Appendix K: Patient Education Material – Example

Name: __________________________

Learning about...

Going home with your PICC

Information about your PICC for your community nurse:
Your PICC was put in by _________________________ on _______________ 

doctor or nurse  date

At:
- McMaster University Medical Centre
- Hamilton General Hospital
- Henderson General Hospital
- St. Joseph’s Healthcare

If you have problems with you PICC, call _________________________________

Brand name of PICC _________________________________

Size or gauge of the PICC _________________________________

- Valved
- Non-valved
- Single Lumen
- Double Lumen

Distal tip location:  
- SVC
- Right Atrium Junction
- Right Atrium

Trimmed:  
- Yes
- No

Length of internal catheter __________________________ cm

Length of external catheter __________________________ cm

Comments: ____________________________________________________________________________________

The above information was completed by _________________________________________________________

Nurse

On ___________________________ Date ____________________________

unit or ward
Nursing Best Practice Guideline

You are going home with a PICC. PICC stands for Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter. The catheter is a long thin tube and may stay in your arm for several weeks or months. Your PICC may be used to give you fluids, medications, nutrition, blood products and/or to take blood samples for testing.

Your PICC will need routine care, such as dressing changes and flushing. Your community nurse will discuss this with you.

**When you first get your PICC**

When you first get home, it is normal for the area around your PICC to be sore. This can last a few days. It may bleed or ooze a little. When the community nurse comes to your home, he or she will change the dressing and check the area around your PICC. Please let the nurse know your concerns. Your nurse's first visit is about 12 to 24 hours after you get home.

**Warm compress**

On the arm where the PICC is, place a warm and moist compress. A compress can be a folded washcloth, small towel or a warm pack. Wet the washcloth, ring out the excess water, wrap in plastic and then place over the PICC. Do this when you get home and for the next 3 days. Do this 4 times a day for 10 minutes.

**Before your nurse visits**

Try not to move the area too much as you do your normal activities. Move your arm as you feel comfortable. You can shower or bathe, but keep the area dry. Wrapping the PICC in plastic wrap is a way to keep it dry. Your PICC should always be covered with at dressing. This helps to keep it free of germs.

**When you have a PICC do not:**

- Lift heavy objects (such as a 10 pound sack of potatoes) with the PICC arm
- Use scissors near the PICC
- Swim with the PICC
- Play contact sports
- Shovel or garden with the PICC arm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>What to do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The dressing is soaked with blood</td>
<td>Do not remove the dressing. Apply pressure with another dressing or clean cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call the community Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you bleed a lot or the bleeding does not stop – go to Emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dressing is soaked with clear fluid</td>
<td>Cover with a clean dressing or cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call the community nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The area around your PICC gets more puffy and swollen</td>
<td>Call the community nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PICC breaks or falls out</td>
<td>Cover with a clean dressing or cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call the community nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular or strange heart beat</td>
<td>Call the community nurse or go to Emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have trouble breathing</td>
<td>Call 911 or go to Emergency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supplies
Before leaving the hospital you may be given a few supplies. More supplies will be sent to your home in a big box. In the box there may be a bag with medications. Check the label on the bag to see if the medications need to go into the fridge. There are supplies in the box for dressings, medications and taking care of the PICC. When you are ready, your nurse will help you learn about these.

Keep your supply box in a clean dry safe place and away from children or pets.

Your supplies are provided by the CCAC. Talk with your nurse about making sure that you have the right supplies. If you run out of supplies – call your community nurse.

You will need to have these other supplies:
- Liquid soap in a pump, or bottle of waterless soap
- Garbage bag
- Paper towels
- Clean towel

Living with your PICC
Your PICC should always be covered. Do not have your blood pressure taken, blood work taken or IV’s started with the PICC arm. When you return to your normal routine such as household chores, cooking, work or sexual activity, you can use your arm as you feel comfortable. Do not overuse your arm with the PICC. (Please review the section on the bottom of page 79.)

Your PICC needs special care to keep it clean and working well. This care may be done by you, a family member, a friend or a nurse. Your nurse will help you learn about the care of your PICC.

When you have a PICC, it is a good idea to:
- Have your emergency telephone numbers close by
- Have your community nurse telephone number close by
- Keep a list of your questions, problems, notes in a book or diary
- Keep a calendar for clinic appointments and follow-up appointments with your community nurse

Setting up your home
You will need a work area or space to lay out the supplies. When choosing the best place to do your PICC care, keep these things in mind:
- Good lighting
- A room that is easy to keep clean and free of dust
- A comfortable spot in the room to sit or lie down
- A safe area away from children and pets
- A place free of drafts away from open windows, heating ducts and fans

When your community nurse comes or when you do your PICC care:
- Set aside 20 to 45 minutes
- Limit distractions: such as not answering your phone
- Try to do it the same time each day: tell your friends and family this time so they do not bother you
- Clean your work area before and after the PICC care