



Allied Health Assistant Orientation and Induction Workbook



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**
WA Country Health Service



Welcome to the WA Country Health Service

The WACHS Allied Health Assistant orientation and induction workbook aims to provide support to Allied Health Assistants commencing work as an Allied Health Assistant for the first time. It is designed to compliment organisational induction programs (e.g. corporate induction, regional induction), and most importantly local workplace orientation. The tool is for use by you and your manager, to ensure that you get the most out of your orientation and make a great start to your new career as an Allied Health Assistant.

Not all components of the WACHS Allied Health Assistant Workbook are relevant to all staff. You should seek guidance from your manager regarding which elements are most applicable to you.

It is recommended that the WACHS Allied Health Assistant Orientation and Induction Workbook be completed within the first 3 months of employment.

Workbook Start Date: _____

Workbook Finishing Date: _____

Allied Health Assistant Signature

Managers Signature

Date:

Date:

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What is an Allied Health Assistant

Allied Health Assistants (AHAs) are important members of the health team. They support the delivery of allied health services by undertaking tasks delegated to them by Allied Health Professionals (AHPs). AHPs working with AHAs often include: physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, dietitians, and podiatrists. An AHA may work with one or more of these professionals.

As an AHA you have three primary responsibilities:

- Carry out delegated activities and engage in monitoring processes
- Take responsibility for conducting services in a safe and efficient manner
- Participate in continuing professional development.

Tasks delegated to you by AHPs are varied and diverse. You can work in many different ways including:

- Carrying out individual sessions with a client
- Carrying out group sessions with clients
- Assisting an allied health professional during a session
- Developing therapy resources
- Assisting with administration tasks
- Promoting health within the community... to name a few.

AHAs can work with many different client types depending on which AHP/s they are involved with. A typical day might involve running a hydrotherapy session with an adult client, running a fine motor group in a pre-primary class, helping an autistic child use pictures for communication.... the list goes on!

AHAs do not require a formal qualification. On the job training is provided. However, formal qualifications are available through TAFE or Registered Training Organisations, including a Certificate III (Allied Health Assisting) and Certificate IV (Allied Health Assisting).

There are over 30 AHAs working across various locations in the WA Country Health Service.



Introduction to Your Worksite

Within your first three months of work, you will gradually be introduced to the work site and its facilities and resources. Use the list below to check off items as you are orientated to them. You can also ask about things you haven't been shown (or can't remember being shown).

NB: Not all of the checklist might be relevant to you.

Within First Week

Policy

- Key policies & procedures
- Departmental procedure manual

Facilities

- Office/desk/workstation
- Office keys/access systems
- Site orientation (departments, wards etc)
- Parking, toilets, staff room, cafeteria
- Security (open/closing procedure)
- Duress alarms/emergency alarms
- Evacuation points
- Other service sites

Resources

- Stationary
- Computers/printers
- Photocopying & Scanning
- Telephone/fax
- Stores & ordering procedure
- Pool vehicles (availability & booking)
- Equipment & booking (laptop/camera etc)
- Videoconferencing (booking & training)
- Pager & Mobile Phones
- Meeting Rooms (venues & booking)
- Purchasing items & petty cash
- Diary/Calendars
- Maintenance requests procedure

OSH

- OSH contacts/procedures
- Travel guidelines/policy
- Home visiting guidelines/policy
- Incident reporting

HR

- Contract (terms and conditions)
- HSU Award (terms and conditions)
- WWC, Criminal Screening
- Local HR Procedures (A/L, sick days etc)
- Leave forms
- TOIL/Overtime/On call
- Payroll Issues
- Start/finish times (working hours)
- Dress code/uniform standards
- Time sheets/rosters
- Security ID
- Salary Packaging
- Allowance/Claims
- Immunisation Status
- Drivers License

Directories

- Local health service directory
- Community services directory
- Key contact lists

IT

- Computer Access
- Help Desk/IT Support
- Email
- Intranet & internet
- Share Drive

Communication

- Email groups
- Mail (incoming/outgoing)
- Notice Boards & Newsletters

Administration

- Standard letters, templates etc
- Stationary
- Clerical assistance
- Medical record forms

