



**CORE COMPETENCIES REFERENCE MANUAL FOR COMMUNITY
HEALTH ASSISTANTS (CHA)/ HIV TO PRACTISE IN ZAMBIA.**

CORE COMPETENCIES AND MINIMUM STANDARDS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

QUALIFICATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	3
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.0 EXIT EXAMINATIONS AND AWARD OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSISTANTS BY TRAINING INSTITUTIONS.....	4
3.0 LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS BY THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA.....	4
4.0. COMPETENCE OUTCOME GUIDELINES.....	5
5.0 CORE COMPETENCIES: COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSISTANTS (CHA)/ HIV.....	7
6.0 BLUEPRINT WEIGHTS BY COMPETENCIES.....	13
7.0 CORE PROCEDURES.....	13
8.0 REFERENCE MATERIALS.....	15

QUALIFICATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title of the programme: Certificate in Community Health Assistant (CHA)/ HIV

Key accountability for the job: First line contact with patient for supportive tasks and basic clinical functions in a community and primary health care facility.

Primary roles and responsibilities:

General:

1. Support Promotive, preventive, rehabilitative and palliative care health services to both community and primary Health care setting.
2. Apply history taking skills to arrive at clinical impressions, prompt treatment and make appropriate referral under the supervision of qualified health personnel.

HIV

- 3 Demonstrate supportive wide range of basic diagnostic test procedures that include malaria, HIV, Tuberculosis (TB), Glucose, Haemoglobin estimation, CD4 cell count, Urinalysis, pregnancy test) based on current guidelines
- 4 Provide quality and culturally sensitive education to patients on HIV and AIDS prevention, Anti-retroviral therapy and adherence to treatment under the direction and supervision of qualified health personnel based on current guidelines.
6. Develop and coordinate patient tracking programs for those patients lost to follow up HIV/AIDS related clients.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Health Professions Council of Zambia (HPCZ) is a statutory body that was established by the Health Professions Act No. 24 of 2009. The Act renames and continues the existence of the Medical Council of Zambia established by the Medical and Allied Professions Act of 1977. The Health Professions Act No. 24 provides for the registration of health practitioners and regulation of their professional conduct; provides for the licensing of health facilities and the accreditation of health care services provided by health facilities; and provides for the recognition and approval of training programmes for health practitioners.

Following the issuance of the guidelines for introduction of licensing examinations for health professionals to be registered with the Health Professions Council of Zambia, this bulletin provides an outline of the minimum competency standards for registrants who have successfully completed the certificate in Community health assistants (CHA)/ HIV seeking registration to practice as Community health Assistants (CHA) /HIV in Zambia.

2.0 Exit Examinations and Award of the Community Health Assistants by Training Institutions

Training institutions, private or public, approved by the Health Professions Council of Zambia are mandated to examine and graduate their students under their own seal and authority. The Certificate in Community Health Assistants (CHA)/ HIV award is designated the primary qualification of the practitioner and it is a pre-requisite requirement for eligibility for licensure examinations. Accordingly, a holder of the Community Health Assistant HIV Certificate award will be required to take and pass the HPCZ licensure examination to qualify for registration with the HPCZ as a Community Health Assistant (CHA)/HIV practitioner.

3.0 Licensure Examinations by the Health Professions Council of Zambia

A person shall not practise as a health practitioner, unless that person is registered as a health practitioner in accordance with the Health Professions Act No. 24 of 2009. In the exercise of its functions under this Act, the 2nd Council and the 3rd Council of the Health Professions Council of Zambia instituted Licensure Examinations to help maintain standards given the emergence of multiple private and public training institutions. This “Minimum Competency Standards for the Licensure Examinations for Community Health Assistants (CHA)/HIV to Work in Zambia” binds all parties regulated under this Act. Examination fees for licensure examinations, as prescribed by the Council, are payable to the Health Professions Council of Zambia as part of the eligibility to sit licensing examinations.

