

## Risk assessment and risk management

### Assessment of clinical risk

In the context of conducting a comprehensive assessment, an ability to carry out an in-depth structured risk assessment which combines information from clinical interviews, measures, observations and other agencies, comprising:	
	the development of a good working alliance with the client, and relevant members of their network (e.g. their partner, family or professional carers).
	a systematic assessment of the demographic, psychological, social and historical factors known to be risk factors for self-harm, self-neglect harm to others or harm to self
	an ability to identify the client and relevant other's views in relation to risk, including their view of possible trigger factors to harmful events, and ideas about interventions or changes in their environment that might be helpful in reducing the risk of future harm
	an ability to consider how the client's state of mind may affect their perception, understanding and behaviours in relation to risk
	an ability to identify the extent to which others living with or involved with the client's care are able to assess and manage risks.
An ability to integrate a risk assessment with any prior knowledge of the individual client and their carers/ family and their social context, including their strengths and any resilience factors	
An ability to conduct a risk assessment to gauge:	
	how likely it is that a harmful/negative event will occur
	the types of harmful/negative events
	how soon a harmful/negative event is expected to occur.
	how severe the outcome will be if the harmful/negative event does occur.
An ability to monitor and assess risk in relation to clients whose presentation and mental state can vary markedly from day to day	
An ability to monitor and assess risk in clients whose presentation is extreme/ challenging (e.g. presenting with extreme moods states, or with high levels of aggression)	

### Ability to develop a risk management plan

An ability to develop a risk formulation which estimates the risk of harm by:	
	identifying factors which are likely to increase risk (including predisposing, perpetuating and precipitating factors)
	identifying factors which are likely to decrease risk (i.e. protective factors)
An ability to create a risk management plan, in collaboration with the client and others who will be relevant to its enactment, and which:	
	is closely linked to the risk formulation.
	takes into account the views of the client and relevant others.
	identifies the actions to be taken by the client, relevant others and relevant services, should there be an acute increase in risk factors
	explicitly weighs up the potential benefits and harms of choosing one action or intervention over another.
	details interventions or supports that reduce or eliminate risk factors for the harmful/negative event(s).
	details interventions or supports that encourage the strengths and resilience factors within the client and their support system.
	manages any tensions arising from restrictions the plan might place on the autonomy of the client

An ability to identify when it is appropriate to employ interventions that involve an element of risk (e.g. where allowing scope for client autonomy results in increased adherence to the risk plan, and this potential positive benefit is judged to outweigh the risk).
An ability to use the risk formulation to judge whether and when to schedule a reassessment with the client and relevant others.
An ability to communicate the risk management plan to clients and relevant others , including information on the potential benefits and risks of a decision, and the reasons for a particular plan.

**Equality and Diversity**

An ability to consider whether any assumptions or stereotypes about particular demographic groups (rather than knowledge of researched risk factors) lead to underestimation or over-estimation of actual risk.
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**Interagency working**

An ability to collaborate with all potentially relevant agencies when undertaking a risk assessment
An ability to ensure that there is timely communication with all agencies involved in the case, both verbally and in writing.
An ability to communicate the risk management plan to other agencies including information on the potential benefits and risks of a decision, and the reasons for a particular plan.
An ability to maintain a clear and detailed record of assessments and of decisions regarding plans for managing risk, in line with local protocols for recording clinical information
an ability to identify and record the actions individuals within each agency will be undertaking
An ability to escalate concerns (within own or other agencies) when the implementation of the risk management plan is problematic.
An ability to refer to, and to work with, more specialised agencies (e.g. inpatient units or forensic teams) in line with local referral protocols.

**Ability to seek advice and supervision**

An ability to recognise the limits of one’s own expertise and to seek advice from appropriate individuals e.g.:
supervisors and/or other members of the clinical team.
specialist forensic teams (e.g. where there are threat of serious violence).
specialist self-harm teams
Caldicott Guardian (regarding complex confidentiality issues).
social workers (e.g. where there are possible child protection issues)