Information Management

- HCARE (use and local rules)
- Records management systems

Within First Month

Management

- Local Plans (strategic, operational)
- Management structure
- Delegation schedules
- Reporting requirements
- Communication channels

Mandatory Skills

- Fire & Safety (fire wardens)
- Aggression/Bullying
- Manual Handling, CPR/BLS
- Emergency response (including cyclone)
- Rural/remote driving/driver safety
- Infection Control

Within First Three Months

Self Care

- First aid
- Bush crisis line
- Employee Assistance program

Consumers

- Complaints management procedures



Your Job Role

AHAs undertake many different jobs as part of their role. There are six main types of roles you may perform:

1. Assist with client specific program activities of allied health services
2. Assist with community based programs provided by allied health services
3. Assist in the provision of support in the client's environment for allied health services
4. Assist with equipment and technical aspects of allied health services
5. Assist in enhancing community access to allied health services
6. Assist with administration and organisation of allied health services.

You will not be expected to undertake all of these roles. Your manager will spend time with you describing the roles that you will be undertaking, and the specific jobs/tasks associated with each. Some you will be able to start doing straight away. Others may require a little training before you can do them.

Job/Task	What does this involve? How frequently will I need to do this job? Who can help with this job?



Workplace Policies and Procedures

Workplace policies are official organisation documents that inform staff what must be done within the particular workplace. A procedure is an official document that explains how staff should do their job.

It is very important that you follow your workplace policies and procedures to

- Ensure the safety of yourself, your colleagues and your patients
- Encourage and maintain good work practice
- To obey the law

Our policies and procedures are located _____

Policies and Procedure Relevant to My Job

Policy/Procedure	What this means to me ...



Scope of Practice

As an AHA, you will carry out a number of tasks throughout the day. It is important that you are aware of what you can and cannot do as an AHA. This is called your scope of practice.

You should only carry out tasks that are:

- Within your scope of practice
- Delegated to you by an allied health professional
- Within your skills (i.e. you have the skills and confidence to do the task).

Discuss the below with your manager, and add in any additional activities that are within or outside of your scope of practice relating to your job.

Activities within my scope of practice	Activities outside of my scope of practice
Assist an AHP conducting a treatment program.	Interpret referrals, screening or assessments.
Conduct a treatment session following a written program prepared by an AHP.	Conduct initial interviews
Conduct screenings (without interpretation of results) following clear protocols.	Undertake standardized or non-standardized diagnostic tests, formal or informal assessments or interpret test results.
Make use of and maintain relevant equipment to carry out treatment programs	Develop or discuss diagnosis
Prepare resources to carry out treatment programs.	Plan, institute or modify treatment programs
Perform non-treatment activities, for example escorting and reception of clients, preparing client and equipment required for treatment.	Give interpretive information to clients, relatives or other staff
Perform administrative duties related to the delivery of allied health services.	Sign any documents outside of scope of practice without the co signature of the AHP
	Prescribe or recommend equipment



Legal and Ethical Responsibilities

As an AHA you, like all other health professionals and support workers, have a number of ethical and legal responsibilities. Many of these have specific policies, which would have been covered by your manager when discussing the previous sections.

The below provides an overview of key legal and ethical responsibilities you are required to abide by.

Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics

These are organisational documents that describe how you must behave and the values you must uphold as a staff member. Read these documents carefully and make sure you understand how they impact on you and your job.

Informed Consent

Patients have the right to decide what will be done to him/her. Your delegating health professionals will ensure that the client has been informed about the reasons for treatment, the types of treatment and the expected outcome, and that he/she has provided consent for this treatment.

Confidentiality

Client information is personal and private. Confidentiality is an important part of health service provision. Everyone has a right to confidentiality when they access health services. In your role you will be entrusted with confidential information about your clients. You are not to disclose confidential information of any nature to any person, except when sharing information with other health professionals involved in the care of the patient.

Documentation

Documentation and record keeping is an important component of health care. Whilst the nature and style of reporting may vary between people and organisations, the recording of relevant facts, results and observations relating to the client's health is essential. Your manager will provide you with guidelines for what you need to document, and how you should do so correctly in medical notes or client files.

