



BEACH 

®

BEDSIDE EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT COURSE FOR HEALTHCARE STAFF

The BEACH® course is an educational programme designed to give clinical staff increased skills, knowledge and confidence in using a structured and prioritised approach in the initial recognition, assessment, care, escalation and handover of a deteriorating person within any healthcare setting.

The BEACH® Course is one of the suite of courses from the ALERT® Headquarters at Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust (PHUT).

The BEACH® Course is designed to give clinical staff who work in any health care environment where their role may require them to recognise and escalate the care of people who have deteriorated, increased confidence, skills and knowledge to:

- assess a person using a structured approach, including observing and interpreting the softer signs of clinical deterioration such as changes in behaviour or routine
- recognise, respond and interpret physiological changes of deterioration in terms of their vital signs
- understand the principles of using an Early Warning Score (EWS) to detect deterioration
- act quickly to prevent further deterioration
- call for appropriate help and escalate in a timely manner
- effectively handover using a structured communication tool such as SBAR to appropriate help

The BEACH® Course can be applied to any clinical member of staff working in any health care environment. Roles within healthcare which may be suited to attend BEACH® include any clinical person working in an assistant or an associate role or any personal who has direct patient contact who could potentially act in a 'recogniser role'. These roles for example could include:

- Health care support worker
- Physiotherapy assistant
- Occupational therapy assistant
- Associate practitioner
- Nursing associate.

The 'responder' could be a registered nurse or other clinical member of staff who would be expected to respond to the deterioration and they are more suited to attend the ALERT® Course. The National Patient Safety Agency, (NPSA), have identified a series of links which contribute to deterioration in a person.

These include; not taking observations, not recognising early signs of deterioration, not communicating observations causing concern and not responding to these appropriately. In support of this The National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death, (NCEPOD), report in November 2015 ('Just Say Sepsis!') has most recently argued that an early warning score should be used in both primary and secondary care.

Early warning scores are increasingly being used as the basis for communication about physiology between all health care providers, enhancing and focusing the handover of technical information about patients, especially those at risk of deterioration.



The course objectives are:

- A structured and systematic approach to the assessment of at risk people.
- The physiology and importance of vital signs monitoring, prompts to initiate and how and when to recognise and respond promptly using an early warning scoring system.
- To undertake an A–H patient assessment using a ‘look’, ‘listen’, ‘feel’ approach.
- To understand the importance of your feelings and family when looking after a person who is deteriorating.
- To understand and interpret the ‘softer signs’ of clinical deterioration in people.
- The importance of a prioritised approach in the assessment, management and escalation of a person who is deteriorating, within their individual scope of practice.
- Their role in emergency situations and improved knowledge of key emergency equipment.
- To use a structured communication tool to handover effectively to the responder.

The course incorporates:

- A comprehensive BEACH® manual which the candidate receives at least four weeks before the course. This manual is then used as a workbook on the course.
- The manual can be used as evidence for continuing professional development and link to their career framework.
- Interactive workshops which can be adapted to meet the local patient safety agenda.
- Content which provides evidence to demonstrate skills and knowledge to support a number of the Care Certificate standards as recommended following the Cavendish Review (2013).

The course has:

- A blended, flexible learning approach with the ability to run the course as a half day or expand to a full day to enable bespoke topics, i.e. embedding organisational learning from incidents and human factors training.
- A nationally recognised candidate course certificate.
- A straightforward programme to organise and deliver with minimal equipment required.
- Endorsed by the intensive care society
- BEACH® record of learning which is a set of learning outcomes which are used as evidence of learning
Comments from BEACH® candidates:

“Confidence in taking vital signs and reading them”;
“Extra knowledge of what to look for in a sick patient”;
“I like the look, listen and feel approach”;
“100% would highly recommend course - very good, should be mandatory

Requirements to deliver the course

- An ALERT® Course licence, which enables use of all of the suite of courses, and purchase of manuals from Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust
- Purchase of a BEACH® Course only annual licence and manuals from Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust
- Adherence to the BEACH® course regulations which can be found on www.alert-course.com.

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