

Overview

This standard covers the use of venepuncture/phlebotomy techniques and procedures to obtain venous blood samples from individuals for investigations.

Users of this standard will need to communicate effectively to meet individuals' needs and wishes and work in line with health and safety legislation, policy and practices.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1. identify and agree the roles and responsibilities of yourself and/or others in obtaining venous blood samples
- P2. confirm identity of the individual and establish consent in accordance with organisational procedures
- P3. give the individual relevant information, support and reassurance in a manner which is sensitive to their needs and concerns
- P4. ensure infection prevention and control methods and personal protective equipment are used
- P5. select and prepare:
 - a. an appropriate site
 - b. appropriate equipment for obtaining the venous blood
- P6. apply, use and release a tourniquet at appropriate stages of the procedure
- P7. gain venous access using the selected blood collection system, in a manner which will cause minimum discomfort to the individual
- P8. obtain the blood from the selected site:
 - a. in the correct container according to investigation required
 - b. in the correct volume
 - c. in the correct order when taking multiple samples
- P9. take appropriate action to stimulate the flow of blood if there is a problem obtaining blood from the selected site, or choose an alternative site
- P10. mix the blood and anti-coagulant thoroughly when anti-coagulated blood is needed
- P11. promptly identify any indication that the individual may be suffering any adverse reaction and take appropriate action
- P12. remove blood collection equipment and stop blood flow with sufficient pressure at the correct point and for the sufficient length of time to ensure bleeding has stopped and prevent bruising
- P13. apply a suitable dressing to the puncture site according to guidelines and/or protocols, and advise the individual about how to care for the site
- P14. label blood samples in accordance with organisational procedures
- P15. place samples in the appropriate packaging with relevant documentation
- P16. place samples in the nominated place for collection and transportation, ensuring the blood is kept at the required temperature to maintain its integrity

Obtain venous blood samples

P17. ensure immediate transport of the blood to the relevant department when blood sampling and investigations are urgent

P18. dispose of waste in accordance with organisational procedures

P19. complete all relevant documentation required for obtaining venous blood samples

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1. how to access and interpret all relevant work instructions, legislation, guidelines, policies, procedures and protocols needed to obtain venous blood samples
- K2. the scope and limitations of your own competence, responsibilities and accountability as it applies to your job role
- K3. specific procedures for reporting issues which are beyond your competence, responsibilities and accountability
- K4. the principles, practice and procedures associated with informed consent
- K5. the needs of individuals including issues relating to dignity, confidentiality, and privacy
- K6. how to obtain positive confirmation of an individual's identity before starting the procedure
- K7. the importance of applying standard infection control precautions to obtaining venous blood samples and the potential consequences of poor practice
- K8. how infection is spread and how to limit the spread - including how to use or apply the particular infection control measures needed when working with blood
- K9. the structure of blood vessels
- K10. the position of accessible veins for venous access in relation to arteries, nerves and other anatomical structures
- K11. blood clotting processes and factors influencing blood clotting
- K12. the contra-indications and changes in behaviour and condition, which indicate that the procedure should be stopped, and advice sought
- K13. the concerns which individuals may have in relation to you obtaining venous blood
- K14. how to prepare individuals for obtaining venous blood, including how their personal beliefs and preferences may affect their preparation
- K15. what is likely to cause discomfort to individuals during and after obtaining venous blood, and how such discomfort can be minimised
- K16. common adverse reactions to blood sampling, how to recognise them and the action(s) to take
- K17. the type and function of different blood collection systems
- K18. what dressings are needed for different types of puncture sites, how to apply and what advice to give individuals on caring for the site
- K19. the factors to consider in selecting the best site to use for venous access

Obtain venous blood samples

- K20. the equipment and materials needed for venepuncture/phlebotomy and how to check and prepare blood collection systems
- K21. the importance of ensuring venous access sites are cleaned effectively, and how and when this should be done
- K22. the correct use of tourniquets
- K23. the importance of correctly and safely inserting and removing needles
- K24. how to recognise an arterial puncture, and the action to take if this occurs
- K25. the factors involved in the procedure which could affect the quality of the blood
- K26. the remedial action you can take if there are problems in obtaining blood
- K27. when and how to dress venous puncture sites
- K28. the information that needs to be recorded on labels and other documentation
- K29. the importance of completing labels and documentation clearly, legibly and accurately
- K30. how to dispose of waste in accordance with organisational procedures
- K31. how to complete and safely store all relevant documentation in accordance with organisational requirements

Obtain venous blood samples

Developed by	Skills for Health
Version Number	4
Date Approved	13 Feb 2026
Indicative Review Date	13 Feb 2031
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating Organisation	Skills for Health
Original URN	SFHCHS132
Relevant Occupations	Health and Social Care, Health and Social Services Officers, Health Associate Professionals, Health Professionals, Health, Public Services and Care, Healthcare and Related Personal Services
Suite	Clinical Health Skills
Keywords	Blood specimens, venepuncture, phlebotomy, take blood
