

Clinical Task Instruction

Delegated Task

D-CH07: Screen for oral language skills - paediatric

Scope and objectives of clinical task

This Clinical Task Instruction (CTI) will enable the Allied Health Assistant to:

- safely and effectively conduct an oral language skills screen using a computer tablet (tablet) and software application (app) for children between 3.5 and 8 years of age

VERSION CONTROL

Version: 1.0

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Document custodian: Chief Allied Health Officer, Queensland Health

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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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- if required, apply oral language skills screening triage and decision-making tools to support the local service model.

Note 1: This CTI has been written for OxEd & Assessment© Language Screen which is commonly used by Queensland Health staff. If the site has a different app, the CTI should be reviewed and amended to align with the app features and manufacturers guidelines for use. This app requires the use of one tablet that is used concurrently by both the client and the allied health assistant.

Requisite training, knowledge, skills and experience

Training

- Completion of CTI D-WTS01 When to stop.
- Mandatory training requirements relevant to Queensland Health clinical roles are assumed knowledge for this CTI.
- Implementation of this CTI by some local services may include protocol-driven processes that support additional information collection about the client's communication status such as local triaging protocols or procedures. If this is the case, additional training is required e.g. workplace instructions, decision-making flowcharts, intake criteria / triage tools and recording forms. Details of completed local training should be recorded in the Performance Criteria Checklist.

Clinical knowledge

- The following content knowledge is required by an allied health assistant delivering this task:
 - basic understanding of speech and language development in children, including awareness of age-appropriate oral language development for the planned client group in the service and the usual variances to oral language development based on cultural background, or children who speak a language or dialect other than English
 - the purpose and rationale for performing oral language skills screening including a broad understanding of health professionals' use of screening outcomes as one component of an assessment process and any common limitations of screening findings for the client population in the local service
 - the process for administering the oral language skills screening tool including required equipment and features (tablet and app), testing protocol, environment and documentation requirements
 - basic adaptations to screening for oral language that can assist the client to use the tablet and app.
- 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:
 - the client needs to be able to follow instructions to participate in the task, including following instructions to use the tablet and app. Client's with suspected developmental delay or a cognitive impairment may require an alternative screening approach. The decision to use an alternative screening strategy is made by the delegating health professional through case-by-case or protocol-driven delegation processes. If the client is unable to follow instructions or participate in the task, cease the task and inform the delegating allied health professional.
 - the client needs to be able to see the pictures, hear the instructions and point. As part of supporting engagement with the activity, confirm if the client can:
 - see the picture. If the client usually wears glasses, confirm they are fitted correctly. If the client still cannot see the picture, check the tablet position and screen colour features, and adjust if required. If the client still cannot see the screen, cease the task.
 - hear the instructions. If the client wears a hearing device, confirm it is fitted correctly and in working order. If required increase the volume on the tablet. If the client continues to have problems and a script is available, provide the instructions by reading the script aloud instead of playing sound through the app. If problems with hearing the instructions continue, cease the task.
 - point to the pictures. If the client cannot clearly indicate their selected picture stimuli, cease the task.
- Inform the delegating health professional of observations as part of feedback and if part of the local service model, implement local processes for review.
- the app stimuli and results may be less representative for clients from culturally diverse backgrounds, with limited English, or who are bilingual or multilingual. Confirm the client's usual spoken language/s and include as part of feedback to the delegating health professional.

Equipment, aids and appliances

- Users require access to the internet and a tablet with the app. The app will automatically prompt for any required updates and these should be accepted prior to use.

Environment

- A quiet room with minimal visual distractions is required for the task. To assist the client to hear the stimuli, the room should be located away from significant background noise e.g. roads, staff lunchroom or high-volume waiting areas. If the environmental requirements cannot be maintained, inform the delegating health professional.

Performance of clinical task

1. Delegation instructions

- Receive the delegated task from the health professional.

Note: the delegation instruction for this task may be provided directly from a health professional or as part of a local work instruction or clinical protocol, for example, the local Healthy Kindy Kids Screening Protocol Flow Chart and workplace instruction document.

- 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.

2. Preparation

- Ensure a chair and table are available that is suitable for the client e.g. height and weight.
- Check the tablet is charged, internet is available, app is updated, and the individual user's log in details are correct.

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:
 - We're going to play a game to check how your talking and listening are going. The tablet will tell you what to do.
- The allied health assistant seeks informed consent according to the Queensland Health Guide to Informed Decision-making in Health Care, Version 2.6 (2025).
 - As clients are under the age of 18 years note Section 3: Informed decision-making for children and young persons for comprehensive information and, if relevant, Section 4.8 Childhood and school-based programs.

4. Positioning

- The client's position during the task should be:
 - sitting on a chair with a backrest, feet flat on the floor
 - with the tablet on a table in front of the client at a height that supports participation.
- The allied health assistant's position during the task should be:
 - sitting on a chair next to the client in a position that allows the allied health assistant to discreetly enter responses on the tablet.
- If a carer is present, their position should be:
 - seated behind the client, out of the view of the client. The carer should be informed to observe and not prompt the client.