Duty of Care

Duty of care requires that you do your utmost to ensure the safety of your patients, yourself and your work colleagues. You must comply with occupational health and safety requirements, and report any potential hazards or unsafe practice.

Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination

Everyone is entitled to a harassment and bullying free workplace. Behaviors involving bullying, harassment and discrimination pose a risk of injury or harm to employees and will not be tolerated. You have a responsibility to ensure that you do not encourage or participate in bullying, harassing or discriminatory behaviour. If you observe any of these behaviors you should report them to your manager.



Management and Coordination

In your role as an AHA, you may be managed by a number of people. It is important that you understand who is responsible for what aspects of your job.

My line manager (the person I directly report to) is

If relevant, the Allied Health Assistant coordinator is

My delegating allied health professionals are

If relevant, my mentor is

If relevant, my orientation buddy is

Discuss with your manager who is responsible for specific tasks and activities, and complete the below table. Add in any others related to your job.

Activity	Who do I report to
General Support and Administration	
Approving leave	
Pay enquiries	
Stationary requests	
Submitting timesheets	
Flexi sheets	
Learning & Development	
Training	
Performance Development	
Job Support	
Caseload management & timetabling	
Time allocation across staff / roles	



Delegation

In your job, you may be working with many different AHPs. The people providing tasks to you are called the 'delegating' AHP. Delegation refers to the decisions made by the AHP as to tasks that you can complete. Their decision to delegate a task to you considers:

- If the task is within *your* scope of practice
- If the task is within *their* scope of practice
- If you have the appropriate skill, competence and confidence to do the task
- How much support is required and if he/she can provide it to you
- The complexity of the task and the client.

When delegating a task to you, the AHP is ultimately accountable (responsible) for your performance of the task and the impact on the client. He/she is responsible also for monitoring your completion of the task, and giving you feedback on how the task was done.

You have a very important role to play in delegation. It is important for you to let the delegating AHP know if you are not comfortable or have concerns in accepting the delegated task. This may be for a number of reasons (e.g. you are not confident or that you do not feel you have the skills to do the task).

Discuss with each allied health professional delegating to you the below:

Delegating Allied Health Professional	1. Types of activities to be delegated? 2. Frequency and type of contact? 3. Best way to contact?



Organising Your Work

As an AHA you will be provided a range of tasks, potentially from different AHPs, which you will need to complete throughout the day. These may be patient related (e.g. running a therapy session) or non-patient related (photocopying programs, entering data).

Allied health professionals typically organise their day, week, month and even year using a timetable. A timetable helps them allocate time to all the jobs they need to do and people they need to see. Timetables are also used for allied health assistants. A timetable can reflect:

- Time needed to prepare for an activity
- Time needed for administrative tasks (such as writing in notes, preparing rooms)
- Time spent with a particular therapist
- Time spent in a particular location
- Time allocated to seeing individual clients
- Time allocated to running groups
- Time for daily tasks (e.g. entering statistics), weekly tasks (e.g. sending letters) or monthly tasks (e.g. ordering stationary).
- Time for travel
- Time for breaks (e.g. lunch).

Your manager will help you set up a timetable for your days at work. Your timetable during orientation may look a little different to your everyday timetable as more time initially will be spent letting you observe sessions, talk to team members, become familiar with the health service and attend training. As you become more familiar with the role you may be asked to take responsibility for your timetable, and determining where and how to allocate your time.

Appendix One provides a blank time table that you can use with your line manager to develop your weekly timetable.



The Health Team

When you applied for the job, you were probably asked how you worked with others. This is because health is delivered by a team of health professionals and support workers. It is important to know what each team member's role is, and their key responsibilities.

People I work with	Their main role is....



Learning and Development

As an AHA, there are many roles and tasks that you will be expected to perform. You may start the job with skills to do some of them, but need training to be able to do others.

Skills Audit

One of the early things you will do with your line manager is to look at the roles that you will be performing and the types of skills you need to do the job. Together you will work out what skills you need training in, and what skills you already possess. Your line manager will then prioritise what is important for the first three months.

A useful tool to help with this process is the Rural and Remote Allied Health Competencies – Allied Health Assistants.

