

INTRODUCTION

The evidence-based Vessel Health & Preservation (VHP) concept of vascular access management was introduced in the US. The essence of VHP is timely, intentional, proactive patient intervention for vascular access device selection during the first 24 hours of entry into the healthcare process (and re-evaluated thereafter), followed by placement of a clinically appropriate device within 48 hours. Once placed, the focus shifts to daily maintenance and care of the device using the central line bundle and daily assessment to determine the health of patient's blood vessels as well as continued necessity of the device (Moreau, et al, 2012).

This practical framework has been developed to support practitioners to undertake vessel assessment and make decisions regarding suitable devices for vascular access and administration of medication or fluids. This is based on individual patient need and risk assessment. The framework is divided into relevant sections recognising the different stages of vascular assessment and therapy and is intended to be used either in its entirety or individual sections.

Preservation of vessels is required to minimise damage (thrombosis, stenosis and infection) and maintain the patency of the peripheral and central veins for as long as possible. This maintains good venous access for future treatments and minimises patient suffering. Further such actions have the potential to save significant staff and equipment costs to organisations providing vascular access and administration of medication or fluids.

This guidance relates to adult vascular access in acute or planned settings. It is not planned for use in emergency situations where other issues take priority and other routes of access may be appropriate e.g. interosseous infusions.

The content of the poster will be reviewed every two years and revisions taken in the light of new evidence.

Please forward feedback to [VHP@ips.uk.net](mailto:VHP@ips.uk.net)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- CVC - Central venous catheter
- IV - Intravenous route of access
- Midline - Long venous catheter inserted into arm veins which does not extend centrally
- PICC - Peripherally inserted central venous catheter
- PN - Parenteral nutrition
- TIVAD - Total implanted vascular access device (port)
- Tunnelled CVC - central venous catheter which is tunnelled away from exit site and has anchoring cuff (e.g. Hickman type catheter)
- VAD - Vascular access device
- VHP - Vessel health and preservation
- VIP - Visual Infusion Phlebitis Score (Jackson, 1997)

REFERENCES

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