

Ear Irrigation and Care³³⁰

Task / Activity	Self-Assessment / Date	Competency Assessed Y / N	Competency Achieved	Signed off by Clinical Assessor / Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of the holistic care of patients requiring ear irrigation • Demonstrate an understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the ear • Demonstrate an understanding of the pathophysiology of hearing loss • Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of excluding impacted wax as a cause for hearing loss to allow for ongoing investigation as indicated³³¹ • Demonstrate an understanding of the need for urgent onward referral in patients presenting with red flag symptoms³³² • Demonstrate an understanding of the relating to the ear irrigation procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The risks associated ○ The contraindications ○ Safe and effective pre-assessment • Demonstrate an understanding of the equipment used to perform ear irrigation, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Its full functionality ○ Manufacturer’s instructions for cleaning and decontamination • Demonstrate an understanding of the safety netting advice to be provided to patient’s post-procedure <p>Patient Care</p>				

³³⁰ http://www.earcarecentre.com/uploadedFiles/Pages/Health_Professionals/Protocols/Ear%20irrigation%20guidelines%202022.pdf

³³¹ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng98/chapter/Recommendations#assessment-and-referral>

³³² <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng98/chapter/Recommendations#assessment-and-referral>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to take a full history in relation to hearing loss³³³ • Be able to perform a thorough assessment of the ear to assess for safety of offering the procedure • Be able to elicit a full history of previous ear problems to identify any contraindications and discuss any concerns with a senior clinician • Be able to have a shared decision-making discussion with the patient about suitable methods of wax removal including self-care³³⁴, explaining risks and benefits of all treatment options³³⁵ • Be able to address any issues around frailty/frailty syndrome that may impact on the safety of carrying out ear irrigation, paying particular attention to history of falls³³⁶ • Be able to elicit the patients understanding of the procedure and provide education about how the procedure may feel³³⁷, what the effects may be afterwards • Be able to ensure all equipment needed is available to provide safe, effective, and comfortable irrigation for the patient³³⁸ • Be able to perform the ear irrigation procedure in line with training, local and national guidelines³³⁹ • Be able to identify complications arising as a result of irrigation and manage appropriately referring on to a senior clinician where appropriate 				
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³³³ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng98/chapter/Recommendations#assessment-and-referral>

³³⁴ <http://www.earcarecentre.com/patients/ears/wax/>

³³⁵ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng98/chapter/Recommendations#removing-earwax>

³³⁶ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/clinical-policy/older-people/frailty/frailty-resources/>

³³⁷ [http://www.earcarecentre.com/uploadedFiles/Pages/Patients/Leaflets/Irrigation\(1\).pdf](http://www.earcarecentre.com/uploadedFiles/Pages/Patients/Leaflets/Irrigation(1).pdf)

³³⁸ http://www.earcarecentre.com/uploadedFiles/Pages/Health_Professionals/Protocols/Ear%20irrigation%20guidelines%202022.pdf

³³⁹ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng98/chapter/Recommendations#removing-earwax>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to provide robust safety netting and aftercare advice ensuring this includes the red flags for infection and trauma post-procedure³⁴⁰ • Be able to provide the patient with health promotion advice about on-going ear care to try to prevent future wax build up³⁴¹Be able to identify when patient complexity exceed competence and refer on to suitable senior clinician 				
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³⁴⁰ <http://www.earcarecentre.com/uploadedFiles/Pages/Patients/Leaflets/Post-Irrigation%20advice.pdf>

³⁴¹ [http://www.earcarecentre.com/uploadedFiles/Pages/Patients/Leaflets/A%20leaflet%20for%20Patients\(1\).pdf](http://www.earcarecentre.com/uploadedFiles/Pages/Patients/Leaflets/A%20leaflet%20for%20Patients(1).pdf)