

KEY ACTIONS
for clinicians

Comprehensive Care: Element 3

Risk screening and assessment

Identifying patients who are at risk of harm, and mitigating risks for those patients, is a core part of comprehensive care.

Health service organisations can implement different strategies to screen, risk assess and mitigate potential risks of harm to patients.

These strategies include using local data to understand and mitigate common risks, developing models of care that mitigate risks to patients in particular wards, using screening conversations to triage patients who may need further risk assessment, and using validated tools to quantify risk.

Purpose of element

The purpose of risk screening and assessment is:

- To gain an understanding of the degree to which a patient might be at risk of harm, or poorer outcomes
- To inform decisions about the action the healthcare team needs to take immediately to address identified risks such as specific assessment processes, implementation of risk mitigation strategies, and escalation of care where needed
- To inform the development of a comprehensive care plan with the patient.

Key actions

Clinicians:

- Use person-centred approaches to communicate, and consider the patient in a holistic way to understand personal factors that might put them at risk of harm
- Use risk screening and assessment approaches and processes as a mechanism to take action to tailor care, mitigate risks and improve patient care and outcomes
- Consistently use the risk screening and assessment approaches and processes that are agreed in your health service organisation
- Use your clinical judgement to inform decisions about potential risks of harm, and need for action to mitigate risk
- Take action immediately if there is a high risk to the patient, or their care needs to be escalated
- Use organisational processes to document and communicate the findings of risk screening and assessment processes and include actions in the comprehensive care plan.

Questions?



For more information, please visit:
safetyandquality.gov.au/comprehensive-care

You can also contact the Comprehensive Care project team at: mail@safetyandquality.gov.au