5. Task procedure

- Explain and demonstrate (where applicable) the task to the client and/or carer if relevant.
- Check the client has understood the task and provide an opportunity to ask questions.
- The task comprises the following steps:
 1. Turn on the tablet and open the app, ensure the volume is set to maximum. Select / enter the client's details.
 2. Open the language screen app and wait while the program loads. Press 'play' and listen to the instructions. Adjust the volume setting, if required.

3. Observe the client's response to the stimuli. Determine if the response meets the scoring criteria and record.
 4. Once a sub-test is complete, progress to the next sub-test by continuing to play the next instruction.
 5. Continue to repeat Step 4 until all sub-tests are completed.
 6. Confirm all responses, including an outcome, are recorded.
- During the task:
 - provide feedback and correct errors in the performance of the task including:
 - some clients may prefer to sit on the floor, stand at the table or remain in their wheelchair. There is no requirement that the client must sit on the chair at a table to participate in the task.
 - if a carer is present and attempts to prompt the client's responses, reinstruct the carer to observe the task and not prompt responses. If prompting continues note as part of feedback to the delegating health professional.
 - to avoid the client self-interpreting responses, the allied health assistant should hover their fingers over the response button icons (tick/cross) and use a discreet tapping movement to record responses.
 - if an error is made when recording a response, immediately press the 'back' button to enter the correct response for the stimulus.
 - if the client starts playing with or moving the tablet, removing the cover or adjusting volume controls that prevents accurate recording of responses, encourage the client to place the tablet on the table and use the stand. If issues continue hold the tablet and re-engage the client with the task.
 - if the client appears uninterested, restless or distracted, encourage the client to refocus on the task by using positive verbal encouragement and gestures. If close to completing the activity, advise the client that they are almost finished.
 - if the client appears anxious, upset or frustrated during the task, pause the task and provide verbal reassurance. Prompt the client to have a drink and / or fidget or move around and recommence the task. If the client continues to display symptoms, or does not consent to recommence the task, cease the task and liaise with the delegating health professional.
 - interruptions during the task due to an internet outage, tablet charge, accidental closure of the app or people entering the room. If able, restart the program at the beginning of the last incomplete sub-test.
 - clients with limited English being encouraged to continue with the task to collect a baseline measure of English oral language skills.
 - 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.
 - 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 or symptoms reported by the client during the task.
- For this task, the following specific information should be presented:
 - result including standard scores, percentile ranks, and outcome colour (green, amber or red)

- any issues encountered during task delivery and actions taken; for example, screen not performed due to environment or low client engagement with the activity.
- if part of the local service model, any actions taken from the score including implementing a local protocol or flowchart. For example, if results indicate that the client's language skills may/would benefit from support, information can be provided to a carer on how to access services.

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

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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 ensuring the chair and table are suitable for the client, tablet is charged, Wi-Fi is available, app is updated and log in details are correct.			
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.			
Delivers the task effectively and safely as per delegated instructions and CTI procedure. a) Clearly explains the task, checking the client's understanding. b) Turns on the tablet and app and checks settings. Correctly selects / enters the client's details. c) Opens the app, presses play and listens to the instructions. d) Observes the client, determines if the response meets the scoring criteria and correctly records. e) Completes all sub-sets until full task is completed. f) Confirms all responses and an outcome are recorded. g) During the task, maintains a safe clinical environment and manages risks appropriately. h) 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.			
Language Screening tool:			
The allied health assistant has been trained and assessed as competent to deliver a language screen using a computer tablet and the following application: ☐ Tablet type and operating system _____			

☐ OxEd & Assessment© Language Screen					
☐					
Comments:					
This may include additional information on the training and competence of the allied health assistance for the service model e.g. Healthy Kindy Kids triage tools, flowcharts and workplace instructions.					
Record of assessment competence:					
Assessor name:		Assessor position:		Competence achieved:	/ /
Scheduled review:					
Review date:	/ /				

Screen for oral language skills – paediatric: Learning resource

Required reading

- Raising Children Network (2023). Language development in children: 0-8 years. Available at: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/development/language-development/language-development-0-8>
- Speech Pathology Australia (2023). Communication Hub: Supporting multilingual children's communication development. Available at: https://communicationhub.com.au/Communication_Hub/Resources/Fact_Sheets/Supporting_multilingual_children.aspx
- Speech Pathology Australia (2024). Communication milestones.
 - Information sheet: 3 years
 - Information sheet: 4 years
 - Information sheet: 5 yearsAvailable at: <https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/Public/Public/Comm-swallow/Speech-development/Communication-milestones.aspx>

Tablet and app

Information on the tablet and app planned for use in the local service including:

- tablet type and operating system and accessories used
- app features on how to register clients and how to assess clients. For example:
 - Required viewing if using the OxEd & Assessment© Language Screen app includes:
 - Registering pupils for assessment. Available at: <https://youtu.be/0Jk8Tlf8OwI?si=QoY9axqyrjgD9w-8>
 - Getting ready to use. Available at: <https://youtu.be/-cvyMeUWjJw?si=1md5a3hPXF-BPDcQ>
 - Assessing children. Available at: <https://youtu.be/JBA7RXItGKM?si=XHnYXmBvA-nfvUKB>

Local Service Information

- For example, if the CTI is being used in a screening program the local workplace instruction documentation and flowcharts that support the service model, e.g. Healthy Kindy Kids program.