NHS abdominal aortic aneurysm screening programme
Clinical skills trainer training handbook

April 2016

Public Health England leads the NHS Screening Programmes
About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation’s health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health.

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About PHE Screening

Screening identifies apparently healthy people who may be at increased risk of a disease or condition, enabling earlier treatment or better informed decisions. National population screening programmes are implemented in the NHS on the advice of the UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC), which makes independent, evidence-based recommendations to ministers in the four UK countries. The Screening Quality Assurance Service ensures programmes are safe and effective by checking that national standards are met. PHE leads the NHS Screening Programmes and hosts the UK NSC secretariat.

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Introduction

This clinical skills trainer (CST) handbook provides information about the role, responsibilities and training for CSTs within the NHS Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme (NAAASP). It also provides a pro forma for CST sign-off from the local programme clinical director.

All screening staff who perform AAA screening scans under the auspices of NAAASP should successfully complete approved competency-based training and gain the recognised accreditation before screening independently within the screening programme. All training has to be aligned to the NAAASP Standard Operating Procedures and the NAAASP Clinical Guidance and Scope of Practice documents, both of which are available on the GOV.UK website.

In order to ensure a safe, efficient and effective service, it is imperative that the screeners who perform the scans are trained to the highest standard and are competent in their work. It is necessary for them to maintain that high level of competence by ongoing development, regular monitoring of their skills and quality assurance (QA) of the images they take. The CST is pivotal in ensuring that screening staff are competent to perform scans. They also need to be competent in their role in providing local training, support and mentoring to trainee screeners and work place assessment of staff.

Pre-requisites for the role of CST

Individuals undertaking this role must:

- hold a recognised CASE accredited (or equivalent) qualification in sonography and/or full SVT accreditation
- have a minimum of two years post qualification experience
- hold (or be working towards) a qualification in assessing vocational achievement and/or demonstrable skills in teaching, mentoring and assessment of others
- be operating under a local AAA screening programme
- have experience of scanning abdominal aortic aneurysms
- provide evidence of appropriate CPD
Assessor qualification

With the introduction of a new AAA screener qualification in 2016, CSTs will be expected to hold or be working towards a level three certificate in assessing vocational achievement (CAVA) so they can supervise screening technicians through the new qualification. NAAASP has produced a condensed distance learning process by which existing CSTs can gain the CAVA as quickly as possible.

All local programmes must have at least one CST who holds or is working towards the CAVA qualification. Existing CSTs who do not want to undertake the CAVA qualification may act as expert witnesses for the training of new screening technicians who are undertaking the Diploma for Health Screeners.

Role and responsibilities of the CST

The CST is accountable to the local screening programme director and will be an advanced practitioner who holds a CASE-accredited qualification or full SVT accreditation. They will also have completed the NAAASP mandatory training for CSTs. The CST is responsible for staff training and regular review of staff for quality assurance. The role of lead ultrasound clinician/QA lead is regularly combined into the role of clinical skills trainer.

In line with the job description issued by local screening programmes, the main purpose and dimensions of the role of CST in addition to their screening and other duties are:

- to be responsible for the clinical training and supervision of new and existing staff, ensuring they are familiar with scanning techniques and the screening programme procedures and high standards of work are maintained

- to act as the main point of contact and supervisor/assessor for the screening technicians whilst undertaking the required NAAASP qualification. This may require CSTs to an undertake additional assessor qualification

- to perform clinical assessments of trainee screening technicians at the specified ‘assessment gateways’ as per NAAASP guidance to ensure trainee technicians complete their portfolio of experience and log book. Assessment criteria are provided to support CSTs when performing these assessments

- to manage and review the work of the screeners at regular intervals as per programme quality assurance framework and instigate further training where necessary

- to plan and provide local training and CPD sessions for screeners including supervisory sessions as per clinical training requirements
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- to offer support and advice to screeners if they encounter problems or unusual findings, particularly associated with conditions in men or technical malfunctions

- to play a key role in the recruitment process for new screeners including assessing the candidates’ eye-hand coordination.

- to undertake accurate abdominal ultrasound scanning as part of the local AAA screening programme if required.