The HPCZ Licensing Examination assesses a Community Health Assistants graduate's ability to apply basic scientific knowledge, skills and performance and professional attitudes, that are important in health and disease and that constitute the basis of safe and effective patient care practice. The HPCZ Licensure Examination includes, but is not limited to, theoretical and practical examinations which complement each and the other components. No component is a stand-alone in the assessment of readiness for professional practice in Zambia. The candidate will be assessed under three domains, namely:-

1. Knowledge
2. Skills
3. Attitude

The above domains will be assessed by means of a theory exam comprising of multiple choice questions followed by a composite objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).

The eight main **subject areas** (assessed under all three learning domains) for community health assistants (CHA)/ HIV in Zambia are:

1. Roles and responsibilities of a CHA/ HIV
2. Basics of anatomy and physiology
3. Common diseases-causes, spread, prevention and treatment
4. Public health
5. Introduction to reproductive health
6. Environmental health
7. Treating people with HIV/AIDS
8. leadership and management

Other subject areas prescribed by the curriculum will be assessed as cognitive domain in the theory paper. The overall expected outcomes of the community health assistant (CHA)/ HIV licensure examination is to ensure that the candidate will meet the minimum standards for the role as a community health assistant (CHA)/ HIV.

4.0. COMPETENCE OUTCOME GUIDELINES

The curriculum must have identified attributes in each educational domain (knowledge, skills and attitude) and present them to guide student learning and assessment by examiners. HPCZ directs CHA/ HIV practitioners to be compassionate and empathetic in caring for patients and to be trustworthy and truthful in all their professional dealings. CHA/HIV practitioners have a responsibility to respect and provide care that is up to standard for the lives and health that are entrusted by patients. The process of licensure seeks to detect the candidate's attainment in each educational domain (knowledge, skills and attitude) and evaluates the minimum competence standards as benchmarks for licensure to practice the profession. The expectations are largely in six main competence areas.

1. Medical knowledge
2. Patient care
3. Practice-based learning and improvement
4. Interpersonal communication skills
5. Professionalism
6. System based practice

Overall Outcomes

Knowledge, Skills and Performance

1. Care of the patient is the first concern.
2. Provision of a good standard of practice and care by keeping professional knowledge and skills up to date while recognizing the limits of one's competence.

Safety and Quality

1. Prompt action if patient safety, dignity or comfort is compromised.
2. Protect and promote the health of patients and the public.

Communication, Partnership, and Teamwork

1. Uphold the respect of patient's autonomy and dignity.
2. Uphold informed consent and confidentiality.
3. Work with colleagues in ways that best serve the patient's interests.
4. Work with honesty, integrity and fairness.

Maintaining Trust

1. Work with honesty, openness and integrity.
- 2 Uphold fairness with patients or colleagues.
3. Safeguard the patient's and public's trust in the practitioner and the profession – never abuse the trust.

Management

1. Apply basic health care activities.
2. Ensure community health assistant supply chain maintenance

5.0 CORE COMPETENCIES: COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSISTANTS CHA/ HIV

DOMAIN :KNOWLEDGE		
Competency	Competence statement	Sub competences
Community Health Assistant (CHA)/HIV	Community Health Assistants (CHA) /HIV should demonstrate basic knowledge about promotive, preventive, rehabilitative and palliative care in the community and primary health care setting with sensitivity to culture	<p>GENERAL</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate knowledge of curative, promotive, preventive, rehabilitative, palliative care in the community 2. Explain common treatment approaches for the common diseases. 3. Demonstrate basic understanding of the social determinants of health in the community 4. Demonstrate understanding of socio-cultural practices in Zambia and the impact it has on the health seeking behaviour. 5. Demonstrate understanding of common approaches of monitoring and evaluation of community health activities. 6. Demonstrate knowledge on Safe motherhood pillars 7. Demonstrate knowledge on community basic health care package <p>HIV</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct the integrated management of child illnesses (IMCI) approach to the community in providing care to both the well and sick child. 2. Identify the classes of ARVs in line with current Zambian treatment guidelines 3. Demonstrate knowledge of quality and reliable diagnostic technology and procedure in HIV counselling

