

National Venepuncture Programme Learner Handbook



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1 Introduction

1.1 Programme Philosophy

The programme philosophy is based on beliefs and values pertaining to nursing and midwifery knowledge, practice and education. Nurses and midwives practice in ways that are independent, dependant and interdependent, when they practice with and amongst other healthcare professionals. Nurses and midwives practice within a changing and evolving healthcare environment and therefore are required to constantly develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes, to respond to evolving health care need by expanding their practice to deliver safe, effective and efficient care. Nursing and midwifery practice is underpinned by knowledge that is continually evolving and therefore must use the best available evidence to guide their practice. Nurses and midwives undertaking this programme in venepuncture will be competent practitioners in this expanded area of practice and therefore will deliver a more responsive timely service that will improve the patient's journey within the healthcare service.

2 Rationale for the Programme

A fundamental component of the *HSE Transformation Programme 2007-2010* is a commitment to ensure that patients are treated in the health setting most appropriate to their needs, while at the same time maximising the "value for money" of health care resources. The Scope of Nursing & Midwifery Practice (An Bord Altranais, 2000) and the Code of Professional Conduct (An Bord Altranais, 2000) provide the framework for nurses and midwives to expand their role. Venepuncture is now considered an "expansion of practice" that nurses and midwives can actively pursue in order to facilitate the delivery of holistic care to patients. In order to expand their roles, nurses and midwives have a professional responsibility to ensure they have the necessary knowledge, skills and competence to meet the needs of patients. The Office of the Nursing Services Director, working in collaboration with all key stakeholders, have developed this national programme to ensure standardisation of education, training and competence validation, in the skill of venepuncture, for nurses and midwives.



3 Glossary of Terms

Aseptic Technique: Aseptic technique is implemented during any invasive procedure that bypasses the body's natural defences e.g. the skin or when handling equipment such as needles that have been used during the procedure. This technique is used to reduce the potential problem of introducing pathogenic micro organisms into the body when the integrity and /or effectiveness of the natural body defences have been reduced.

(Jamieson et al., 1988, Dougherty and Lister, 2009)

Assessor: An assessor is an identified nurse or midwife who has undertaken a similar educational and clinical programme and is a competent expert practitioner. It is recommended that nurses and midwives develop their competence within specific disciplines according to their area of practice.

Competence: The ability of the registered nurse or midwife to practice safely and effectively, fulfilling his or her professional responsibility within his or her scope of practice.

(An Bord Altranais, 2000)

Child: The term child refers to neonate, infant, child and adolescent's under 18 years of age unless otherwise stated.

Family Centred Care: A way of caring for children and their families within health services which ensures that care is planned around the whole family, not just the individual child/person, and in which all the family members are recognised as care recipients.

(Shields et al., 2006)



Nurse: The word nurse means a person registered in the Live Register of Nurses as provided for in Section 27 of the Nurses Act 1985 and includes a midwife and nursing includes midwifery - Code of Professional Conduct for each Nurse and Midwife.
(An Bord Altranais, 2000)

Order of Draw: The order of blood draw refers to the sequence in which blood collection bottles should be filled.
(WHO, 2002)

Parent/Legal Guardian: The term parent or legal guardian is used to describe the parent and/ or legal guardian of the child who is under the age of 16 years.
(A Practical Guide to Immunisations, HSE, 2008)

Safety Blood Collection Systems: Safety blood collection systems are single use blood collection systems that enhance safer venepuncture. Equipment utilised for the procedure is approved for use in this organisation.

Venepuncture: Describes the introduction of a needle into a vein to obtain a blood sample for haematological, biochemical or bacteriological analysis (also known as phlebotomy, venesection, drawing or taking blood).
(Lavery & Ingram, 2005)

4 Aim

The overall aim of this programme is to facilitate registered nurses and midwives to develop the knowledge, skills and competence that will enable them to safely and successfully perform venepuncture for service users in their care.

