

10: Foresight Training handout

Foresight Training handout

This quick reference guide will help you remember the principles of foresight during Foresight Training, as well as in your everyday tasks. It includes a set of questions to help you identify factors that may increase the likelihood of a patient safety incident occurring.

Foresight

Foresight is the ability to:

- recognise potential patient safety risks in the healthcare system
- identify, and respond to, initial indications that a patient safety incident could take place
- intervene, and recover, to prevent a patient safety incident.

Evaluating your situation and preventing harm

Use the 'three bucket' approach to evaluate the factors that might contribute to a patient safety incident. Ask yourself:

- **Self** – how safely are you able to work?
- **Context** – how safe is your working environment?
- **Task** – how error prone is the task you are carrying out?

The more the buckets fill up, the greater the likelihood of an error or patient safety incident occurring. Being aware of this is foresight, and using foresight gives you a chance to prevent an error happening before harm occurs.

Full buckets, or high scores, increase the likelihood of an unsafe act but do not imply that an unsafe act will actually happen; likewise, nearly empty buckets do not ensure safety



SELF How safely are you able to work?

Assess

Your level of knowledge, skill, experience and expertise.
Your current capacity to do the task (fatigue, life events, illness).

Ask yourself

- Are you working beyond your competences or training?
- Are you familiar with all staff, working practices, policies and protocols?
- Is this a job you do so often that you do not have to think about it?
- Are you comfortable asking a question if you need to?
- Can you challenge senior staff?
- Have you had your break?
- Are you stressed or ill, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs?
- Are things outside work okay?
- How is your relationship with your line manager?

CONTEXT How safe is your working environment?

Assess

Your physical environment and workspace, and the equipment to be used.
Your team, management and organisation, and support network.

Ask yourself

- How well do you know your working environment? Has anything moved?
- Is there enough space and light? Is the temperature okay? Is it noisy?
- Can you find and reach everything you need? Has the equipment been serviced?
- Are you trained to use the equipment you need, and is it easy to use?
- Do you have space to complete your task without being interrupted?
- Do you have enough time?
- How well do you know the people you are working with? Do you feel listened to and supported?
- Do you have enough information about what you are doing? Do you know what others are doing? Do others know what you are doing?
- Are you being pressurised to do something you are not comfortable with?

TASK How error prone is the task you are carrying out?

Assess

The complexity and novelty of the task, and the potential errors that could occur
The processes and procedures you need to follow

Ask yourself

- Is this a new task? Have you had time to prepare?
- Do you feel confident to carry out this task?
- Have you ever made a mistake with this task before?
- Could you forget to finish the task, or forget where you are and have to start again?
- How likely is it that you will do steps of this task in the wrong order?
- Do you do this task so regularly that you might not notice if it goes wrong?
- How likely are you to notice if something unexpected occurs with this task?
- Do you know processes for rare, but possible events, such as power failures?
- Have new ways of working have been introduced? What new risks are there?
- Are you likely to be distracted from your task? Can you plan to avoid this?
- Can you stop when you realise you are juggling too many things at once?
- Is this a high-risk task, for example intravenous medication administration?