POCT Training and Competency

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# Purpose and Scope

This policy is to ensure that all Point of Care Testing (POCT) training provided to end users adheres to current quality standards. The standards used are taken from United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) standards ISO 15189 and 22870 for medical laboratories and Point of Care Testing, as well as the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) guidance on the use of point of care test devices.

# References

* ISO 15189:2012, standards 5.1.5 and 5.1.6
* ISO 22870:2016, standard 5.1.5
* MHRA: Management and use of IVD point of care test devices, January 2021, standard 4.2

# Definitions

POCT = Point of Care Testing Team

POCT equipment = refers to any group of POCT analyser, for example glucose meters, blood gas analyser, INR meter etc.

# Responsibilities

All staff required to use any POCT equipment as part of their clinical/laboratory based role, including all members of the POCT team, are covered by this policy.

# Publication and Distribution

This document will be available to all POCT staff on Q-Pulse, and will be shared on Trust intranet POCT Recertification and Training web page.

All training documentation received by POCT is scanned and retained in the X:Drive > Biochemistry > POCT > Training Records

# Initial Operator Training

Training must be carried out before any operator is able, and given access, to use any POCT equipment in a clinical setting. This initial training should always be a face to face session from a suitably qualified person:

* A member of the POCT team – *trained and competent to hold training sessions as per Intermediate Tasks for POCT staff*
* A company representative for the equipment
* A link trainer – *with a signed link trainer agreement (PC-TEM-GENLTA) and documented on the Link Trainer Database on the X:Drive > Biochemistry > POCT > Training Records. Link trainer agreements are reviewed 2 yearly in line with POCT equipment recertification*

The training session must be formatted to include key points as outlined here:

* Sample collection and pre-analytics
* Clinical use and limitations
* Expertise in the analytical process
* Reagent storage
* Quality control and External Quality Assurance (EQA)
* Technical limitations of the test
* Response to results both within and outside of the reference range
* Appropriate documentation of results
* Troubleshooting and who to contact
* Infection control guidance

Training must be documented by the POCT team. Upon receipt of a completed training log (PC-TEM-GENTL or PC-TEM-GEN-TL), the operator ID will be generated and access to the specific POCT equipment will be given in middleware. An operator ID barcode will be sent in the internal post for ease of access.

This initial training will give the operator access to the POCT equipment they have been trained on, but does not necessarily mean that they are competent to carry out the test alone. The operator should perform any clinical test with supervision/observed until they feel competent.

# Competency Assessment

Following training, the trainee will be provided with a ‘Self-Assessment Competency’. The trainee should perform analysis under observation until they feel competent. Both the trainee and a fully trained colleague should read and sign off the competency paperwork, and return the paperwork to POCT. The operator is now deemed competent to perform analysis without supervision.

Upon receipt of competency paperwork to POCT, this will be documented in the relevant middleware for the POCT equipment.

# Recertification of Operators

Recertification on all POCT equipment is set to be completed every 2 years. On all ‘connected’ equipment such as blood gas analysers and glucose meters, operators will expire and be unable to access equipment after 2 years.

Operators are warned of the need to recertify within 90 days of being due to expire (as per processes set out in the monthly POCT SOP PC-SOP-MONTHLY).

The competence of operators recertifying is either by receipt of signed ‘Self-Assessment Competency’ paperwork (as above) or by a self-declaration at the end of a recertification quiz.

The POCT equipment with the largest cohorts of operators and how to recertify is outlined here:

**Glucose**

* Complete the e-learning package on Learning Hub. This has an 80% pass mark, and will automatically recertify the operator.
* Attend group training sessions which the POCT team deliver on a minimum weekly basis.
* Attend training guided by a link trainer to recertify

**Blood gas analysis**

* Complete the e-learning package on Learning Hub. This has an 80% pass mark.
* Complete the paper recertification quiz which can be found on the Trust intranet POCT Recertification and Training web page and return it to POCT via internal post or mailbox.
* Attend group training sessions which the POCT team deliver on a minimum weekly basis.
* Attend training guided by a link trainer to recertify

**Ketones**

* Complete the e-learning package on Learning Hub. This has an 80% pass mark.
* Attend group training sessions which the POCT team deliver on a minimum weekly basis.
* Attend training guided by a link trainer to recertify

**Urinalysis**

* Complete the e-learning package on Learning Hub. This has an 80% pass mark.
* Attend group training sessions which the POCT team can deliver as and when required.
* Attend training guided by a link trainer to recertify

**All other equipment**

Staff will be contacted by the POCT team and the educational element of training may take the form of a face to face update or a knowledge quiz.