

Nursing Needs Assessment Tool

Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety
An Roinn Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí

Introduction to the Assessment Tool

This assessment tool is designed to assess the nursing needs of an older person needing long-term care. The tool is designed to encapsulate a systematic approach to assessment whilst at the same time embracing professional decision-making that takes place in the relationship between a nurse and another person. For this reason, the tool takes the assessment through a staged approach, moving from a general 'narrative' based assessment of 'domains' of care need to a focused assessment of aspects of risk and complexity.

The tool is not designed to replace 'specialist assessments' that you may already use (e.g. continence assessment; pressure damage risk assessment, assessment for depression, assessment of memory or cognitive functioning). Instead the assessment domains should act as triggers for specialist assessment. For example, an assessment of pain control may trigger the need to undertake a further assessment using a recognised 'pain assessment tool'.

The tool is largely based on the amalgamation of other developments in assessment of an individuals' need for care, namely:

- The Nursing Older People Assessment Tool (Royal College of Nursing, 1997)
- Department of Health England (2001)

Key Terms used in the Tool

Domain: There are 21 of these in the tool. Each domain represents a particular part of a person's interrelated emotional, psychological and physical functions.

Nursing Intervention: a specific intervention needed by a registered nurse or a delegated responsible person to meet the deficit identified in the assessment of each domain in order to maximise the potential of the person. The identified domains include:

1. **Actual Nursing Care:** An assessed care need that requires an intervention to be conducted/undertaken by the registered nurse themselves (e.g. a daily insulin injection, the treatment of a wound or the delivery of aspects of essential care).
2. **Supervisory/Management:** An assessed care need that requires an intervention that can be conducted by any care worker with the appropriate experience, but which requires the registered nurse to supervise the intervention (e.g. mobility training) or manage the intervention or the care setting (e.g. planning the care with the care worker, ensuring the appropriate equipment is available).
3. **Directive:** An assessed care need that requires the registered nurse to undertake a teaching, guiding or supportive intervention (e.g. assisting an older person to get dressed by laying out clothes in the correct order but not actually dressing the person; or implementing a planned course of mobility as assessed by a physiotherapist; or teaching a person about their medicines so that they can 'self-medicate'.

Aids and Adaptations

The need for aids and adaptations should be considered in the assessment of each domain and the resulting care needs identified.

Medicines and Drugs

Medicines and drugs that the person is taking should be included in the assessment of each domain.

A “Nursing Needs Assessment Tool – Users Guide” has been developed by the Department for use in conjunction with this tool and is available on both hard copy and on the Department’s web-site.

Full NAME OF RESIDENT

DOB...../...../.....

HOME ADDRESS

CURRENT LOCATION

NAME OF NURSE ASSESSOR

DATE OF ASSESSMENT

REVIEW DATE

SIGNATURE OF NURSE ASSESSOR

SIGNATURE OF RESIDENT OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVE

Medical Diagnosis / History

Background / Biography

CATEGORIES 1 – 21	DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORY	NARRATIVE	TYPE OF NURSING REQUIRED TO MEET THE NEED
(1) Self Identity	Ability to fulfill personal and spiritual needs that are important to self-identity.	1 Assessment and Identified Care Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive
(2) Loss, change & adaptations	Ability to adjust emotionally, and awareness of moods and stimuli that elicit emotions. Capability of expressing desire for emotional support.	2 Assessment and Identified Care Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive
(3) Motivation	Knowledge of abilities and constraints and ability to act accordingly in fulfilling personal goals	3 Assessment and Identified Care Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive

<p>(4) Social relationships and behaviour</p>	<p>Ability to initiate and accept social contact, without the presence of disruptive or dysfunctional behaviour.</p>	<p>4 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(5) Cognition</p>	<p>The ability to reason logically, and decisively and present their information in a contextual, coherent manner.</p>	<p>5 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(6) Orientation</p>	<p>Grasp of present environment without showing levels of distress and/or supportive information.</p>	<p>6 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>

(7) Emotions	Adapted emotions to life circumstances, and awareness of the stimuli that cause this .	7 Assessment and Identified Care Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive
(8) Communication	Ability to express views and desires using appropriate verbal and non-verbal methods of communication in a manner understandable by most people.	8 Assessment and Identified Care Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive
(9) Senses	Level of sensory functioning with or without aids/adaptations. Capacity to use and maintain aids/adaptations correctly.	9 Assessment and Identified Care Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive

<p>(10) Pain Control</p>	<p>Ability to identify pain type and location and alter behaviour in order to reduce or alleviate it. Ability to express presence of pain and seek help.</p>	<p>10 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(11) Breathing</p>	<p>Ability to control level of breathing and activities that precede bouts of breathlessness. Knowledge of physical limitations and ability to act appropriately.</p>	<p>11 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(12) Hygiene</p>	<p>Ability to meet personal hygiene (including oral hygiene) needs to maintain skin integrity and self-esteem. Ability to make arrangements to preserve standards of hygiene.</p>	<p>12 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>

