

Observations of care

“The most important practical lesson that can be given to nurses is to teach them what to observe – how to observe – what symptoms indicate Improvement – what the reverse which are of importance – which are none – which are the evidence of neglect – and what kind of neglect”
(Nightingale 1866)

Observation of care

Information is that which an individual perceives as significant.

Sanger 1985



Principles of observation of care

- Open process
- All those involved have full access at all times to information collected
- Constructive feedback
- Collaborative action planning



Undertaking observations

- Observations last for 15-20 minutes
- If you see any unsafe care/practice, you will need to intervene
- You record everything you observe; your written record is available to staff if they wish to read it



Benefits of observation of care

nutrition
now

To service users

- possible areas of improvement are highlighted
- new ways of working are identified.

To teams/organisations:

- good practice is identified and acknowledged
- experience of receiving feedback, action planning, problem solving and developing strategies to improve practice
- systems redesigned to meet needs of patients.