5 Objectives

- i. The programme will provide a standardised approach towards the education, training and competence validation of nurses and midwives, undertaking the skill of venepuncture
- ii. It will facilitate the transferability and recognition of venepuncture skills acquired by nurses and midwives across the Health Service Executive

6 Criteria to Undertake the Programme

- Be registered on the live register of nurses and midwives maintained by An Bord Altranais
- Be employed by the HSE
- Be approved by the Clinical Nurse/Midwife Manager
- Be employed in an area where venepuncture is required to enhance service provision
- Accept personal responsibility and accountability for undertaking venepuncture

7 Application Process

Nurses and midwives who wish to undertake the education programme must have approval from their line manager and make application to their local educational provider.

8 Learning Outcomes

On completion of this venepuncture programme, the learner will be able to:

- Identify anatomical structures and explain the appropriate choice of venous sites applicable to venepuncture
- Understand the role of the nurse and midwife in undertaking the skill of venepuncture.
- Outline the indications for venepuncture
- Undertake communication with patients and their families to facilitate safe and effective venepuncture
- Demonstrate knowledge of:
 - Preparing for the procedure and obtaining informed consent
 - The effective technique for the procedure
 - Order of blood draw and the correct use of equipment
 - Documentation and the correct labelling process
 - The management of complications associated with venepuncture
- Successfully complete the theoretical clinical knowledge assessment.
- Successfully complete the supervised practice assessments and the final competence assessment within a twelve week time frame from commencement of the theoretical component.
- Practice independently and maintain competence in accordance with scope of practice and local policy.

The learning outcomes reflect a very specific level of knowledge that incorporates An Bord Altranais - Domains of Competence for Nurses and Midwives (An Bord Altranais, 2005).



9 Programme Outline

There are five elements in this blended learning programme. Nurses and midwives must successfully complete all five elements of the programme to be deemed clinically competent.

1: eLearning Module	The eLearning element of the programme introduces the theory and practice of venepuncture and includes practical demonstrations on video. There is also an online self assessment to help you prepare for your Clinical Knowledge Assessment. The module should take between sixty and ninety minutes to complete with a further 15 to 20 minutes required for the on-line self-assessment.
2: Clinical Knowledge Assessment	The second element of the programme is an assessment of your theoretical knowledge of venepuncture. It is a multiple choice examination of one hour's duration. Please contact your line manager or local educational provider to take the assessment.
3: Clinical Skills Demonstration and Practice Session	The Clinical Skills Demonstration and Practice session gives you the opportunity to practice the skill of venepuncture in an educational environment. Contact your line manager or local educational provider to arrange this.
4: Supervised Clinical Practice	Supervised Clinical Practice enables you to practice the skill of venepuncture in a clinical environment under supervision. A children's nurse may be required to undergo additional supervised practice sessions in order to achieve competence for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neonates• 0 to 1 year olds• 1 to five-year-olds• 5 year olds and above Local organisational policy will identify the number of supervised clinical practice sessions required. These sessions must be arranged in conjunction with your line manager.
5: Competence Assessment	This is an assessment of your competence to undertake the skill of venepuncture. To undertake this assessment, you need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree a date for the competence assessment to take place with your clinical practice supervisor or assessor• Undertake the peripheral intravenous cannulation competence assessment within the twelve week time frame from commencement of the eLearning module

9.1 eLearning Module

The venepuncture programme or eLearning module consists of five units containing learning outcomes, theoretical content, self assessment questions and resources provided for supplementary reading. The venepuncture module will align itself to the following standardised format:

Components		Learning Outcomes
Unit 1	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Elements of the programme Prerequisites for the blended learning programme eLearning module contents Disclaimer Using the eLearning module Module Learning Outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify anatomical structures and explain the appropriate choice of sites applicable to venepuncture Describe the role of the nurse/midwife in undertaking the skill of venepuncture Outline the indications for venepuncture Communicate with patients to facilitate safe and effective venepuncture Demonstrate knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation for procedure and how to obtain informed consent The effective technique for the procedure Blood draw sequence and the correct use of equipment Documentation and correct labeling Management of complications Complete the online self assessment
Unit 2	Venous Site Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of Veins Anatomy of Veins, Nerves and Arteries Selection of a Venous Site Clinical Assessment to Choose a Vein 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the relevant veins, nerves and arteries that relate to venepuncture Undertake a clinical assessment to choose the appropriate vein
Unit 3	Preparation for Procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand Hygiene. Personal Protective Equipment. Management and Disposal of Sharps. Blood Borne Viruses. Choosing Equipment. Order of Blood Draw. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the appropriate hand hygiene and personal protective equipment required for the procedure Explain the safe management and disposal of sharps, and the risks associated with the transmission of blood borne viruses during the procedure Determine the blood collection sets and bottles required for the procedure
Unit 4	Procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indications for Procedure Communication Consent Topical Anaesthetic Agents Tourniquet Use and Application Standard Equipment for the Venepuncture Procedure The Venepuncture Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline the indications for venepuncture and explain the five-step process to obtain informed consent Describe the importance of communicating effectively with the patient (adult or child) and family Describe the pharmacological and non pharmacological methods of pain relief Explain the requirement for topical anaesthetic agents and be familiar with their indications and application Identify when other health care professionals should be involved in assisting with the procedure Discuss the application of the tourniquet Describe the standard equipment required for the venepuncture procedure and how to safely carry it out
Unit 5	Aftercare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Problems and Complications Documentation Self-Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential problems and complications associated with venepuncture and outline the appropriate actions to prevent and treat these complications Critically discuss the importance of documentation in relation to the venepuncture procedure