DOMAIN:SKILL		
Competence	Competence statement	Sub competences
Patient Care	Community Health Assistants (CHA) /HIV should be able to perform patient care and support proficiently and manage patients on ART (treatment initiation, adherence and complication identification) in line with the current guidelines to improve care and support for patients.	<p>GENERAL</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform point of care techniques proficiently 2. Carry out community health diagnosis 3. Perform quality and reliable diagnostic procedures 4. Perform and utilize point of care techniques, technology and apparatus proficiently 5. Utilize knowledge of human body in the practice of community health. 6. Provide basic health care. <p>HIV</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage patients on ART (treatment initiation, adherence and complication identification). 2. Conduct effective triage process(health history) 3. Carry out patient management in terms of ART and HIV testing care and support. 4. Perform routine physical examinations for opportunistic infections related to HIV. 5. Perform disease preventive activities that include condom and ITN distribution

Interpersonal and communication skills	Community Health Assistants (CHA) /HIV must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange through teaming up with health professionals, patients, families and community	GENERAL/HIV <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate effectively in various roles, for example: as an educator, mentor, counsellor, and patient advocate 2. Demonstrate ability in creating a therapeutic relationship with patients 3. Demonstrate listening skills in a patient encounter 4. Demonstrate ability in educating patients and family 5. Demonstrate skills in communicating patient related findings to colleagues 6. Communicate effectively with other health professionals
Primary Health care setting/Community based practice	Community Health Assistants (CHA) /HIV must be able to promote health through provision of support that is appropriate and effective to both community primary health care setting.	GENERAL <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conducts health promotion and education activities 2. Participates in preventive health care services such ITN distribution ,indoor residual spraying (IRS) 3. Promotes environmental health practice that involve waste disposal and management. 4. Participates in community diagnosis 5. participates in community stake holder meetings 6. Participates in mother and child health promotive and preventive activities such as growth monitoring. HIV <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect specimens safely and with minimal discomfort to the patient. 2. Utilize correct apparatus, tools and techniques to collect specimens. 3. Label and process specimens correctly. 4. Process specimens in a timely and efficient manner. 5. Operate and use of basic laboratory equipment and instruments correctly 6. Conduct a point of care procedure using appropriate relevant point of care equipment

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Collect and handle biological samples and clinical specimens 8. Apply principles of infection control principles. 9. Utilize appropriate laboratory reagents test strips. 10. Apply laboratory rapid diagnostic test (RDT) techniques. 11. Observe principles of quality control when executing point of care tests. 12. Perform basic quality control on all point of care diagnostic [laboratory] procedures. 13. Describe appropriate actions for positive and negative laboratory test results.
DOMAIN: ATTITUDE		
Competence	Competence statement	Sub competences
Professionalism	Community Health Assistants (CHA) /HIV must demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles, & cultural sensitivity to diverse patient population	<p>GENERAL</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate caring & respectful behaviours 2. Demonstrate ethically sound practice 3. Practice informed decision making 4. Demonstrate adherence to code of practice 5. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity to diverse patient groups 6. Uphold and respect patient's autonomy, dignity and confidentiality 7. Work honesty, integrity and fairness. 8. Work with colleagues in ways that best serve the patient's interests in 9. Modern family planning contraceptive methods, birth plans, advantages of ANC, facility delivery and PNC as well as Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision. <p>HIV</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adhering to good rapid diagnostic test practice, safety and health guidelines. 2. Utilise counselling skills for informed decision making on HIV counselling.

Systems-Based Practice	<p>Community Health Assistants (CHA) /HIV must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context & system of health care & to provide care that is of optimal value</p>	<p>GENERAL/HIV</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of the interaction of their practice with other members of the multidisciplinary team Practice cost-effective care</p> <p>Identify systems for collaboration and networking with in the community.</p> <p>Conduct community social mapping. Provision of basic curative services and identification of referral cases for further management at health center.</p> <p>Distribution of supplies such as condoms and providing family planning services including contraceptives.</p> <p>Empower the community. e.g. community mobilization for involvement in local health activities such as disease outbreak, National Immunization days, Child Health week, world TB day, World Health Day, World AIDS day and other commemorations.</p> <p>Apply elements and principles of Supply Chain Management.</p> <p>Place orders/request for supply chain commodities.</p> <p>Receive and store supply chain commodities correctly. Manage inventory and keep records of commodities</p>
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6.0 BLUEPRINT WEIGHTS BY COMPETENCIES

