ear health records
 - maintaining confidentiality of client information
- for hearing and ear health:
 - organisational responsibilities and role boundaries of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health care workers and practitioners

- the roles of other members of the multidisciplinary care team including medical practitioners, audiometrists, audiologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists
- how to facilitate referrals
- key information collected and recorded in medical histories specific to ear health
- types of equipment used for ear examinations and treatments including their key features and operating procedures
- different types of infection control precautions and when these would be used for different types of ear examinations and treatments
- overview anatomy and physiology of the outer and middle ear:
 - structure of the ear and how it functions
 - normal presentation
 - medical terminology and plain language usage for client explanations
- causes of hearing loss and their prevalence in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander adults and children:
 - congenital:
 - hereditary and non-hereditary genetic factors
 - complications during pregnancy and childbirth
 - acquired:
 - outer ear infections (otitis externa)
 - middle ear infections, particularly in children (otitis media)
 - infectious diseases
 - injury to head or ear
 - recreational and occupational exposure to excessive noise
 - ageing
 - wax and foreign bodies blocking the ear canal
- impacts of hearing loss at individual and community level:
 - functional, including for learning and development in children
 - functional impacts on older people, and how an older person's dementia may be impacted
 - social and emotional
 - economic
- signs and symptoms of otitis media and treatment options
- ear wax management:
 - normal and abnormal presentations
 - when cerumenolytic softening agents can be used and when referral for ear wax removal by a medical specialist may be required
- first aid procedures and standard treatment protocols for treating minor ear trauma and presence of foreign bodies in the ear canal
- hearing, ear health problems and emergencies requiring referral, assessment and treatment by medical or ear health specialists
- self-care preventative practices for improved ear health in both children and adults:

- avoidance of over-reliance on antibiotics
- avoidance of smoking and smoke-filled environments
- breastfeeding of infants
- healthy eating
- household hygiene
- personal hygiene routines
- regular ear health assessments
- types of practical support needed by clients to access specialist services:
 - accommodation
 - interpreter services
 - transport
 - special assistance for those with hearing loss
- hearing and ear health resources and support services available in the community, state or territory:
 - for ear health in general and for prevalent conditions in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, including otitis media
 - sound amplification services in educational settings
 - specialist services and government programs available to people of different genders and ages, and to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
 - how to access information about the types of information resources and services they offer
 - how clients can access services and the role of health workers and practitioners in facilitating access.

Assessment Conditions

Skills must be demonstrated in a health service workplace within a multidisciplinary primary health care team.

Evidence of performance must be gathered:

- during on-the-job assessments in the workplace under live conditions while interacting with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, or
- during off-the-job assessments in the workplace, not under live conditions, using simulated activities while interacting with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Evidence of workplace performance can be gathered and reported through third party report processes. (Refer to the Companion Volume Implementation Guide for information on third party reporting.)

Evidence can be supplemented by assessments in a simulated workplace environment using simulated activities, scenarios or case studies only when:

- the full range of situations covered by the unit cannot be provided in the individual's workplace, or
- situations covered by the unit occur only rarely in the individual's workplace.

Assessment must ensure the use of:

- personal protective equipment for infection control
- equipment and consumables used for ear health assessments and simple treatments:
 - otoscope including tips
 - specula
 - lighting aids
 - ear medications
 - clinical waste disposal bins
- visual aids, which can include an ear model, to assist with client explanations
- template forms or reports for documenting client histories, assessment details and findings
- ear care first aid procedures and standard treatment protocols used by the organisation, which can include Standard Treatment Manuals
- organisational policies and procedures for:
 - maintaining ear health records
 - maintaining confidentiality of client information.

Assessors must satisfy the Standards for Registered Training Organisations requirements for assessors, and:

- be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person who has applied the skills and knowledge covered in this unit of competency through experience working as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health worker or practitioner, or
- be a registered health practitioner with experience relevant to this unit of competency and be accompanied by, or have assessments validated by, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

Links

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