9.2 Programme Accessibility

The programme will be facilitated through the Centres of Nursing/Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education/ practice development units or designated educational providers. The eLearning theoretical module is accessible for learners through www.hseland.ie. Where nurses and midwives cannot access the on-line theoretical component of venepuncture, they may attend their local Centre of Nursing/Midwifery/ Children's Nurse Education, practice development units or designated educational provider.

9.3 Programme Duration

The theoretical and self assessment component of the programme is provided in an eLearning module and is completed at the learner's own time and pace. It is recommended that the theoretical component is sixty to ninety minutes duration, with the on-line self assessment taking twenty minutes and is accessible for the learner through www.hseland.ie. The clinical knowledge assessment is a multiple choice examination facilitated through the Centres of Nursing/Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education, practice development units or designated educational provider and is of one hour duration. The supervised clinical demonstration and practice session is facilitated through the Centres of Nursing/ Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education, practice development units or designated educational provider and is recommended as a four hour session. Supervised clinical practice assessments and the final competence assessment must be undertaken in the clinical area and must be completed within a twelve week time frame from commencement of the eLearning module / theoretical component.

9.4 Theoretical Assessment

A clinical knowledge assessment is undertaken prior to the clinical skills demonstration and practice session and the nurse or midwife must achieve a pass. The examination is a multiple choice exam and takes approximately one hour.

9.5 Clinical Assessment

- The nurse or midwife must successfully complete a pre- defined number of supervised clinical practice assessments (six to ten), before undertaking the final competence assessment
- Each assessment must be signed by a clinical practice supervisor or assessor –Record of Supervised Practice Assessment (appendix i)
- The supervised practice assessments and final competence assessment must be completed within twelve weeks of undertaking the theoretical instruction
- It is the responsibility of the nurse or midwife to:
 - o ensure that the Record of Supervised Practice Assessments is completed (appendix i)
 - o arrange a date with the clinical practice supervisor/ assessor to undertake the venepuncture final competence assessment
- If successful at final competence assessment, the Final Competence Assessment Form (appendix ii) is completed by the clinical practice supervisor/ assessor. The signed Final Competence Assessment Form is returned to the line manager who completes the Skills Completion Checklist (appendix iii)
- If unsuccessful at the final competence assessment, additional supervised practice assessments are required and a date rescheduled for the final competence assessment
- It is the responsibility of the nurse or midwife to retain a copy of the Skills Completion Checklist and send a copy to the Centre of Nursing/Midwifery/ Children’s Nurse Education, practice development units, or designated service provider in order to receive a National Standardised Certificate of Competence Achievement
- In order to maintain competence, it is recommended that the nurse or midwife undertakes a number of venepuncture procedures per month (as per local policy)

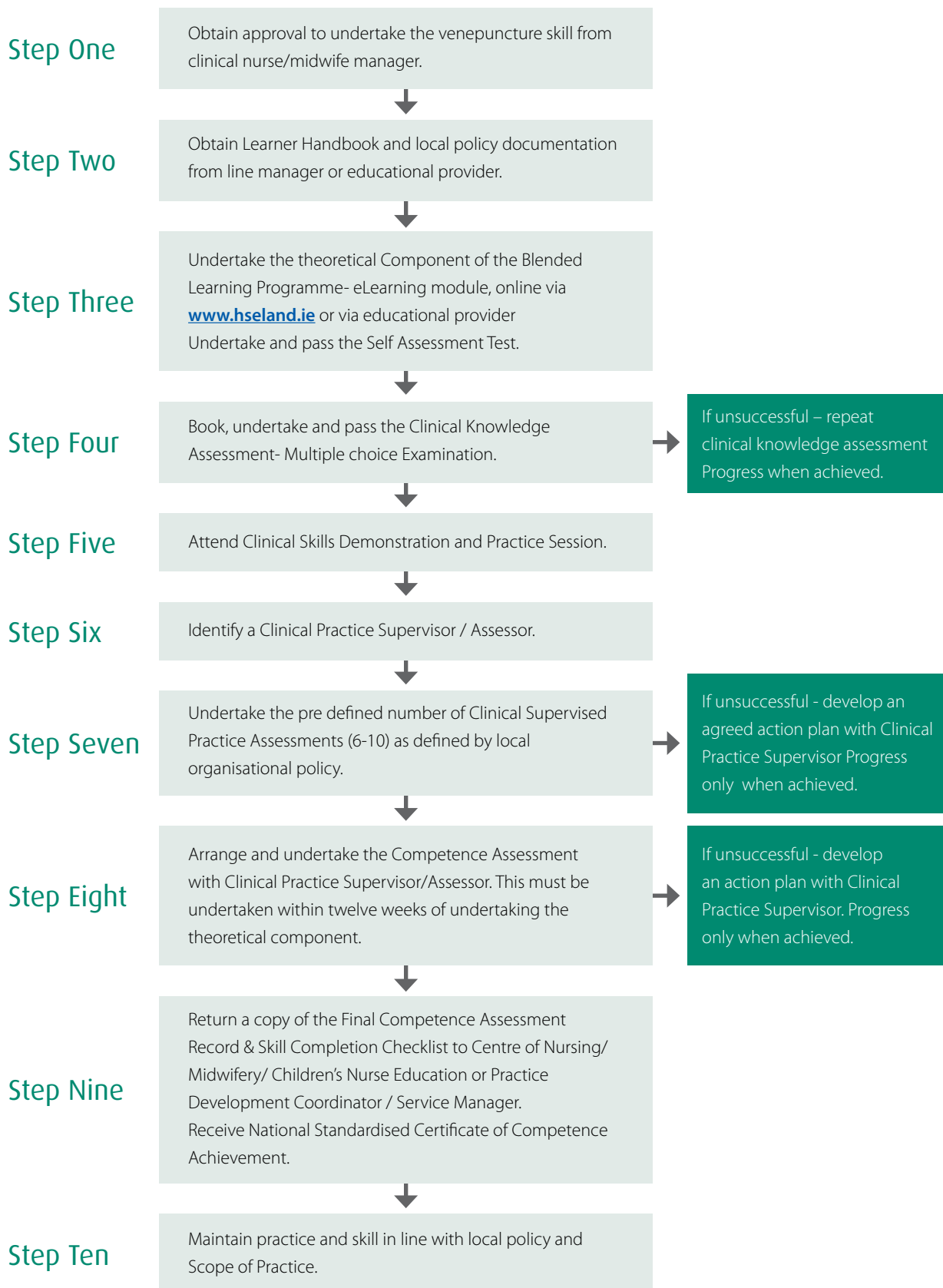
9.6 Certification

A Certification of Competence Achievement is issued by the educational provider on receipt of the Final Competence Assessment Form (appendix ii) and Skill Completion Checklist (appendix iii). The National Standardised Certificate of Competence Achievement enables transferability and recognition of venepuncture skills across the health service.



10 Skill Pathway

The skill pathway outlines the steps involved in order for the nurse or midwife to obtain competence in undertaking the skill of venepuncture.



10.1 Ten Step Approach to the Skill Pathway

Step One Approval to Undertake Skill

Discuss with your line manager and obtain approval to undertake the venepuncture programme.

Step Two Learner Handbook and Policy Documents

Obtain Learner Handbook and local policy documents from your manager or educational provider. Read and familiarise yourself with this information.

