

Nurse-led Orthopaedic Post-op Wound Clinic	
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1. Overview

This policy provides the framework for the operation of a Nurse-Led Wound Clinic, outlining the role of the nurse in the delivery of evidence-based, patient-centred care for individuals with acute post-surgical wounds. The clinic will support enhanced wound management through nurse-led assessment, treatment, and ongoing care to improve patient outcomes, reduce hospital admissions, and optimise resource utilisation.

2. Applicability

This workflow only applies to the Orthopaedic Post-operative Wound clinic, operated by Adult Specialist Clinics, Footscray Hospital. It is not applicable to any other clinic operated by Western Health.

3. Responsibility

3.1 Department/ Head of Unit

The Orthopaedic Head of Unit and associated medical team are responsible for ensuring that the outlined workflow is adhered to at all times. The Orthopaedic Unit must ensure that Medical Support is available to the Nurse Clinic during operation in conjunction with the Fracture Clinic.

3.2 Managers

The Operational Manager and the Nurse Unit Manager (NUM) (Footscray) for Adult Specialist Clinics (ASC) are responsible to ensure that Nurses complete the required Education and Training and maintain their competence to practice in the Post-operative Wound Clinic.

The Orthopaedic Surgery Head of Unit, Registrars and HMOs must be familiar with the workflow. It applies to Medical and Nursing staff working within the clinic. NUM and ANUM of Adult Specialist Clinics are responsible for ensuring the clinic is conducted in accordance with this workflow.

3.3 Employee

It is the responsibility of all WH Nursing Staff working in Adult Specialist Clinics to ensure that they comply with this workflow.

4. Authority

Deviations from the workflow prescribed in this document may only be approved the NUM (Footscray) Adult Specialist Clinic or Head of Unit Orthopaedic Surgery.

5. Associated Documentation

In support of this procedure, the following Manuals, Policies, Instructions and/or Guidelines apply:

Aseptic Technique (AT) Organisational Procedure July 2023 [Aseptic Technique \(AT\)](#)

Bluebelle Wound Healing Questionnaire © University of Bristol 2017 [Bluebelle Wound Healing Questionnaire | Bristol Medical School: Population Health Sciences | University of Bristol](#)

Taking a Wound Swab Procedure code: OP-CC3 August 2021 [Taking a Wound Swab](#)

Topical Negative Pressure Dressings Procedure code: OP-CC4 August 2021 [Topical Negative Pressure Dressings](#)

Western Health Wound Care Assessment [Wound Care Assessment \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Western Health Wound CNC Chart [Wound-CNC-chart.jpg \(2371x2708\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Western Health Wound Care Equipment [Wound Care Equipment \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Wound Care Management Organisational Procedure July 2023 [Wound Care Management](#)

6. Training Requirements

The Footscray NUM will be responsible for ensuring that Nursing Staff working within Adult Specialist Clinics have fulfilled the training requirements and follow the clinical practice outlined in the procedure. The following education learning packages available on WeLearn must be completed prior to allocation in the Wound Clinic.

- Aseptic Technique
- Diabetic Foot complications
- Hand Hygiene
- Skin Integrity Learning Hub
- EMR for Nurses
- Pain Management Resource Hub

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7. Definitions and Abbreviations.

7.1 Definitions

For purposes of this procedure, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Orthopaedic Post-op. Wound Clinic	A weekly face-to-face outpatient clinic, conducted within ASC to facilitate two-week post-operative review of wounds +/- removal of sutures or follow up care as deemed necessary by the Orthopaedic Consultant.
Bluebelle Wound Healing Questionnaire (Abbreviated)	A widely recognised tool for wound assessment developed by The University of Bristol (free to use for publicly funded healthcare). An abbreviated version has been developed and approved by the HOU for Orthopaedics.

7.2 Abbreviations

For purposes of this procedure, unless otherwise stated, the following abbreviations shall apply:

NUM	Nurse Unit Manager
ANUM	Associate Nurse Unit Manager
ASC	Adult specialist Clinics
EMR	Electronic Medical Record
HMO	Hospital Medical Officer
NSQHS	The National Safety and Quality Health Service
PAC	Post-Acute Care

8. Procedure Detail

- Clinic to be staffed with one Registered or Enrolled Nurse to 10 patient appointments plus one Senior Registered Nurse (Grade 2 Y5 and above).
- Registered or Enrolled Nursing staff to consult independently, under the indirect supervision of the Orthopaedic Medical Team and a Senior Registered Nurse, who will be available for support, advice and care escalation.
- Three-point Identification Check.
- Facilitate interpreter support if required.
- Offer patient a Certificate of Attendance if required.
- Review the patients record with previous notes and instructions, including the operation report.
- Ask patient if they have been unwell over the last 72 hours and document symptoms/ interventions in EMR.
- Conduct a thorough wound assessment as per WH policy.
- Photograph any wounds (with patient consent) with abnormal healing, upload to EMR and document in the patient notes.
- Escalate any wounds not healing normally per the Bluebell Abbreviated assessment tool (Appendix 1) for medical review.
- Perform suture removal as required.
- Cleanse wound and apply new dressings as per WH policy- *Wound Care Management (2023)*
- Complete a progress note on EMR, documenting the following:
 - Comprehensive wound assessment, guided by the Bluebelle Wound Healing Questionnaire (abbreviated) and WH Policy.
 - Number of sutures removed
 - Use of Aseptic Technique
 - List of dressing products utilised
 - Education provided
 - Any escalation of concerns/advice sought +/- medical review
- Provide general education and reassurance to patients before their surgical review at 6 weeks post-procedure as per the discharge summary provided by the Orthopaedic team.
- Refer patients to Physio and/or plaster technicians if ordered by the Orthopaedic team.

8.1 Quality Assurance/ Risk and Performance Feedback

- **Monitoring**
Review patient outcomes monthly to ensure evidenced based practices are being followed.
- **Education**

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Ongoing education will be provided to nursing staff on the latest wound care products, techniques and research developments through scheduled education meetings and journal articles.

- **Patient Feedback**
Regular review of feedback from Best Care from Riskman reports and provided to the nursing team.
- **Audit and Review**
Six monthly audits will be conducted to review adherence to clinical guidelines, safety protocols and proper documentation.

9. Document History

Number of previous revisions:0

Previous version dates: N/A

Minor amendment: not applicable this version

10. References

The external frameworks, standards & programs informing this procedure include:

- NSQHS Standard 2 Partnering with Consumers
- NSQHS Standard 3 Preventing and Controlling Infections
- NSQHS Standard 5 Comprehensive Care
- Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare (2019) [Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare \(2019\) | NHMRC](#)
- Wound Care Management, 2023, Western Health Procedure, Prompt.

11. Sponsor

Nurse Unit Manager Adult Specialist Clinics Footscray

12. Authorisation Authority

Divisional Director - Clinical Support and Specialist Clinics
Director of Nursing and Midwifery – Melton Health
Operations Manager - Adult Specialist Clinics

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ADULT SPECIALIST CLINICS – FOOTSCRAY HOSPITAL

Nurse-led Orthopaedic Post-operative Wound Clinic

Are any of the following present? If yes, photograph (with patient consent) and refer for medical review	YES	NO
Redness (erythema/cellulitis)		
Warmth (inflammation)		
Copious clear fluid (serous exudate)		
Blood-stained fluid (haemoserous exudate)		
Thick yellow/green fluid (pus/purulent exudate)		
Edges of any part of the wound separated/gaped open on their own accord (dehiscence)		
Excessive swelling		
Bad smell (malodour)		
Excessive pain		
Fever (> 38 °C)		

NOTES