

Dignity Newsletter

Adults, Wellbeing and Health

August Edition 2010

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Dignity Newsletter

Dignity Challenge 5

“Listen and support people to express their needs and wants”

The challenge relates to communication, active listening, supporting people to express their needs and preferences. This includes advocacy and supporting people with communication needs and cognitive needs.

Communication:

Good communication is important to ensure that dignity is maintained and is essential to ensure that care provided is person centred. Communication is a two way process. It is how people make friends and express their thoughts and feelings. Communication is a way in which people make choices and have control over their lives, promoting their independence.

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) identifies the importance of interpersonal skills, particularly when communicating with people with specialist needs such as sensory loss or dementia.

Effective communication involves:

- Speaking clearly
- Giving people time to talk
- Being respectful, courteous and patient
- Listening carefully to what the person has to say
- Being aware of the other person's body language
- Finding out how the person prefers to be addressed e.g. Mrs Smith or Elizabeth, Liz or Betty
- Not making assumptions about what a person wants
- Understanding a persons communication needs and providing appropriate support

Further information on communication can be found on the following websites:

www.scie.org.uk
(Social Care Institute for Excellence)
www.alzheimers.org.uk
www.mencap.org.uk
www.rnid.org.uk
(Royal National Institute for Deaf People)
www.rnib.org.uk
(Supporting blind & partially sighted people)

Communicating with people who have dementia

A person who has dementia may not always find the right words for objects or may forget the names of family and friends. They may eventually have very limited communication through language. Non verbal communication is important for people who have dementia. Communication can be through gestures, facial expressions and touch.

The Alzheimer's Society advise that when communicating with someone with dementia it is important to encourage the person to communicate in the way that works best for them and to pay attention to body language. Important to communicating with someone with dementia is: attracting the person's attention; listening skills; use of body language; speaking clearly; showing respect and considering how things appear in the reality of the person. Further details about communicating with a person with dementia is available from the Alzheimer's Society:

www.alzheimers.org.uk.

Telephone: 0845 300 0336

Communicating with people with sensory support needs

Durham County Council have a Sensory Support Team who can provide help to people living in County Durham who have:

- Visual loss
- Hearing loss
- Dual sensory loss (both visual and hearing).

The Sensory Support Team provides short term therapeutic intervention training and social work support. The team have a range of specialist communication skills including British sign language and deafblind manual and may offer independent mobility training, communication training, Braille and Moon tactile communication, daily living skills help with safety in the kitchen and support with education and employment.

It is estimated that 1 in 7 people have a degree of hearing loss (RNID) and based on projections from national statistics people in County Durham who have sight sufficiently impaired to require services or support may be in the range of 8,000 to 10,000 people. The occurrence of sight loss in people who have a learning disability can be 1 in 3 people (Durham Sight Loss survey Partnership 'Taking a Blind bit of Notice' November 2008).

Evidence suggests choices in lifestyle, diet, smoking and the affects of diabetes and stroke and an ageing population have seen an increase in incidence of sensory conditions requiring professional support.

Listening and supporting people to express their needs and wants requires additional skills from a variety of sources. Effective communication with service users and their families needs time, patience. Equipment can be provided to assist people with a sensory impairment to fully participate in the social work / care co-ordination assessment process, for example synthesised speech software, portable amplifiers or loop systems can be used to make communication easier.

Attention to appropriate lighting, soft-flooring, clear speech and the reduction of background noises are simple steps which you need to consider allowing information to flow between both parties. Issues can be clarified by writing them down and enabling the person to have the opportunity to respond. If the person has sight problems beyond the help of spectacles or magnifiers, a black felt pen, and increased size of print are simple yet effective tools.

The use of additional resources may also be required. Independent advocacy services are currently commissioned by Durham County Council to enable adults with a sensory loss to access local services and health related support. The use of qualified British Sign Language Interpreters and lip speakers are also commissioned.

For more information on sensory support in County Durham see www.durham.gov.uk

Advocacy

“Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interest and obtain services they need. Advocates and advocacy schemes work in partnership with the people they support and take their side. Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice”.

Action for Advocacy - The Advocacy Charter

Types of Advocacy

Self Advocacy:

individual people or groups of people making their own decisions and expressing them effectively.

Citizen Advocacy:

an independent advocate who develops an understanding of the partner's views and needs to help the person achieve their goals.

Representational Advocacy:

a short term provision, in response to an identified problem, event or change in someone's life, providing advise, representation and negotiation.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA):

The role of the IMCA is to support and represent a person who lacks capacity under the Mental Capacity Act (2005) when major decisions are to be made, and the person does not have close relatives or friends who could provide this assistance.

Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA):

Independent Mental Health Advocate's refer to statutory mental health advocates under the Mental Health Act (1983).

Real Life : Real Choices

Real Life : Real Choices provide independent advocacy services for people aged 18 and over who have a learning disability and live in County Durham. The service began in 2003 and currently has one full-time and two part-time staff. The advocacy service is provided free of charge to the client and people can self refer or can be referred by a third party. The advocacy service provides independent support for people at various stages in their lives. The advocate represents the views of the individual.

Real Life : Real Choices provide advocacy representation for:

- Representing the person, their views and goals.
- Supporting people with their rights.
- Support to make changes, and during times of change.

- Moving home e.g. from living with parents to supported housing.
- Attending meetings e.g. care reviews.
- Support during legal proceedings.

Real life : Real Choices also have the following projects:

Supported Volunteering Project - crafts themed events and coffee events.

KK2 is a team of volunteers supported by Real Life Real Choices.

KK2 – hosts regular programmed social events throughout the county. KK2 promote the Stay Up Late Campaign for adults who have learning disabilities. The campaign promotes adults who have learning disabilities to stay up late.

Real Life : Real Choices also hold workshops and training events.

**Real Life : Real Choices, Advocacy Service,
Front Street, Community Centre, Nettleworth.
Tel: 0191 371 3396 / 07989587961**



Safeguarding and person centred care

Adult safeguarding investigations in County Durham have identified the need for effective communication and good person centred care planning to protect people using social care services.

Care plans and support plans need to be up to date, accurate and informative. Safeguarding investigations often identify a lack of person centred approaches in daily recording and care plans by providers of services.

Focusing on the individual person, their past, present and future enables assessments and care planning to be person centred. Life story work can enable a good picture of the person to be identified, providing a foundation for person centred care. Services found to provide high standards of care generally contain these key elements of person centred approaches in care plans and associated documentation.

Dignity – Tim Dredge

Social Work Lead, Learning Disabilities, Adults Wellbeing and Health

'For me, dignity is about seeing the individual person and how they can be supported and enabled within the environment in which they live in or choose to live. It is about respecting the person's views, their way of life and to help them to achieve a quality of life that promotes their rights and their worth.

Good social work practice is about promoting dignity in all the work we do. The principles behind the dignity campaign are enshrined in the values and ethics of the social work profession.

Our skills as social workers can go a long way to delivering on the dignity campaign.

Dignity 

If there is anything you would like to see in future editions please contact:

Dawn Richardson

Practice Development Officer,
Safeguarding and Practice Development Team,
dawn.richardson@durham.gov.uk
Tel: 0191 3835214

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

العربية (Arabic) (中文 (繁體字)) (Chinese) اردو (Urdu)
polski (Polish) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi) Español (Spanish)
বাংলা (Bengali) हिन्दी (Hindi) Deutsch (German)
Français (French) Türkçe (Turkish) Melayu (Malay)

altformat.awh@durham.gov.uk

(0191) 370 8838



Braille



Audio



Large Print