

Comfort Observation and Symptom Assessment Specialty Chart Paediatric – Nursing

Quick Reference Guide

The Palliative Care **Comfort Observation and Symptom Assessment (COSA)** Specialty Chart within **Managing Deterioration** has been created. The COSA Specialty Chart provides a graphical view of the documentation of comfort observations and symptom assessments and enables better monitoring and decision-making.

It is based on the COSA component of the Care Plan for the Dying Child to facilitate ongoing assessment, and to rate and proactively manage symptoms and comfort cares. It encourages detailed assessment of a paediatric patient's symptoms and level of comfort and provides instructions for escalation of care.

The COSA Specialty Chart can be initiated with authorisation from the admitting Senior Medical Officer (SMO) for a paediatric patient (less than 16 years) receiving end-of-life care, or if the goals of care align more closely with the COSA, rather than the CEWT. Patients over 16 years should use the COSA – Adult Specialty Chart.

1. Navigate to **Managing Deterioration**.
2. The **Palliative Care – COSA – Paediatric Specialty Chart** should be displayed at the top of the chart.

In addition to the COSA Specialty Chart, the **Palliative Care COSA Paediatric PowerForm** has been introduced for clinicians to document comfort observations and symptom assessment.

To Document in the **Palliative Care COSA Paediatric PowerForm**:

1. Click **Add+** hyperlink next to any symptom.

2. The **Palliative Care COSA Paediatric PowerForm** populates.

Note: The instructions for **Symptom Assessment and Management** state:
Observations must be performed routinely at a minimum of 1 hourly in consultation with inpatient team and parent/carer(s). If any treatment or escalation initiated more regular observation should occur.

3. To document in the **Pain Assessment** section, select from either option:

4. Select the appropriate pain tool to document the **Pain Assessment**.
5. The selected pain scale tool populates in fly-out window. Document accordingly.
6. Click the return button  to return to the **COSA PowerForm**.

7. Navigate to the **Details** box to document the details of the symptoms.
8. Select the radio button to mark if there is **Action Required; Yes** or **No**. If **Action Required: Yes** is selected, conditional field will appear. Users can document details of action taken.

9. Navigate to the **Breathlessness** section and select a radio button to mark as either:

- **Severe**
- **Moderate**
- **Mild**
- **Absent**

10. Select a radio button in **Action Required, Yes** or **No**. **Yes** is selected, conditional field will appear. Users can document details of action taken.
11. Complete the **Respiratory Secretions, Restlessness and Agitation** and **Other Symptoms** sections as per the steps above.

12. Navigate to the **Baxter Animated Retching Faces (BARF) Nausea Assessment Scale**.
13. Document the **BARF Scale** in the free text box.

N.B. 0 = absent; 2 = mild; 4-6 = moderate; 8-10 = severe

14. Select the radio button to mark if there is **Action Required; Yes** or **No**. If **Action Required: Yes** is selected, conditional field will appear. Users can document details of action taken.
15. To document **Comfort Observations**, select a radio button to mark as:
 - Yes
 - No

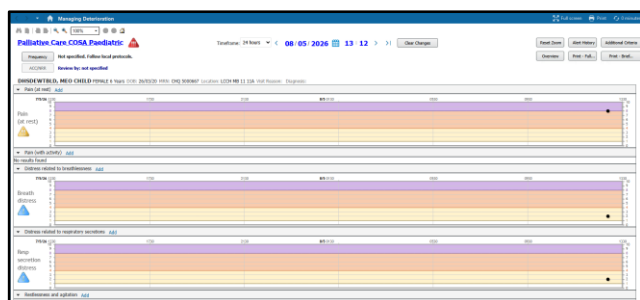
16. If **No** is selected, conditional fields appear to be completed.
17. Document any details in the free text sections:
 - Problems
 - Action
 - Outcome

18. Complete the above steps for all of the **Comfort Observations** options.
19. Some of the conditional fields include suggested management strategies for the identified issue.

20. Further management strategies can be found in the COSA Management Strategies & Considerations tab after signing the PowerForm.

Symptom Assessment
PIPP Pain Assessment
FLACC Pain Scale
r-FLACC Pain Scale
FACEs and Numeric Pain Assessments
Comfort Observation
Environment Record of Actions
Medications Record of Actions
Hygiene Needs Record of Actions
Eyes Record of Actions
Mouth Record of Actions
Skin Integrity Record of Actions
Bowel Record of Actions
Urinary Record of Actions
Well-being Record of Actions
Family/Carer Record of Actions
COSA Management Strategies & Considerations

21. To **sign** the PowerForm, navigate to the top left-hand corner of the PowerForm and click the **green tick** ✓.
22. Once the PowerForm has been signed, the **Symptom Rating** will be calculated, and the results will be plotted on the **COSA Chart**.



23. If the results yield a result in either **Moderate** or **Severe**, a discern notification will populate advising users on the appropriate escalation and observation required actions.

Symptom Rating - Moderate

- Consult promptly with the NURSE-IN-CHARGE to:
 - Discuss the problem/symptom and agree to a plan of care
 - Decide whether a MEDICAL/PALLIATIVE CARE REVIEW is required
- Increase frequency of symptom assessment and comfort observations

No EW Score alerts will fire when using COSA Chart

Symptom Rating - Severe

- Initiate appropriate clinical care
- Initiate a MEDICAL / PALLIATIVE CARE REVIEW
- Increase the frequency of symptom assessment and comfort observations

No EW Score alerts will fire when using COSA Chart

Note: If the patient meets criteria for Moderate and Severe, users will only receive an alert for **Severe Symptom Rating**.

Note: No EW Score alerts will fire when using COSA Specialty Chart.

24. The **Comfort Observations** will be plotted on the **COSA Chart**.

Comfort observations Add	
28/7/26 1300 170	
Environment supports	Yes
Med safety needs met	Yes
Hygiene needs are met	Yes
Eyes are moist and clean	No
Mouth is clean and moist	No
Skin care needs are met	No
Free of Bowel problems	Yes
Free of Urinary problems	No
Psychosocial spiritual	Yes
Fam / Carer wellbeing	Yes

25. At the end of the COSA Specialty Chart, there is a hyperlink to the **Managing Deterioration Observations PowerForm**. This PowerForm may still be used to document vital signs while the COSA Specialty Chart is in use.

Powerforms
Managing Deterioration Observations - Paediatric

Note: The Managing Deterioration Observations PowerForm will not input into the CEWT while the COSA Specialty Chart is in use.

Note: No EW Score alerts will fire when using COSA Specialty Chart.