At the end of this process you will be able to describe the skills that you already have and those you need to develop (see appendix 2)

Learning Plan

The next step is to set up a learning plan (see appendix 3), to help you to quickly learn the skills you need to be able to do your job. There are lots of different ways that this skills development can occur, including:

- Completing the WACHS Allied Health Assistant training modules
- Watching and listening to colleagues (health professionals, other AHAs)
- Attending health service in-servicing (e.g. manual handling, CPR, fire & safety)
- Observing and then repeating a skill demonstrated by someone else
- Reading books or articles
- Completing a self directed learning package or online learning module
- Direct supervision sessions with feedback by the allied health professional
- Enrolling in a TAFE course

Remember, most of what you learn initially will be informal and during the normal course of your work (watching, listening, asking questions).

Life Long Learning

Learning is ongoing and will continue well after the first three months, in fact you will continue to learn and develop throughout your career. This booklet is focused on the initial three months (orientation stage).

Formal Qualifications

Formal qualifications are available through TAFE or Registered Training Organisations, including a Certificate III (Allied Health Assisting) and Certificate IV (Allied Health Assisting). For country AHAs such qualifications are only available by distance education. If you are interested find out more about formal qualifications, discuss this with your manager.



Allied Health Assistant Training Modules

The WACHS Allied Health Assistant Training modules have been developed to assist allied health assistants develop the skills and knowledge needed to work in the health service. It is recommended that these modules are included as part of your orientation and training. The general sessions are especially important to complete in the first three months.

General Training Sessions (Recommended for All Allied Health Assistants)

Module	Format	Date Completed
Running a session	DVD	
Prompting, cueing & modelling	DVD	
Legal & ethical requirements	DVD	
Communicating & managing time	DVD	
Patient Safety for Support Workers	Online Learning Module www.onwebfast.com/ie/	
Hand Hygiene	Online Learning Modules Hand Hygiene	
First aid	St Johns Online www.ambulance.net.au/onlinecourse/loqin.asp	

Clinical Specific Training Sessions (Dependent on Role and Client Type)

With your manager, work out which training modules below are relevant for you.

Module	Format	Date Completed
Paediatric Phonology– speech sounds	DVD	
Paediatric Behaviour management	DVD	
Paediatric Fine Motor Skills	DVD	
Paediatric Comprehension	DVD	
Paediatric Sensory Processing	DVD	
Paediatric Gross motor	DVD	
Paediatric Pre-literacy	DVD	
Working with Adults & Seniors	DVD	
Paediatric Visual Perception	DVD	
Paediatric Early Intervention	VC or onsite presentation	
Working with people who have a disability	VC or onsite presentation	
Paediatric Narrative	VC or onsite presentation	
Adult Mobility	VC or onsite presentation	
Play Skills	VC or onsite presentation	
Pulmonary Rehabilitation	VC or onsite presentation	



Performance Development

Performance development is a formal development process conducted between you and your manager. The aim of performance development is to:

- Discuss how you think you are going with your job
- Discuss how you think you can improve the way you work (e.g. learning new skills)
- Discuss how your line manager thinks you can improve the way you work
- Help you deal with any problems or issues affecting your work
- Plan for your future development.

This process can sometime be a bit daunting. The important thing to keep in mind is that it is all about helping you develop and grow as an allied health assistant.

My first performance management session will be

Things I need to think about before the session:

What have I achieved / done well?	
What have I learned?	
What things about my job are hard/challenging?	
What can I do (what needs to be done) to improve the job that I do?	
What skills do I need to learn or would like to learn?	
What other things would I like to do in my role?	
What would I like to achieve in the future?	



Appendix One: Time Table

Week: _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.00am					
9.00am					
10.00am					
11.00am					
12.00pm					
1.00pm					
2.00pm					
3.00pm					
4.00pm					
5.00pm					



Appendix Two: Skills Audit

Tasks/activity	What skills do I possess already?	What skills do I need to develop?



Appendix Three: Learning Plan

Development Plan

Name		Position	
Date Start		Date Completed	
Review Date		Review Date	

<i>Competency Area Identified</i>	<i>Learning Goals (specific learning needs – skill, knowledge, attitude, behaviour)</i>	<i>Methods (strategies and resources)</i>	<i>Evidence of learning</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>