

Comfort Observation and Symptom Assessment Specialty Chart Paediatric – Medical Officers 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) either receiving end-of-life care, or outside of the end-of-life care phase if the goals of care align more closely with the COSA, rather than the CEWT (e.g., admission for symptom management, uncontrolled pain etc.). Patients over 16 years should use the COSA – Adult Specialty Chart. Teams should consider referring to the specialist paediatric palliative care service for consultative support if the patient is not already connected.

To select the **COSA Specialty Chart**:

1. Navigate to **Managing Deterioration**.
2. Select the **CEWT hyperlink**.

The screenshot shows the 'Managing Deterioration' header. Below it, there is a search bar with '100%' and a dropdown menu. The dropdown menu is open, showing 'CEWT 5 - 11 years' highlighted with a red box. Below the dropdown, there are two buttons: 'Frequency' and 'ACC/NRR'. To the right of these buttons, the text 'Not specified. Follow local protocols.' and 'Review by: not specified' are visible.

3. Chart selection fly-out window populates, select the **Palliative Care COSA Paediatric** chart.
4. In the **Reason for Chart Change**, document the reason for the chart change.
5. Click **Submit**.

The screenshot shows the 'Palliative Care COSA Paediatric' selection interface. It has a radio button next to 'Palliative Care COSA Paediatric'. Below it is a yellow box labeled 'Reason for Chart Change'. At the bottom, there are 'Submit' and 'Cancel' buttons, with 'Submit' highlighted by a red box.

6. The **Palliative Care – COSA – Paediatric Specialty Chart Selection** Instructions populate, review the instructions and click **x** in the top right-hand corner.

The screenshot shows the 'Palliative Care - COSA - Paediatric Specialty Chart Selection' instructions. It includes a 'Warning' section stating that the chart can only be used for paediatric patients. There is also a section for 'EW score alerts will be turned OFF' with a list of reasons: 'No CEWT score will be calculated', 'No CEWT score was entered or was not entered', 'Removes the grouping of all vital signs from Managing Deterioration', and 'Auto grouping of Symptom Assessment and Comfort Observations'. At the bottom, there is a 'How to use this chart' section.

7. **Palliative Care COSA Paediatric Specialty Chart** populates.

The screenshot shows the 'Palliative Care COSA Paediatric' Specialty Chart. It is a table with multiple columns for symptoms and observations. The table is currently empty, showing only the headers. The headers include 'Pain (at rest)', 'Pain (with activity)', 'Distress related to breathlessness', 'Other symptoms', 'Comfort observations', and 'Pain management'. The table is titled 'Palliative Care COSA Paediatric' and has a date/time stamp of '08-05-2024 12:52'.

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

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

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

The screenshot shows the 'Palliative Care COSA Paediatric PowerForm'. It has a table with three rows. The first row is 'Pain (at rest)' with an 'Add' button next to it. The second row is 'Pain (with activity)' with an 'Add' button next to it. The third row is 'Distress related to breathlessness' with an 'Add' button next to it. All 'Add' buttons are highlighted with red boxes. The text 'No results found' is displayed below each symptom row.

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

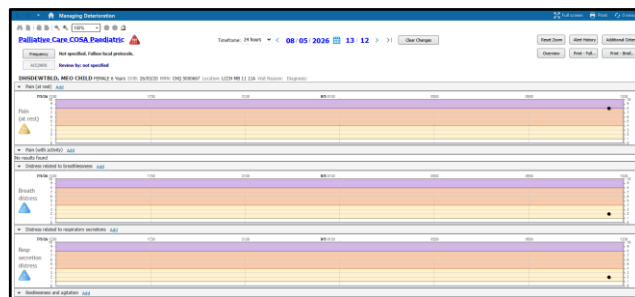
18. Complete the above steps for all of the **Comfort Observations** options.

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.

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

1. Consult promptly with the NURSE-IN-CHARGE to:
 - a. Discuss the problem/symptom and agree to a plan of care
 - b. Decide whether a MEDICAL/PALLIATIVE CARE REVIEW is required

2. Increase frequency of symptom assessment and comfort observations

No EW Score alerts will fire when using COSA Chart

Symptom Rating - Severe

1. Initiate appropriate clinical care
2. Initiate a MEDICAL / PALLIATIVE CARE REVIEW
3. 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 Charts.

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

Comfort observations Add	
28/7/26 1300 171	
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.