Indwelling Urinary Catheter Maintenance
– A guide for care staff

Person Assessment
- Consult the catheter passport (if available) for person specific information
- Know who to consult if you need advice on catheter related issues
- Ensure daily personal hygiene, wash the genital area with warm water and unperfumed liquid soap (see key additional guidance column)
- If the person is feeling unwell check for symptoms of a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)
- Check if the catheter and closed drainage system are draining adequately
- Check if catheter bag needs emptying. Empty when 2/3 full

Key Additional Guidance Daily Personal Hygiene
Male: gently retract foreskin, wash with warm water and unperfumed liquid soap, dry gently and replace foreskin if present and possible.
Female: wash the genital area from front to back with warm water and unperfumed liquid soap, dry area.

Procedure For Emptying Leg Bag
- Carry out hand hygiene, apply apron and gloves
- Remove straps/sleeve from leg drainage bag if necessary
- Open outlet taps on the bag over the toilet or into a person specific jug, allow the urine to drain
- After emptying the bag, close the tap, wipe outlet with a clean tissue or toilet paper, dispose of this in the toilet or disposal bag
- Reapply straps/sleeve etc
- Remove apron and gloves and dispose
- Carry out hand hygiene
- Record urine volumes if required
- Maintain dignity at all times

Urinary Output Assessment
Check the urine output volume and colour
100mls/hour = OK
50-90 mls/hour = Low
30mls/hour = Very low

Low Fluid Volume in the Bag – Check if the Catheter is Bypassing or Blocking
- Check for kinks and straighten them out
- Check the bowels have moved and exclude constipation
- Review oral intake

Consider Dehydration
1. Urine that smells foul or unusually strong, if yes follow point 3 and 4
2. Urine that is thick, cloudy or tinged with blood, if yes follow point 3 and 4
3. Commence a urine frequency/volume chart and monitor output
4. Encourage fluid intake of 1.5-2 litres per day or as directed

Does the person show signs and symptoms of having a UTI?
- Person feels unwell
- Fever
- New central lower back pain
- New confusion or more agitated
- Pain in or around the area where the catheter is inserted and/or any pus like discharge in the urine
- Change in normal behaviour

Contact the person in charge or your line manager for advice, action or treatment