

Basic Foot Care Guidelines

Basic Footcare is a normal activity of daily living

“Foot hygiene is defined as fundamental attention given to normal toe nails and skin surfaces of the foot, including washing and drying, the cutting and filing of toe nails, the removal of superficial dead skin material inter-digitally and the application of drying or softening agents.” - Australasian Podiatry Council

The role of Direct Care Workers

Direct Care Workers (DCWs) are expected to support personal care clients to maintain healthy feet within the Active Support Model (ASM). This includes:

- Assist the client to set-up so the client can complete footcare hygiene tasks
- Prompt the clients to identify & try different techniques to perform footcare hygiene tasks
- Inform the Assessment Officer if a client is no longer able to complete footcare hygiene tasks independently
- Work with client to complete the footcare checklist to identify any problems with their feet.
- Report any changes in the condition of the clients feet that may indicate a foot problem that needs to be assessed by the podiatrist

Cutting & Filing Nails

Northern Grampians Shire Council HACC personal care services only provides nail cutting/filing when the following requirements have been met:

- A Podiatrist has assessed the client and determined that they are low risk
- The DCW has successfully completed the *Foot, Skin & Nail Care Unit* through Chisholm HACC Training (or another RTO)
- The podiatrist has determined that DCW is competent in cutting/trimming nails, and
- The DCW has attended a podiatry appointment with the client for a handover

Credentialing

As indicated to provide basic foot care support with cutting/filing the DCW must successfully complete the training unit, a nail cutting/filing competency session and attend a handover with a Podiatrist for each client.

Review & monitoring

The podiatrist determines the planned review date for each client and communicates this to NGSC

All DCWs providing personal care support are expected to report any changes in the condition of the client's feet that they or the client have observed using the *Checklist for the Identification of Foot Problems*

Infection Control

- Wash or apply alcohol rub to hands before and after gloves are donned and removed
- Wear gloves during the procedure
- Minimise loose gross matter (eg. nail clippings) and attempt to catch these on a towel.
- Dispose of waste materials correctly and sweep up visible debris.

Equipment

Clippers

Clients will be required to purchase a pair of clippers once the podiatrist has determined that their toenails can be cut by a DCW. The clippers are purchased from the Podiatrist/Health Service.

The clippers will be provided in a resealable plastic container for storage and the client will be advised that the clippers are to be used for their feet only and not to use the clippers for any other use.

Nail Care Kit

NGSG provide a kit that DCWs will take with them when they visit clients to cut/file nails. The Kit includes:

- Gloves
- Alcohol hand rub
- Alcowipes
- Protective sheets/blueys
- Foot dressers/emery boards

The client will be asked to provide a clean towel and all waste (used gloves, clippings, protective sheet etc.) is disposed of in the client's household waste bin.

Nail cutting/filing Protocol

- Apply alcohol rub to hands
- Ensure that the client is seated comfortably
- Set up equipment and place clippers on a protective sheet
- Ensure that you (the DCW) is positioned in the correct and comfortable position
- Place towel under the client's feet to catch debris
- Don gloves
- Remove footwear & hosiery noting condition and fit
- Inspect feet thoroughly including between the toes noting any changes
- Wipe feet with an Alcowipe
- Cleanse between toes noting dead skin build up or maceration
- Cut nails carefully, starting at edge and move in short snips across. Do not cut too short.
- File using foot dresser/emery board with strokes in one direction
- Ensure that there are no skin breaks
- If a skin break occurs, apply pressure to stop bleeding and apply Band-Aid if necessary
- When finished filing, wipe toes and feet with an Alcowipe
- Apply the client's own emollient if skin is dry
- Put clients socks and shoes back on.
- Clean clippers with a Alcowipe to remove debris and return to plastic container
- Remove gloves
- Dispose of debris, wipes, gloves and protective sheet/bluey in bin.
- Use alcohol hand rub to clean hands