Step Three Theoretical Components of the Programme

Undertake the theoretical component of the programme. This is provided as an online eLearning module. The module consists of an introduction to the theory and practice of venepuncture with practical demonstrations on video. The module contains a self assessment section to ensure learning has taken place on the key aspects of the module. Evidence of a pass in the self assessment is required in order to proceed to the next step. The programme may also be delivered by your local Centre of Nursing/Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education or practice development unit or designated educational provider.

Step Four Clinical Knowledge Assessment

Upon completion of the theoretical component, proceed to undertake the clinical knowledge theoretical assessment by booking a place through the local Centre of Nursing/Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education or practice development unit or designated educational provider. This is a multiple choice exam, which takes approximately one hour.

Step Five Clinical Skills Demonstration and Practice Session

Undertake a Clinical Skills Demonstration and Practice Session to practice the skill of venepuncture in an educational environment. This can be arranged by booking a place through the local: Centre of Nursing/Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education or practice development unit or designated educational provider.

Step Six Clinical Practice Supervisor/Assessor

In conjunction with your clinical nurse/midwife manager, identify a clinical practice supervisor/assessor, who will support you to undertake the required number of supervised clinical practice assessments, applicable to your area of clinical practice.



Step Seven Clinical Supervised Practice

In conjunction with your clinical practice supervisor/assessor, a pre-defined number of practice assessments (six to ten) must be undertaken. Your clinical practice supervisor/assessor must assess each session and complete the Record of Supervised Practice Assessments (appendix iv) by grading your skills in fourteen areas and signing the form for each clinical practice session. You are graded according to your skills in:

- Correct identification of patient
- Appropriate patient preparation, communication and consent procedure
- Choice and handling of equipment confidently and correctly
- Consideration of personal safety and that of others, taking into consideration clinical holding and distraction techniques that may be required
- Correct identification of a suitable vein
- Appropriate venous dilation methods
- Provision of local anaesthesia as required (as per local organisational policy)
- Needle inserted and sample obtained
- Correct order of draw for multiple samples
- Appropriate troubleshooting techniques
- Appropriate technique followed throughout
- Needle removed safely
- Disposal of sharps safely
- Completes documentation and sample dispatch

Local organisational policy identifies the number of supervised clinical practice assessments required for venepuncture. For example, a children's nurse may be required to undergo additional supervised clinical practice assessments in order to achieve competence for:

- Neonates
- 0-1 year olds
- 1-5 year olds
- 5 year olds and above.

Step Eight Competence Assessment

This is an assessment of clinical competence to undertake the skill of venepuncture. This must be undertaken within twelve weeks of undertaking the theoretical component. When the nurse or midwife is deemed ready for the clinical competence assessment, they must:

- Agree a date for the clinical competence assessment with their clinical practice supervisor/assessor
- Undertake the venepuncture competence assessment. If successful, the Final Competence Assessment Form (appendix ii) is completed by the clinical practice supervisor/assessor. The signed Final Competence Assessment Form is returned to the line manager, who completes the Skills Completion Checklist (appendix iii). If unsuccessful additional supervised practice assessments should be arranged and a date rescheduled for the final competence assessment.

Step Nine Record of Competence Achievement

The National Standardised Certificate of Competence Achievement is issued by your local Centre of Nursing/Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education, practice development unit or designated educational provider, on receipt of the Final Competence Assessment Form and Skill Completion Checklist.

Step Ten Maintenance of Competence

Upon completion of the skill pathway, each nurse or midwife should have the knowledge, skills and competence to practice the skill of venepuncture across healthcare organisations within the HSE. In order to maintain competence it is recommended that up to ten venepuncture procedures per month is required (or as predefined in local organisational policy). It is also important to keep up to date with changes in best practice, local policy and to keep abreast of equipment utilised for the procedure.



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Resources

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Appendix i Venepuncture Record of Supervised Practice Assessment

Venepuncture – Record of Supervised Practice Assessments

The purpose of this document is to provide evidence of supervised practice and demonstrate competence progression under supervision.

Name & (Initials)			
Job Title			
Organisation			
Department			
Clinical Skill	Venepuncture	Date Started:	Date Completed:
Clinical Assessor Name & (Initials)	1.	2.	
Clinical Assessor Name & (Initials)	3.	4.	
Clinical Assessor Name & (Initials)	5.	6.	