<p>(13) Dressing</p>	<p>Ability to dress appropriately for climate, environment and own standards of self-identity.</p>	<p>13 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive </p>
<p>(14) Sleeping</p>	<p>Description of sleep patterns, routines and interventions applied to achieve a comfortable sleep. Presence of emotional and/or physical problems that may interfere with sleep.</p>	<p>14 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive </p>

<p>(15) Mobility</p>	<p>The level of assistance required by the person to tackle activities of daily living such as walking and steps/stairs. Awareness of obstacles to safe mobility and dangers to personal safety.</p>	<p>15 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(16) Eating and drinking</p>	<p>The level of independence in identifying and choosing food and drink in accordance to hunger/thirst. Ability to manage own eating and drinking and level of assistance.</p>	<p>16 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>

<p>(17) Elimination of urine</p>	<p>Awareness of need to eliminate urine, the ability to maintain periods of continence, proper use of incontinence aids, and able to select appropriate environment to eliminate urine.</p>	<p>17 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(18) Elimination of faeces</p>	<p>Awareness of need to eliminate faeces, the ability to maintain periods of continence, proper use of incontinence aids, and able to select appropriate environment to eliminate faeces.</p>	<p>18 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(19) Assessment of risk</p>	<p>Awareness of potential threats to personal safety from environment, and to take appropriate decisions to remove/ resolve this threat, level of support required in assessing this risk.</p>	<p>19 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>

<p>(20) Additional needs of the older person</p>	<p>Identified needs that are not specific to any of the previous domains but which are considered important to the overall assessment of the person's health status.</p>	<p>20 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>
<p>(21) Needs / role of relatives & carers</p>	<p>Care needs of relatives and carers arising from their relationship with the older person or their role as carer. Needs that are important to the maintenance of an established relationship or the transition to a new role.</p>	<p>21 Assessment and Identified Care Needs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Super/ manage <input type="checkbox"/> Directive</p>

(Adapted from the Royal College of Nursing Assessment tool for nursing older people; 1997)

DETERMINING STABILITY, PREDICTABILITY, RISK & COMPLEXITY

(22) ASSESSMENT OF RISK	Tick <input type="checkbox"/> one box	Rationale to Support Risk Assessment
LOW RISK – Able to assess their own situation and make decisions about degree of risk to self and others.		
MEDIUM RISK - Able to assess their own situation and with help can make a decision about the degree of risk to self and others.		
HIGH RISK - Unable to assess their own situation or make a decision about the degree of risk to self and others.		

(Adapted for the Department of Health, 2001).

(23) ASSESSMENT OF COMPLEXITY	Tick <input type="checkbox"/> one box	Rationale to Support Assessment of Complexity
Simple: Physical and mental needs are fine, needs occasional intervention to maintain health status.		
Medium Complexity: Physical and mental needs are moderately complex; mechanical/technical and/or therapeutic assistance is needed <i>regularly or intermittently</i> . The interventions require regular reassessment.		
Highly Complex; Physical and mental needs are highly complex; mechanical/technical and/or therapeutic intervention is needed <i>frequently</i> , including <i>frequent</i> reassessment over a 24 hour period.		

(Adapted for the Department of Health, 2001)

(24) ASSESSMENT OF STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY	Tick <input type="checkbox"/> one box	Rationale to support Assessment of Stability and Predictability
<p>Stable and predictable: Health or disease process/disorder, including emotional, physical, behavioural and psychosocial needs are in a steady state, and are likely to remain if correct treatment/care regimes continue. How the patient responds to their health or disease processes/disorder or to any internal or external triggers can be anticipated with some certainty through established interventions and regularly reviewed care plans.</p>		
<p>Stable and unpredictable or unstable and predictable: Health or disease processes/disorder, and/or emotional, physical, behavioural and psychosocial conditions are in a steady state, but how the patient responds to their health or disease processes/disorder or to any internal or external triggers cannot be anticipated with certainty</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Or</p> <p>A fluctuating disease process/disorder, and/or emotional, physical, behavioural and psychosocial conditions, resulting in an alternating health state and requiring frequent and regular intervention or treatment. How the patient responds to their health or disease processes/disorder or to any internal or external triggers can be anticipated with some certainty through established interventions and regularly reviewed care plans.</p>		
<p>Unstable and/or Unpredictable: A fluctuating disease process/disorder, and/or emotional, physical, behavioural and psychosocial conditions, resulting in an alternating health state and requiring frequent and regular intervention or treatment. How the patient responds to their health or disease processes/disorder or to any internal or external triggers cannot be anticipated with certainty, and there is a requirement for ongoing assessment, care planning, intervention and review.</p>		

(Adapted for the Department of Health, 2001).

Summary of Assessment

Key Domains of Concern and priorities for care

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