

# Clinical Task Instruction

DELEGATED TASK

## D-CM02: Heart rate measuring

### Scope and objectives of clinical task

This CTI will enable the Allied Health Assistant (AHA) to:

- correctly measure and document a client's heart rate (pulse) using radial pulse
- identify indications for initiating heart rate measurement

#### VERSION CONTROL

Version	V1.0		
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Document custodian:	Chief Allied Health Officer, AHPOQ	Review date:	April 2019

The CTI reflects best practice and agreed process for conduct of the task at the time of publication and should not be altered. Requests for amendment or review of this document should be directed to AHPOQ: [allied\\_health\\_advisory@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:allied_health_advisory@health.qld.gov.au).

This CTI should be used under a delegation framework implemented at the work unit level. The framework is available at: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/calderdale-framework.asp>

Please check <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/clintaskinstructions.asp> for the latest version of this CTI.

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# Requisite training, knowledge, skills and experience

## Training

- Completion of CTI D-WTS01 When to stop
- Mandatory training requirements relevant to Queensland Health / HHS clinical roles are assumed knowledge for this CTI.
- Achievement of the following competencies (which relate to HLT - Health Training Package qualifications HLT43015 Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance) would be beneficial:
  - Deliver and monitor a client-specific physiotherapy program

Note: if above competencies have not been achieved by the AHA as part of the formal Certificate training program, the workplace may implement workplace-based training that encompasses these competencies and provides equivalency of knowledge and skills.

## Clinical knowledge

The following content knowledge is required by an AHA delivering this task:

- Knowledge of basic anatomy and physiology to the extent required to undertake this task, including terminology such as radial pulse, tachycardia and bradycardia.
- Knowledge of the indications for initiating heart rate measuring.

The knowledge requirements will be met by the following activities:

- Completing the training programs (listed above)
- Reviewing the Learning Resource
- Receiving instruction from an allied health professional in the training phase.

## Skills or experience

The following skills or experience are required by an AHA delivering this task:

- Nil

The following skills or experience are desirable for an AHA delivering this task:

- Nil

# Safety and quality

## Client

- The AHA will apply CTI D-WTS01 When to stop at all times.
- This CTI should be administered in conjunction with CTI D-WTS01 When to stop which includes normal values for a range of standard clinical observations and actions to implement if observations fall outside these ranges.

## Equipment, aids and appliances

- Stop watch, or clock or watch with a second hand.

## Environment

- Ensure that an appropriate level of client privacy is maintained during the task.

# Performance of Clinical Task

## 1. Delegation instructions

- Receive delegated task from the allied health professional.
- The delegating allied health professional should clearly identify parameters for delivering the clinical task to the specific client, including any variance from the usual task procedure and expected outcomes (e.g the delegating allied health professional should indicate if an irregular heartbeat might be normal for the client). The delegating practitioner should provide guidance regarding the timing of the measurement in the broader intervention if relevant e.g. at the commencement, at 15 minute intervals, at conclusion.
- The AHA may implement this task in variance to the timing or frequency in the delegation instruction, or initiate the task if indicated by circumstances outlined in CTI D-WTS01 When to stop. The following may indicate heart rate monitoring is required:
  - Instructed by delegating allied health professional
  - One or more of the following is reported by the client or is documented in the client's chart:
    - light headedness, when standing from a sitting or lying position
    - dizziness e.g. swaying, balance problems, unable to focus eyes on AHA
    - weakness
    - blurred vision
    - fatigue
    - fainting
    - feeling hot or sweaty or clammy
    - recent surgery or trauma

- low haemoglobin level (<90 g/L)
- Also consider if client has any of the following which may affect their heart rate:
  - infection
  - dehydration
  - recent physical activity
  - recent ingestion of caffeine
  - recent cigarette smoking

## 2. Preparation

- Nil

## 3. Introduce task and seek consent

- The AHA introduces him/herself to client.
- The AHA checks three forms of client identification: full name, date of birth plus one of the following; hospital UR number, Medicare number, or address.
- The AHA describes the task to the client. For example: “I would like to measure your heart rate. Is that OK?”
- The AHA seeks informed consent according to the Queensland Health Guide to Informed Decision Making in Healthcare.

## 4. Positioning

The client's position during the task should be:

- comfortable on the bed or chair

The AHA's position during the task should be:

- standing or sitting at the client's side so that the client's heart rate can be effectively measured.

## 5. Task procedure

- Explain the task to the client.
- Check the client has understood the task and provide the opportunity to ask questions.
- The task comprises the following steps:
  1. Locate the radial pulse using your index and middle fingers over the pulse. Do not use the thumb to measure a heart rate as it has its own pulse that may be felt.
  2. Count the beats for 30 seconds, then double the result to get the number of beats per minute.
  3. Record heart rate clearly and accurately as per local health service guidelines.
  4. Provide feedback to the client on their heart rate at the completion of the task.

- At the conclusion of the task:
  - Take appropriate actions including CTI D-WTS01 When to stop if indicated by the heart rate reading.

## 6. Document

- Document the heart rate in the clinical record, consistent with relevant documentation standards and local procedures.

## 7. Report to delegating health professional

- Provide comprehensive feedback to the health professional who delegated the task.

## References and supporting documents

- Queensland Health. (2015). CTI D-WTS01 When to stop.  
<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/clintaskinstructions.asp>
- Queensland Health. (2012). Guide to Informed Decision Making in Healthcare.  
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/consent/default.asp>

# Assessment: Performance Criteria Checklist

## D-CM02: Heart rate measuring

Name:

Position:

Work Unit:

Performance Criteria	Knowledge acquired	Supervised task practice	Competency assessment
	Date and initials of supervising AHP	Date and initials of supervising AHP	Date and initials of supervising AHP
Demonstrates knowledge of fundamental concepts required to undertake the task.			
Obtains all required information from delegating health professional, and seeks clarification if required.			
Completes preparation for task including compliance with infection control and obtaining appropriate equipment.			
Introduces self to client and checks client identification.			
Describes purpose of delegated task and seeks informed consent.			
Positions self and client appropriately to complete task and ensure safety.			
Delivers task effectively and safely as per delegated instructions and CTI procedure. a) Clearly explains task, checking client's understanding. b) Cleans hands in compliance with infection control protocols. c) Ensure the client's arm is supported. d) Locates client's radial pulse using index and middle fingers over the pulse. e) Counts the pulse for 30 seconds – timed correctly. f) Records heart rate clearly and accurately as per local health service guidelines. g) Provides feedback to client on their heart rate at the completion of the task. h) Takes appropriate actions if indicated by the heart rate reading.			
Documents the outcomes of the task in the clinical record, consistent with relevant documentation standards and local procedures.			
Provides accurate and comprehensive feedback to the delegating health professional.			

**Comments:**

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**Record of assessment of competence**

Assessor name:	Assessor position:	Competence achieved: / /
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**Scheduled review**

Review date / /
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# Heart rate measuring: Learning Resource

## Relevant training program

Queensland Health. *Deliver and monitor a client-specific physiotherapy program.*  
<http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/alliedhealth/html/strategies/allied-health-assistants.htm>

## How do I check someone's pulse?

NHS. (2015). How do I check someone's pulse?  
<http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/2314.aspx?CategoryID=72&SubCategoryID=725>

## Image of radial pulse

Medline Plus. (2014). *Radial pulse* <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/imagepages/19395.htm>