Training of CSTs

All CSTs must successfully complete the required training before they provide formal support, training or oversight to trainee technicians within local providers. CSTs must not complete any internal quality assurance of images until they have completed the required training.

CST training overview

The CST training has four main parts and completion must be documented in this handbook with final signoff from the programme clinical director.

1. Successful completion of the required e-learning units

2. 0.5 days shadowing of trained CST/QA lead

3. SMaRT/data session with co-ordinator

4. Attend and complete appropriate assessor training qualification

E-learning overview

This will form a significant component of the training for CSTs within NAAASP and must be successfully completed.

The units run through the role of the CST, NAAASP, principles of screening, mentoring and assessing in NAAASP and also an overview of the clinical knowledge required by the screening technicians undertaking the Diploma for Health Screeners.

It is foreseen that the units should take 1-2 days to complete.

A certificate of completion will be available to print off once the CST has successful completed the elearning units.

The elearning units are available on the PHE Screening CPD website.
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CST shadowing visit overview

CSTs must conduct a 0.5 day shadowing visit with a fully trained CST from their local programme or neighbouring programme. This is to observe the role of a CST in the assessment of the clinical practice of the screening technicians and to develop an understanding of the role of CST.

The following key points must be covered during the shadowing visit;

- observation of technician undertaking screening to NAAASP protocols
- observation of CST undertaking clinical observations of technicians
- observation of CST providing feedback
- opportunity to scan patients under NAAASP protocols
- understanding of the NAAASP method for measuring the aorta
- observation of the national IT system, SMaRT, for patient management and inputting results

This is not an assessed session but provides the opportunity for the trainee CST to observe the screening programme and to ask any pertinent questions regarding the role of the CST and screening technicians.

SMaRT training/data session

This session is to ensure that CSTs are aware of the role of the CST in the quality assurance process within the local programme. It should include an overview of SMaRT.

Programme co-ordinators are expected to show the CST the requirements of their role and ensure they are aware of their responsibility within the programme. A run through of the reports that are available and how they are used within the programme should be covered during this session.

This session should take at least 2 hours to ensure the role of CST is adequately demonstrated to the trainee CST.

Clinical director sign-off

Following completion of the CST training, CSTs must have final sign-off by the clinical director of the local screening programme. They will need to provide evidence of the completion of the outlined requirements within this document. A proforma is available in appendix 1.
Appendix 1.

Clinical Skills Trainer Training Completion Certificate

Once the sonographer/accredited vascular scientist has completed the required training they are able to act as a CST within the NAAASP.

The clinical director has overall responsibility and accountability for the programme and must sign off the CST as competent and that they have completed the outlined training to the required standard.

Continuing professional development points can be applied for upon successful completion of this course.

Following completion of the CST training the clinical director of the programme must sign the certificate of completion for the CST. The clinical director should directly observe evidence where appropriate before completing the certificate.

Requirements;

1. Appropriate pre-requisite requirements confirmed
2. Successful completion of the required e-learning units
3. 0.5 days shadowing of trained CST/QA lead
4. IT/SMaRT requirements with co-ordinator
5. Complete or working towards the certificate in assessing vocational achievement
Certificate of Clinical Skills Trainer  
Completion of Training

I confirm that I ________________________________ have successfully completed: _______________ ________________________________ (name of clinical skills trainer)

- E-learning for CSTs
- 0.5 day shadowing with a CST
- IT/data session
- Undertaking/completed assessor training

Date Signed

I confirm this is a true and accurate record of my training and that I understand the role and responsibilities of a clinical skills trainer within the NHS abdominal aortic aneurysm screening programme.

Signed: ________________________________ Date: ________________________________
Name: ________________________________
Designation: Clinical Skills Trainer

I have observed the appropriate evidence for the training and qualifications for the trainee CST as outlined above and am satisfied this individual is competent to act as a clinical skills trainer within the local screening programme.

Signed: ________________________________ Date: ________________________________
Name: ________________________________
Designation: Clinical Director
Name of local screening programme:

A copy of this form must be kept with the screening programme and a hard copy sent to:

NAAASP Training and Education Manager
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