

HC6 Assess images of the fundus to establish the degree of diabetic retinopathy or other abnormality

About this workforce competence

This workforce competence covers the full disease grading of fundus images to assess the extent of diabetic retinopathy (and other abnormality or disease of the fundus as specified by local protocol) and to make recommendations for referral. Full disease grading may replace or follow on from the activities described in competence HC5.

Links

This workforce competence links with the following dimensions and levels within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004)

Dimension HWB6: Assessment and treatment planning

Level: 3

Origin

This workforce competence has been developed by Skills for Health

Scope

Further assessment and management

referral to specialist for interventions; further monitoring

Lesions

as identified by local protocols

Specialists

Ophthalmologists who will carry out further screening or therapy

Performance criteria

You need to:

1. carry out full disease grading within your required National Screening Programme quality assurance targets
2. prepare the equipment and confirm that the identity of the patient and images match
3. assess images for clarity, correct positioning and gradability if this has not already been done, and record as ungradable those images which do not reach the gradable standard set by your organisation
4. examine each eye and accurately identify any evidence of diabetic disease according to your National Screening Programme (NSP) protocol and any other disease according to your local protocol
5. correctly identify the **lesions** and record the level of diabetic retinopathy according to the NSP Grading Protocol and local protocol, or verify that an appropriate level has been ascribed by the computer software programme you are using
6. correctly identify the level of other eye disease according to your local protocol
7. review images from a previous screening of the patient to identify change, where this is necessary to make an informed assessment.
8. correctly identify those cases where there is no evidence of disease
9. accurately record the findings of your assessment
10. make recommendations for referral that are based on your NSP, and your organisation's protocols, and on current evidence
11. make arrangements for prompt communication of the results of your assessment to the patient, to the patient's GP, and to **specialists** who will be involved in **further assessment** and management of the patient
12. file the findings and the images in accordance with required procedures

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to apply:

National guidelines

- K1 A basic awareness of national guidelines on eye screening and on diabetes monitoring, management and education

Specialist knowledge for grading

- K2 An in-depth knowledge of the equipment and software used in your programme

K3 An in-depth understanding of the protocol for assessing clarity, positioning and gradability of images

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- K4 An in-depth understanding of the normal appearance of the fundus

K5 An in-depth understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the eye relating to diabetic eye disease

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K6 An in depth knowledge of the lesions seen in diabetic retinopathy

K7 An in-depth knowledge of your National Screening Programme grading protocol for diabetic retinopathy

- K8 A working understanding of the local protocol for other disease

K9 A working understanding of local arrangement for ungradable images

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Diabetes

- K10 A factual knowledge of causes, signs and symptoms of diabetes

K11 A factual knowledge of the development of complications of diabetes

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K12 An in-depth knowledge of the effects of diabetes on a person's eyes

Organisational and legal issues

- K13 An in-depth understanding of your role in the healthcare team and the role of others

K14 A working understanding of the National Screening Programme Grading Protocol, or local protocols, as applicable, for diabetic retinopathy

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K15 A basic awareness of local guidelines on diabetes healthcare

K16 A working understanding of local referral pathways

K17 A working understanding of local systems for recording patient information

- K18 A working understanding of the Data Protection Act and local patient information protection protocols

K19 A working understanding of the complaints system and how to handle complaints

| K20 An in-depth knowledge of the internal quality assurance system in your organisation

| K21 A working understanding of the external quality assurance systems in the National Screening Programme for Diabetic Retinopathy

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