

Title of Document	Digital Stimulation		
Name of Department	Clinical Team		

What type of document is this?	Work Instruction (WI)	This is a simple guide to follow in order to complete a particular task	
Which Helping Hands policy/SOP does this WI relate to?	N/A	Index number of policy/SOP	N/A

Which Operational Priority/Priorities does this document link to?	Governance Framework	Superior Client Care	People, Performance & Culture	Business Growth

Custodian of document	Clinical Team	Committee/Group responsible for this document	Governance Committee
Approval date and committee chairperson signature	21.06.23	When is its next scheduled review?	21.06.26

Who does it apply to?	All staff at the facility / All staff working with clients				
	Does it apply to bank workers?	Yes	Does it apply to agency staff?	No	Does it apply to third party contractors?

Purpose of the Work Instruction	To ensure that all staff who work with customers have competency and knowledge to deal with Digital Stimulation				
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Digital Stimulation Work Instruction

1.0 Purpose

Digital rectal stimulation (DST) is a technique used to start a bowel movement when the nerves that allow a person to control bowel movements are impaired. By gently touching the wall of the rectum, it will relax and open the passage and trigger muscle contractions, which push stool out of the body. It is a procedure commonly used by our customers with a spinal injury or a neurogenic bowel as part of their routine bowel care routine. It is often used alongside rectal medication such as enemas or suppositories.

2.0 Process

- 2.1 Explain the procedure to the customer and gain consent.
- 2.2 Prepare the area, ensuring the customers privacy and dignity.
- 2.3 Carer dons' apron and gloves.
- 2.4 Support the customer to lie on their left side with their knees bent (left lateral position). They may however choose to be seated on a commode or over a toilet.
- 2.5 Lubricate your gloved finger and inform the customer you are about to begin. The carer should have short nails and no jewellery other than a plain band.
- 2.6 Gently part the buttocks and insert the single, gloved, lubricated finger, slowly and gently into the rectum. The carer may choose to double glove in the event that the glove may split
- 2.7 Remember to monitor your customers conditions throughout, especially for signs of autonomic dysreflexia in customers who have a spinal injury above T6.
- 2.8 Turn the finger so that the padded surface of the finger is in contact with the bowel wall.
- 2.9 Slowly rotate the finger maintaining contact with the bowel wall throughout for 30 – 60 seconds.
- 2.10 Withdraw the finger and await a bowel movement.
- 2.11 Repeat the process every 5-10 minutes until the rectum is empty or the bowel movement finishes.
- 2.12 Remove the soiled glove and replace, re-lubricating as necessary between insertions.
- 2.13 Once the rectum is empty, conduct a final digital check of the rectum after five minutes to ensure that evacuation is complete.
- 2.14 Place any evacuated faecal matter in an appropriate receptacle (such as a small bag) as it is removed and dispose of it either into the toilet or double bagged into the household waste.
- 2.15 Support the customer to wash and dry their buttocks and anal area.
- 2.16 Remove your gloves and apron and wash your hands.
- 2.17 Document the procedure in the customer's visit record notes, including the result of the procedure using the Bristol stool chart
- 2.18 Report any abnormalities to the customers district nurse and/or GP.



3.0 Training

Sign off training can be achieved by completing the online Learning Management System (LMS) module also supported by face to face training and competency sign off with a Regional or District Nurse.

Note – Equality Impact Assessments are not required for Work Instructions

What was the previous version number of this document?	Version 01	
Changes since previous version	Amendment to 1.0 and terminology in 2.0 – customer visit record notes. Reviewed by Clinical team.	
Author of the document	Clinical Team	
Who was involved in developing / reviewing/ amending this work instruction?	Clinical Nursing Team	
How confidential is this document?	Public	Can be shared freely within and outside of Helping Hands

Associated Documents	Training & Competency Form – Access Care Planning Digital Stimulation Fact Sheet
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