#	Competence	Weights	Practical
1	Medical knowledge	40%	
2	Patient care	40%	
3	Practice-based learning and improvement	-	100%
4	Interpersonal communication skills	5%	
5	Professionalism	10%	
6	System based practice	5%	
	TOTAL	100%	100%

7.0 CORE PROCEDURES

The following procedures are the minimum standards and a full list could be found in the curriculum

Common procedures(these procedure cut across all the subject areas mentioned in 3.0)	<p>GENERAL</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a relevant history taking in all specific subject areas 2. Conduct relevant physical examination in all specific subject areas <p>HIV</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform basic laboratory procedures (,RPR, TB rapid HIV test,CD4 cell count, malaria, microscopy)
Roles and responsibilities of a CHA/ HIV	<p>GENERAL</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake and Participate in Disease Surveillance 2. Demonstrate Understanding and Application of Community health Requisite to the Practice of the Profession. 3. Collaborate and Function Effectively with other Health Professionals 4. Adherence to health and laboratory safety guidelines <p>HIV</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect and Interpret common laboratory investigations (blood for CD4, HIV, malaria etc.) 2. Providing certain types of health care:vital,triage,phlebotomy.VCT 3. Counselling , educating and monitoring patients on ARV therapy 4. Adherence support and encouraging patients on ARVs
Basics of anatomy and physiology	<p>GENERAL/HIV</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List basic functions of parts of the human body 2. Identify human body systems and their functions 3. Outline and name basic parts of the human body

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Identify conditions caused by abnormal function of some body parts Conduct community health promotion and activities
Treating people with HIV/AIDS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize and refer people who need ARVs 2. Plan and carry out treatment education 3. Apply the appropriate intervention strategies to address treatment non adherence and treatment failure 4. Apply knowledge in understanding the requirement and guidelines for first, second and third line treatment
Common diseases-causes, spread, prevention and treatment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List 10 common diseases in Zambia 2. Describe cause, management and prevention of Malaria 3. Describe different Sexually Transmitted Infections, causes and management 4. Describe basic HIV life cycle and progression 5. List opportunistic infections (ois) related to HIV and AIDS 6. Apply knowledge in disease identification 7. Recognize and differentiate acute infections
Introduction to reproductive and child health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilizes integrated management of community (IMCI) approach in providing 2. Care to the well and sick child 3. Determines and refers children to appropriate health care setting requiring specialized treatment. 4. Demonstrate knowledge on Safe motherhood pillars
Public Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifies communicable diseases and initiates measures on prevention and control 2. Identify, plan and implement health promotion activities 3. Recommend appropriate methods of waste storage, collection and disposal. 4. Conduct community health promotion and activities 5. Conduct basic health Education talks
Environmental Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate correct hand washing 2. Participate in prevention measures of water associated diseases 3. Conduct health education talks on food /home hygiene. 4. Provide IEC to clients on importance of clean water supply

8.0 REFERENCE MATERIALS

GENERAL (CHA)

SUBJECT AREAS	READING LIST NOT EXHAUSTIVE
Professionalism	<p>Bayne R, and Horton, I (Ed). (2003). Applied Psychology. Sage Publication, London.</p> <p>Bond, J. Bond S (1994) Sociology and Health Care. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh. Geiwitz J, (1980) Psychology. Looking at ourselves. Little Brown. New York.</p>
Skill	<p>Ministry of Health June 21 (2007), Dry Blood Spot for DNA PCR testing, Health facility Handbook 1st ed.</p> <p>World Health Organisation (2006), How to Use a Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT)</p> <p>World Health Organisation – TB/98.258 Laboratory services in Tuberculosis control: Part 1 Organisation and Management 1998</p> <p>World Health Organization – TB/98.258 Laboratory Services in Tuberculosis control: Part 2 Microscopy 1998</p> <p>Ministry of Health Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) manuals for laboratory test.</p>
Roles and responsibilities of a Community health assistants CHA /HIV	<p>Ministry of Health (2009). Integrated Technical Guidelines For Front Assistants. 3rd Ed.Lusaka</p> <p>St John’s Ambulance (1972) First Aid, summarized manual of St. John Ambulance Association and Brigade.</p>
Basics of anatomy and physiology	<p>Amick III, BC, Levine S, Tarlov A R, Walsh DC, (1995) Society and Health. Oxford University Press, Oxford.</p>

