
Electronic annex 2b

Minimum requirements for experience and training of assessors for patients with PDOC

Due to the complexity of this patient group there is a need to ensure a high degree of competency for the assessors of patients with a prolonged disorder of consciousness (PDOC), particularly where there is no formal training programme for the standardised tool utilised.

The minimum requirements for PDOC assessors are shown in the table below.

Category	Requirements
Background qualification and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clinical qualification in the field of specialist neurorehabilitation (may be medical, nursing or AHP).• Specialist training and a minimum of 5 years experience in the management of patients with severe and complex neurological impairments, including those with PDOC.
Experience of PDOC assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidenced experience in working specifically with patients with PDOC.• Evidence of experience maintained over time for a minimum of 5 patients per assessor per year.
Knowledge and clinical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of the diagnostic criteria for VS and MCS and an understanding of the different levels of functions across the diagnostic groups.• Knowledge of the cognitive, communicative, perceptive and motor aspects of complex neurological disabilities.• Ability to facilitate optimal positioning and potential functional ability.• Finely tuned observation skills to differentiate the range of behaviours and movements exhibited.• Proven competence in the administration and interpretation of assessment tools for PDOC, including the WHIM and CRS-R.• (Optional: Trained and accredited in the use of the SMART.)
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent communication skills.• An understanding of the contribution of family/friends to the assessment process.• Availability and commitment to undertaking frequent assessments over time.

Units providing a specialist PDOC service are expected to have a multidisciplinary team of staff who meet these minimum requirements.