The nurse or midwife must be able to discuss the rationale for each of the actions and demonstrate competence in the practical application of these skills as applicable

Skill Required	10 SELF ASSESSMENTS									
	Achieved = √					Not Achieved =0				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A Correct identification of patient										
B Appropriate patient preparation and communication										
C Chooses and handles equipment confidently and correctly										
D Considers personal safety and that of others										
E Correct identification of suitable vein										
F Appropriate venous dilation methods										
G Provision of local anaesthesia as required (as per health care organisation policy)										
H Needle inserted and sample obtained										
I Correct order of draw for multiple samples										
J Appropriate troubleshooting techniques										
K Aseptic technique followed throughout										
L Needle removed safely and care of site given										
M Disposal of sharps safely										
N Completes documentation, labelling, and sample dispatch (as per health care organisation policy)										
Initial of Clinical Assessor:										
Initial of Nurse/Midwife										
Date:										

The number of these supervisions will vary between individuals so please copy this form if you require more supervised assessment

Appendix ii Venepuncture – Final Competence Assessment

Venepuncture – Final Competence Assessment

Name			
Job Title			
Organisation			
Department			
Clinical Skill	Venepuncture		
Clinical Assessor			
The nurse or midwife demonstrated:		Pass	Refer
1	Appropriate communication with the patient throughout		
2	Safe technique throughout the whole procedure		
3	Familiarity with equipment		
4	Aseptic technique throughout		
5	Correct positioning of patient and preparation of environment		
6	Chooses appropriate vein site and equipment for venepuncture		
7	Provides local anaesthesia (as per health care organisation policy)		
8	Completes venepuncture procedure correctly and safely (as per health care organisation policy)		
9	Disposes of sharps and equipment correctly and safely		
10	Completes documentation in line with local health care organisation policy.		
Outcome (tick ✓)		Pass <input type="checkbox"/>	Refer <input type="checkbox"/>

OUTCOME AGREED		
Date	Nurse / Midwife:	Clinical Assessor:
	Sign:	Sign:
	Print:	Print:
Note of action if referred for further assessment:		
ACTION PLAN AGREED		
Date	Nurse / Midwife:	Clinical Assessor:
	Sign:	Sign:
	Print:	Print:



Appendix iii Venepuncture Skill Completion Checklist

Venepuncture Skill – Completion Checklist

Name			
Job Title			
Organisation			
Department/Ward/Unit			
Clinical Skill	Venepuncture		
Clinical Assessor			
Date Programme Commenced <i>(must be completed within 3 months)</i>			
Date Programme Completed			
The nurse /midwife will be able to discuss the rationale for each of the following actions and demonstrate competence in the practical application of venepuncture skills			
	Actions and skills required	Achieved	Date
1	Preliminary discussion with line manager and be approved to undertake the venepuncture skill pathway		
2	Read " <i>Name of Organisation- Venepuncture Policy</i> "		
3	Read the "Code of Professional Conduct" and the "Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework" (An Bord Altranais, 2000)		
4	Completed the HSE eLearning component of the blended learning education programme or Attended approved theoretical programme provided by the <i>Name of Organisation</i>		
5	Successfully completed the HSE Clinical Knowledge Assessment or its equivalent		
6	Attended a skills demonstration and practice session and has become familiar with and practiced with equipment used in <i>Name of Organisation</i>		
7	Has been deemed suitable to proceed to supervised practice by educator		
8	Completed and recorded 6-10 supervised practice assessments		
9	Successfully completed the Final Competence Assessment and has been deemed competent by the Clinical Assessor for independent practice in <i>Name of Organisation</i>		
Competence agreed for Venepuncture			
I agree to maintain my clinical competence in venepuncture in line with the Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework (An Bord Altranais 2000) (recommend performing x 10 venepuncture Procedures per month)			
Date	Nurse/Midwife	Clinical Assessor:	
	Sign:	Sign:	
	Print:	Print:	

Clinical Nurse/Midwife Manager:

I am satisfied that the above named person has attended the necessary education & training and has completed the related competence programme.

Sign Print Date

*Send Copy of completed checklist to Centre of Nursing/Midwifery/Children's Nurse Education (or other education provider) to receive your Record of Competence Achievement and keep a copy for your own records.