	Kathleen, J.W. Waugh, A. (2006) Ross and Wilson's Anatomy and Physiology health and illness, 10th edition, New York: Churchill Livingstone.
Treating people with HIV/AIDS	MOH (2008) HMIS Trainers Guide, Lusaka, Ministry of Health Ministry of Health TB Trainer's Manual 2010
Common diseases-causes, spread, prevention and treatment	Schott J, Henley A, (1996). Culture, religion and Child bearing in a multiracial society. A handbook for Health Professionals. Butterworth Heinemann, Edinburgh. Stanhope, M. And Lancaster, J. (1992) Community Health Nursing, St Louis: Mosby. Spradley, B.W. (1996) Community Health Nursing: Concepts and Practice, Philadelphia: Lippincott.
Public Health	Anchor, E.L.A. (2000) Fundamentals of Nursing, Springhouse, Pa: Springhouse Corporation. Gastrell, P. and Edwards, J. (1996) Community Health Nursing, London: Bailliere Tindall. Ministry of Health (2005). Community Health Assistant's Handbook: A Reference Manual for the Community Health Assistants. 4th Ed. Lusaka. Zambia
Introduction to reproductive and child health	Irving S (1983) Basic Psychiatric Nursing, Third Edition. WB Saunders. Philadelphia. Kozier, B. et al (1995) Fundamentals of Nursing; Concepts, Process and Practice, Rewood City: Addison Wesley.

Environmental Health	Ngatia, P. And Mwita, N. (2010). Comprehensive Curriculum and Implementation Guide for Training Community Health Assistants in Africa: A Certificate Course. AMREF. Nairobi, Kenya.
System based practice	McMahon, R Barton, E Piot M (1992) On Being in Charge, Geneva WHO

(CHA HIV)

SUBJECT AREAS	READING LIST NOT EXHAUSTIVE
Professionalism	Adire M ,Farthing C.(2009).HIV medic training work book; trainers edition
Skill	Adire M (2012).HIV medic students training work book; 6 th edition Zambia National Guidelines for HIV Counselling & Testing.
Roles and responsibilities of a CHA HIV	Adire M ,Farthing C.(2009).HIV medic training work book; trainers edition
Basics of anatomy and physiology	Sear S(1994) Anatomy and Physiology for Nurses sixth Edition Waugh (2001).Anatomy and Physiology in Health and Illnesses
Treating people with HIV/AIDS	Ministry of health (2007)Zambian ART Reference Resource Manual Ministry of health (2006).Zambia National Guidelines for HIV Counselling & Testing
Common diseases-causes, spread, prevention and treatment	Adair M (1992)HIV medic program text book for diseases;spring house corporation first edition
Public Health	MoH (2005). Community Health Worker's Handbook: A reference manual for the community health workers. 4 th Ed. Lusaka Zambia. Ngatia, p. and Mwita, N. (2010). Comprehensive curriculum and implementation guide for training community health workers in Africa: A certificate course. AMREF. Nairobi, Kenya

Introduction to reproductive and child health	<p>MoH (2008) HMIS Trainers Guide, Lusaka, Ministry of Health.</p> <p>Stanhope, M. and Lancaster, J. (1992) Community Health Nursing, St. Louis: Mosby.</p>
Environmental Health	<p>MoH (2005). Community Health Worker's Handbook: A reference manual for the community health workers. 4th Ed. Lusaka. Zambia.</p> <p>Ngatia, P. and Mwita, n. (2010). Comprehensive curriculum and implementation guide for training community health workers in Africa: A certificate course. AMREF. Nairobi, Kenya.</p>