

<p><b>Status: Guideline:</b> Offers direction and guidance on good practice, need not necessarily be strictly adhered to.</p>	<p><b>Policy No: ADLG 01</b> <b>Version No: 1</b> <b>Date Approved: 01/03/11</b> <b>Review Date: 01/03/13</b></p>
<p><b>Title:</b> Guidelines for Assisting a User of a Cheshire Service with a Bath</p>	
<p><b>Written by:</b> Clinical Practice Project Group</p>	
<p><b>Approved by:</b> National Risk Management Committee</p>	
<p><b>Cross Reference:</b> ICG 01, ICG 02, BPH 02</p>	

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure appropriate assistance is offered to Cheshire service users with taking a bath and to ensure the dignity of the person is respected.

### 2.0 Scope

These guidelines refer to all Cheshire Services where staff assist service users with taking a bath. All the activities of daily living are generic, however in line with the Best Possible Health plan, staff will assist service users to discuss their own personal care needs and put actions in place where needed. This will be recorded in the service users Best Possible Health Personal Care plan and will be kept in a secure place of the service user's choosing. It will be adapted and updated as the needs of the service users change.

### 3.0 Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of all staff involved in assisting people with baths to be familiar with and adhere to these guidelines.
- It is the responsibility of all service managers to ensure staff are familiar with the guidelines and to monitor compliance.

### 4.0 Definitions

N/A

## 5.0 Guidelines

### Equipment

- Soap/shower gel
- Flannel/sponge
- Towels
- Brush and/or comb
- Toothbrush, toothpaste and denture pot if necessary
- Shampoo and conditioner if required
- Clean clothing
- Toiletries, make-up etc., according to individual preference
- Hoist and/or other aids to mobility if required
- Non-slip mat in bath and at side of bath.

### Guidelines

- All people using Cheshire services will be supported to manage their own bathing. However, in circumstances where this is not possible or the resident chooses not to, Cheshire Ireland will provide support in line with a person centred approach as per the Best Possible Health plan.
- In relation to bathing, staff will respect the rights of service users to be treated with sensitivity and respected as individuals, and to have wishes and opinions in relation to bathing considered fairly (Cheshire Ireland National Consumer Committee, 2004).
- Engage with the service user to ascertain whether they prefer a bath or a shower and their personal toiletry preferences.
- Check the bathroom is available and that the bath is clean.
- Where appropriate a screen should be placed around the bath separating it from the door for privacy.
- Wash and dry hands thoroughly (Ref: Guidelines for Hand Hygiene, ICG 02).
- Prepare the bath, running in the cold water first, before the hot water. It must be mixed thoroughly and the temperature taken with a bath thermometer. For a warm cleansing bath the temperature should be 38°C (100°F). Some people may require the temperature to be a little more, however the temperature should not be higher than 41°C.
- If no bath thermometer is available, check the water temperature with your elbow. If possible request the service user to check the temperature.
- Assist the service user with undressing as required, maintaining dignity by covering them with a towel.
- Observe the condition of the person's skin. Note and report on any signs of inflammation, bruising, discoloration or rash in the Best Possible Health Personal plan and make the service user aware of this.

- Assist the service user into the bath if required. It is important to be aware of and adhere to the specific transfer (moving and handling plan) requirements.
- Assist the service user to wash, encouraging as much independence in the task as possible.
- If leaving the service user to wash on their own, ensure they have access to a call bell for assistance.
- If required, assist the service user to wash their hair, using the flannel as an eye-guard to avoid getting shampoo into the eyes.
- Assist the service user out of the bath adhering to their specific moving and handling requirements.
- Cover the service user with a towel as soon as possible, to provide warmth and maintain dignity.
- Assist the service user to dry, apply toiletries as requested and dress in chosen clothes.
- Assist the service user to brush/comb hair and clean their teeth or dentures as appropriate as per Best Possible Health Oral Hygiene care plan.
- Assist the service user where required to return to bed or chair as per personal preference. Ensure the service user is comfortable.
- If any problems which are not being treated are highlighted, please identify in Best Possible Health Priority Areas for Action for Personal Care. This may require appointments with G.P. or other clinical referral.

#### Guidelines – Aftercare of Equipment

- Staff to ensure the bathroom is cleaned and ensure the service user's clothes and toiletries are taken care of (i.e. returned to service user's room or brought to laundry).
- A bath/shower is usually shared by a number of people, some of whom may have open wounds, skin infections etc. This means that the bath is potentially one of the articles of equipment that can transmit pathogenic micro-organisms from one service user to another. For this reason, give careful attention to cleaning and disinfecting the bath. The bath should be thoroughly cleaned using a brush or disposable cloth and hot water, using products appropriate to the bath (as per manufacturer's guidelines). Rinse carefully.
- If a service user with a skin infection or wound has used the bath, clean with a non-abrasive chlorine releasing powder/cream.
- Bath mats should be scrubbed with hot detergent water after use. Dry carefully and store over the non-heated towel rail - **never over a radiator.**

## Trouble Shooting

Please note below practices which can increase the likelihood of a service user getting a Pressure or Skin Sore:

- Skin wet from sweat, urine or stool
- Poor nutrition causing anemia (low blood count) and low protein
- Slouching in bed or in the wheelchair
- Fevers
- Bumps or other injuries to the skin
- Friction to the skin, caused by sliding or being pulled across a surface, or by spasms
- Clothing, braces, splints, etc., that are too tight
- Burns
- Worn out or improper equipment.

## **6.0 References**

Mallett, J. & Dougherty, L. (2000). *The Royal Marsden Hospital Manual of Clinical Nursing Procedures*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.

Nicol, M., Bavin, C., Bedford-Turner, S., Cronin, P. & Rawlings-Anderson, K. (2004). *Essential Nursing Skills*, Mosby, United Kingdom.

Robertson, B. & O’Kell, S. (1995). *Study Guide for Health and Social Care Support Workers*. First Class Books Pub., Bristol.

Spinal Injuries Ireland, *Skin Care*. National Rehabilitation Hospital, Rochestown Ave, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland.