

Clinical Task Instruction

Delegated Task

D-FC07: Supply, fit, train and review a removable cast walker or post-operative shoe +/- peg-assist insole

Scope and objectives of clinical task

This CTI will enable the Allied Health Assistant to:

- safely measure and fit the client for a prescribed off-loading device (removable cast walker (RCW) or post-operative shoe +/- a peg-assist insole) to protect the foot

VERSION CONTROL

Version: 1.0

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The CTI reflects best practice and agreed process for conduct of the task at the time of approval and should not be altered. Feedback, including proposed amendments to this published document, should be directed to the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer (OCAHO) at: 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/ahassist>

Prior to use please check <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/clintaskinstructions> for the latest version of this CTI.

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- train and educate the client in the use of the off-loading device including safety checks, equipment features and maintenance requirements, limitations and risks associated with use
- if part of the delegation instruction, fit a peg-assist insole to a post-operative shoe
- observe the client using the prescribed off-loading device, including during walking and make adjustments to improve fit and function.

Note 1: the local service will determine which off-loading devices in the scope of this CTI for an individual allied health assistant. This CTI includes the following off-loading techniques: removable cast walker (RCW); post-operative shoe +/- peg-assist insole.

Requisite training, knowledge, skills and experience

Training

- Completion of CTI D-WTS01 When to stop.
- If the planned scope includes semi-compressed felt to support off-loading whilst wearing an off-loading device, completion of CTI D-FC08 Supply, fit and review semi-compressed felt to off-load a high-risk foot.
- Mandatory training requirements relevant to Queensland Health clinical roles are assumed knowledge for this CTI.
- If not part of mandatory training requirements, complete patient manual handling techniques including competence in the use of walk belts and assisting clients with standing transfers and walking.
- Completion of the following Queensland Health allied health assistant training modules (or corresponding units of competency in HLT43021 Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance) or equivalent work-based learning:
 - Assist with basic foot hygiene. Padding processes, p 72-73.
 Access the module/s at: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/ahassist-modules>
- Completion of the Queensland Government. Clinical Skills Development Service online course (2003-2025): Foot Disease: Recognise, Respond, Refer (FDRRR). Available at: <https://central.csd.s.qld.edu.au/central/courses/449>

Clinical knowledge

- The following content knowledge is required by an allied health assistant delivering this task:
 - common signs, symptoms and risks for developing a pressure area and/or foot ulcer
 - basic foot anatomy to the extent required to accurately identify and locate the plantar metatarsal heads, base of 5th metatarsal styloid process, calcaneus and plantar hallux
 - purpose and rationale for applying an off-loading device and/or padding to a high-risk foot including the differences between a removable and non-removable device
 - the range of off-loading devices and padding products defined as ‘in scope’ in the local service including indications and limitations for use for each, safety features and maintenance requirements
 - method to measure, fit, and adjust each device for off-loading and the peg-assist insole product/s available within the service

- if RCWs are in the planned scope for the local service, the fitting and supply of a 'level-up' device to support walking and the exercises commonly prescribed to prevent ankle stiffness whilst wearing a RCW.
- The knowledge requirements will be met by the following activities:
 - completing the training program/s (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 not identified in the task procedure but support the safe and effective performance of the task and are required by an allied health assistant delivering this task:
 - Nil

Safety and quality

Client

- The allied health assistant will apply CTI D-WTS01 When to stop at all times.
- In addition, the following potential risks and precautions have been identified for this clinical task and should be monitored carefully by the allied health assistant during the task:
 - if the client has signs of infection (redness, heat, swelling) and this was not included as part of the delegation instruction, or if signs and symptoms do not match the delegation instruction, liaise with the delegating health professional prior to fitting the RCW or post-operative shoe +/- peg-assist insole
 - clients may report concerns of a skin reaction to wearing an off-loading device and/or synthetic insole e.g. allergies to synthetics, heat rash from felt linings. If concerns are expressed and strategies to support wear were not included as part of the delegation instruction, cease the task and inform the delegating health professional
 - clients with non-standard foot measurements or foot deformities may require custom made footwear. If the client's foot posture and alignment do not match the delegation instruction, or the device and padding fit are not firm and functional, cease the task and inform the delegating health professional.

Equipment, aids and appliances

- RCWs are single client use devices and should not be re-used on other clients. Clients should always wear a sock during the fitting process. Once fitted and supplied, the client should be educated how to clean and maintain the boot. Spare linings are available to aid washing and cleaning. Linings should be washed as per the manufacturer's guidelines. Refer to local processes for the supply of spare linings.
- To avoid walking injuries due to unequal leg lengths, clients wearing a RCW should wear a shoe of the same height on the unaffected side. It is likely that the contralateral shoe will need a 'build-up'. This can be done via an adjustable heel lift, removable even-up device or by adding an additional sole at the shoe repairers. See the 'Learning resource'.

- Post-operative shoes are designed with a narrower fit for women's sizes and a wider fit for men's sizes. When fitting post-operative shoes to the client, determine the foot width requirement and match appropriately, irrespective of gender, for example men's sizing for wide or oedematous women's feet or women's sizing for narrow men's feet.

Environment

- The bottom of the post-operative shoe and RCW is designed with a rocker sole and can be slippery. Clients should be cautioned to take extra care when walking, including reducing the speed of walking to match the environment e.g. in wet and slippery environments like bathrooms and toilet areas and reinforcing the use of water management strategies, prompt to use handrails on stairs, etc.

Performance of clinical task

1. Delegation instructions

- Receive the delegated task from the 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. This may include:
 - the client's risk of falls including walking and transfer ability. If assistance is required, the type and amount should be noted e.g. walking aid, with supervision
 - the location of any wounds, pressure areas, deformity or amputations including any dressings/coverings present and/or to be applied
 - the off-loading device for fitting including any particulars e.g. style of post-surgical shoe
 - if a peg-assist insole is to be fitted, area/s for off-loading and shape requirements
 - education resource for use including information on the care of the off-loading device and/or peg-assist insole
 - the period and plan for review e.g. review at high-risk foot clinic and timeframe.

2. Preparation

- Post-operative shoes or RCW planned for supply and fit.
- If included in the delegation instruction, marker (e.g. lipstick pen), peg-assist insole, adhesive non-woven fabric tape
- Client resources for the planned off-loading device including care instructions and if relevant, prophylactic ankle exercise program.

3. Introduce task and seek consent

- The allied health assistant introduces themselves to the client.
- The allied health assistant checks three forms of client identification: full name, date of birth, plus one of the following: hospital unit record (UR) number, Medicare number, or address.
- The allied health assistant describes the task to the client. For example:
 - I am going to fit this (name of device with/without peg-assist insole) to your foot to help reduce your foot symptoms while you are walking and standing.

- The allied health assistant seeks informed consent according to the Queensland Health Guide to Informed Decision-making in Health Care, Version 2.6 (2025).

4. Positioning

- The client's position during the task should be:
 - sitting comfortably in a supportive chair or on a height-adjustable plinth.
- The allied health assistant's position during the task should be:
 - In a position to allow access to the lower limb for sizing and fitting of the off-loading device.

5. Task procedure

- Explain and demonstrate (where applicable) the task to the client.
- Check the client has understood the task and provide an opportunity to ask questions.
- The task comprises the following steps:
 1. Educate and demonstrate (if necessary) the use of the prescribed off-loading device to the client and/or carer.
 2. Ask the client to remove their shoes and/or socks and confirm the location of any wounds and areas for off-loading.
 3. Adjust and fit the selected device (RCW, post-operative shoe) to the size of the client using the manufacturer's instructions.
 4. If the delegation instruction does not include fitting of peg-assist insole proceed to step 5. If the delegation instruction includes fitting of peg-assist insole into a post-operative shoe remove the post-operative shoe.
 - a. Using visualisation and palpation locate and mark the required bony landmarks and pressure areas as per the delegation instruction.
 - b. Place the peg-assist insole into the post-operative shoe and refit to the client's foot.
 - c. Ask the client to stand up and fully weight bear. Provide assistance as per the delegation instruction.
 - d. Ask the client to sit and remove the post-operative shoe. Remove the peg-assist insole, confirming pegs are clearly marked.
 - e. Remove the required pegs aligned to the markings and the delegation instruction. Confirm the aperture matches with the area requiring off-loading.
 - f. Cover the pegs with adhesive non-woven fabric tape to reduce slippage and re-insert into the post-operative shoe. Re-fit the device to the client.
 5. Ask the client to don their socks and device, provide assistance if required.
 6. Review the client's ability to safely mobilise with the off-loading device in situ. See the Safety and quality section.
 7. If required, make adjustments to the off-loading device for comfort, fit and function.
 8. Instruct the client and/or carer, to check their feet after 30 minutes of wear. If signs of abrasion or signs of pressure injury occur, instruct the client to cease wearing the device and contact the service for immediate review. If the examination is normal, double the review period of wear and inspection (i.e. 1 hour, 2 hours, 4 hours, 8 hours). The client should then maintain wear and resume their daily foot care inspection regime.

9. Provide education to the client and/or carer, for the general care of the device including maintenance, periods of review, personal hygiene and if using a RCW, prophylactic ankle exercise program.
- During the task:
 - provide feedback and correct errors in the performance of the task including:
 - socks should be the correct size, have a firm fit and stay positioned. Poor fitting or damaged socks can increase the risk of pressure injuries. If the sock is too small or big, falls down, bunches, has holes or appears tight, remove the sock and replace with Tubifast™ to protect the foot/leg during device wear.
 - RCW
 - The device should have a firm fit to reduce the risk of rubbing. Check the device has adequate width and length to accommodate the foot by confirming the heel is positioned as far back in the device as possible and that the lower leg and calf muscles are accommodated i.e. too much space or too tight will cause discomfort and possibly injury.
 - if the client's walking appears to be unstable due to a leg length difference, or the client reports feeling lop-sided, use local processes to support even walking, for example fit a level-up to the client's contralateral shoe.
 - Post-surgical shoe
 - Check for fit and function. Devices that are too short may result in trauma to the toes, if too long they will create a trip hazard and if too wide there is potential to increase friction and cause a pressure injury.
 - Straps that are too long may create a trip hazard. Straps should be trimmed with scissors to an appropriate length, including rounding of edges.
 - Peg-assist insole
 - The aperture should be slightly larger than the wound (<5mm) at all edges. Peg removal is based on both markings that occur in weight bearing and size of the aperture. Apertures that are too large or small will hinder off-loading. If too small remove pegs singularly and refit between removal. If the aperture is too large replace the peg-assist sole for a new one and recommence the task.
 - if slippage/ movement of pegs whilst weightbearing is observed, reinforce with an additional layer of adhesive non-woven fabric tape.
 - Sitting and walking
 - the use of a post-operative shoe or RCW or can create new risk of falls. This may include a loss of balance whilst positioning themselves to fit and adjust the RCW or post-operative shoe to the lower limb or appearing unsteady when walking with the device. If the client appears unsteady during the task or reports unsteadiness, a fear of falling, and this was not included in the delegation instruction, cease the task and inform the delegating health professional.
 - monitor for adverse reactions and implement appropriate mitigation strategies as outlined in the Safety and quality section above including CTI D-WTS01 When to stop.
 - At the conclusion of the task:
 - encourage feedback from the client on the task
 - provide summary feedback to client, emphasising positive aspects of performance and areas to work on (including reinforcing safety considerations) if this was requested by the delegating health professional.

- ensure the client is comfortable and safe.

6. Document

- Document the outcomes of the task in the clinical record, consistent with relevant documentation standards and local procedures. Include observation of client performance, expected outcomes that were and were not achieved, and difficulties encountered or symptoms reported by the client during the task.
- For this task, the following specific information should be presented:
 - details of the off-loading device fitted including particulars e.g. left/right, the size and style of post-surgical shoe or RCW brand and model fitted and supplied
 - the details of the peg-assist insole, if one was fitted e.g. left/ right, location of aperture
 - education provided to the client e.g. wear and care of the off-loading device, warnings for safety including inspection frequency and care, prophylactic ankle exercise program
 - the plan for review and ongoing management e.g. review at high-risk clinic in timeframe indicated in delegation instruction.

7. Report to the delegating health professional

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

References and supporting documents

- Queensland Health (2015). Clinical Task Instruction D-WTS01 When to stop. Available at: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/clintaskinstructions>.
- Queensland Health (2025). Guide to Informed Decision-making in Health Care. Version 2.6. Available at: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/consent/clinician-resources/guide-to-informed-decision-making-in-healthcare>.

Assessment: performance criteria checklist

D-FC07: Supply, fit, train and review a removable cast walker or post-operative shoe +/- peg-assist insole

Name:

Position:

Work Unit:

Performance criteria	Knowledge acquired	Supervised task practice	Competency assessment
	<i>Date and initials of supervising AHP</i>	<i>Date and initials of supervising AHP</i>	<i>Date and initials of supervising AHP</i>
Demonstrates knowledge of fundamental concepts required to undertake the task.			
Obtains all required information from the delegating health professional, and seeks clarification if required, prior to accepting and proceeding with the delegated task.			
Completes preparation for the task including off-loading device and/or padding, marker, tape and client education resources.			
Introduces self to the client and checks client identification.			
Describes the purpose of the delegated task and seeks informed consent.			
Positions self and client appropriately to complete the task and ensure safety.			
<p>Delivers the task effectively and safely as per delegated instructions and CTI procedure.</p> <p>a) Clearly explains the task, checking the client's understanding.</p> <p>b) Removes the client's shoe and locates any wounds.</p> <p>c) Adjusts and fits the prescribed off-loading device to the size of the foot using the manufacturer's instructions.</p> <p>d) If the delegation instruction includes fitting of a peg-assist insole to the post-operative shoe accurately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - locates and marks the bony landmarks and pressure areas aligned with the delegation instruction. - fits the peg-assist insole aperture for size and location to support off-loading goals. <p>e) Reviews the client's ability to safely walk with sock and off-loading in situ.</p> <p>f) Adjusts the off-loading device with a peg-assist insole (if present) for comfort, fit and function.</p> <p>g) Provides education to the client and/or carer on signs of pressure injury, including inspection frequency during off-loading wear.</p> <p>h) Provides information to the client and/or carer on care of the off-loading device, including peg-assist insole, if fitted.</p> <p>i) During the task, maintains a safe clinical environment and manages risks appropriately.</p>			

j) Provides feedback to the client on performance during and at completion of the task.			
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.			
Notes on the scope of the training and competency of the allied health assistant:			
<p>The allied health assistant has been trained and assessed as competent to deliver the task for the following off-loading applications:</p> <p>Removable cast walker (RCW) – list the brand and style for each device</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Knee high – standard _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Knee high – with air _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ankle high – standard _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ankle high – with air _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level-Up</p> <p>Post-operative shoe – list the brand and style for each device</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fore foot off-loading _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Heel wedge _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wound care with peg-assist insole included _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wound care with insole removed and peg-assist insole added _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wound care without peg-assist insole _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>			
Comments			
Record of assessment competence:			
Assessor name:		Assessor position:	Competence achieved: / /
Scheduled review:			
Review date:	/ /		

Supply, fit, train and review a removable cast walker or post-operative shoe +/- peg-assist insole: Learning resource

Required reading

- Fernando ME, Horsley M, Jones S, Martin B, Nube VL, Charles J, Cheney J, Lazzarini PA. Australian guideline on offloading treatment for foot ulcers: Part of the 2021 Australian evidence-based guidelines for diabetes-related foot disease; version 1.0. Brisbane, Australia: Diabetes Feet Australia, Australian Diabetes Society; 2021.

- Page 5 - Offloading Australian Recommendations List; and
- Pages 18-19 - Recommendation 5 explanatory notes

Available at: <https://www.diabetesfeetaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Offloading-Guidelines-V1.0121021.pdf>

- Manufacturers guidelines for the off-loading devices available in the local service and in the scope for the skill share-trained health professional (RCW, post-operative shoe and peg-assist sole) including fitting instructions and care of each device.
- Local guidelines and processes for supplying clients with RCW, post-operative shoe including eligibility criteria and co-payment contributions.
- Local client handouts and education resources for the off-loading devices in scope for the local service e.g. care and maintenance of RCW, prophylactic ankle exercise program.

Required viewing

- BraceAbility (2020). How to apply BraceAbility tall Pneumatic walking boot. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVoylReM_74
- RosalindFranklinU (2012). CLEAR – A patient's guide to understanding offloading diabetic foot ulcers. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRolebcoL2g>
- Sole Foot & Ankle Specialists (2014). How to put on a CAM/ Walking boot. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7cE9l4Utdw>
- Darco PegAssist™ Insole Off-loading Insoles (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahFbVwxQZMI>

Off-loading devices

Removable Cast Walker (RCW)

A pre-fabricated removable walking cast applied to the lower leg and foot. Fixed with Velcro closures. The ankle may be fixed or moving. Designed to allow walking whilst reducing plantar surface loading.

For examples see:

- Aircast. Available at: <https://www.djoglobal.com/our-brands/aircast>
- Ossur Rebound Diabetic Walker. Available at: <https://www.ossur.com/en-us/bracing-and-supports/foot-and-ankle/rebound-diabetic-walker>

LEVEL UP

- OPED International (2023). EVENup: Application and choosing sizes/ EU Version. Available at: Motivation Australia (2021). Offloading pads. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-RFAhGQXk>

Post-operative shoe

A shoe that is applied to the foot only. Fixed with hook and loop closures. Large enough to accommodate bandages and give protection during walking.

For examples see:

- Darco post-op shoe. Available at: <https://www.ossur.com/en-au/bracing-and-supports/foot-and-ankle/darco-orthowedge-shoe>
- ProCare post-op shoe. Available at: <https://www.betterbraces.com.au/procare-squared-toe-post-op-shoe-4>

Peg-assist insole

A manufactured insole that fits within a post-operative shoe that has “pegs” that can be removed to plantar foot offload pressure sites.

- Darco™ Peg-Assist Insole. Available at: <https://briggatemedical.com/product/darco-peg-assist-insole-for-apb-ortho-heel-wedge-slimline-shoes-only-medium/>