

Introduction

This unit is about communicating with individuals using appropriate methods for the situation and individuals you are working with. It involves your communication with all the people you work with: individuals, colleagues and visitors, and includes keeping and accessing records.

This unit covers the knowledge needed for the following:

- Unit SHC21 Introduction to communication in health and social care settings (F/601/5465) (Level 2 Diploma in health and social care)
- Principles of communication in adult social care settings (L/602/2905) (Level 2 Certificate in preparing to work in adult social care settings)

Aims

When you have worked through this unit you will:

- Understand why communication is important in the work setting.
- Know how to meet the communication and language needs, wishes and preferences of individuals.
- Know how to reduce barriers to communication.
- Know how to apply principles and practices relating to confidentiality at work.

Content

This unit contains four sections:

Section 1: The importance of communication in health and social care

Section 2: Meeting the communication needs of individuals

Section 3: Reducing barriers to communication

Section 4: Confidentiality and sharing information



Assessment

There are different versions of the assessment depending on which qualification you are taking. Your tutor will make sure that you have the correct version.

By completing the tasks in the assessment for this unit you will be able to provide evidence that you have learned the knowledge required for the unit and can use that knowledge in your work. You should complete the assessment questions at the end of each unit and submit it to your tutor who will give you detailed written feedback.

Terminology

Different settings use different terms to identify the individuals receiving health and social care services. Throughout this programme, the terms 'individual' or 'individuals' will be used to refer to clients, service users, residents and patients.



The importance of communication in health and social care

This section is about the different reasons for communication in health and social care and why it is important.

You will look at two main areas:

- **Communication and health and social care**
- **Effective communication in health and social care**

Communication and health and social care

Communication is important in any situation, but in particular within health and social care, where you will communicate with a variety of people in different situations and be expected to develop effective communication skills in order to do this.

As a care worker, you are often the person who has most contact with individuals. You need information about them so that communication is effective, and you also have a duty to pass this information on to relevant people. There could be times when it comes to your attention that an individual's needs have changed or that their personal preferences are not being respected. This type of information, as with any that affects care delivery, should be given to the key worker or senior care worker, so that the care plan can be reviewed and updated.



Activity 1

Identify five reasons why communication is so important in a health and social care setting.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Communication is especially important in a health and social care setting for many reasons. For example:

- People using health and social care services often feel, and are, **vulnerable**.
- Information about individuals is **personal and sensitive**.
- People may have **different communication needs**; they could have a hearing or visual impairment, for example.
- **Teamwork** – all staff need to communicate with each other in order to work safely.
- Communication is needed for **working relationships**.
- It's the way people can express their **choices and opinions**.
- There are **legal requirements** for making and keeping records.

In your work role, you need to be able to understand other people and make yourself understood. Some situations can be challenging, for example responding in an emergency or when someone is upset. This is when it is especially important for you to use effective skills when communicating.



Activity 2

Think about the last time you used a service where you might have felt vulnerable. Perhaps you went to see your general practitioner (GP) or had a hospital appointment. Answer the following questions.

a) What were your feelings?

b) Who was the first member of staff you saw?

c) What were the good points about the way staff communicated with you?

d) What were the bad points about the way staff communicated with you?

You will see that you can learn a lot from your own experiences, whether these are personal or work-related. It is important to apply this to the way you work. If someone communicates with you and makes you feel at ease, how did they do this? Perhaps they smiled, gave you eye contact and addressed you by your name. But if you have had a bad experience, what was it about the way people communicated with you that caused it?

As you progress, you will look in more detail about how to develop your communication skills, but it is always a good start to think about how the other person might be feeling.

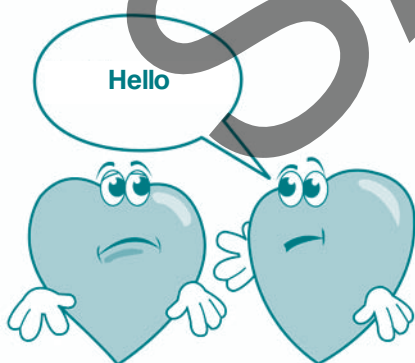
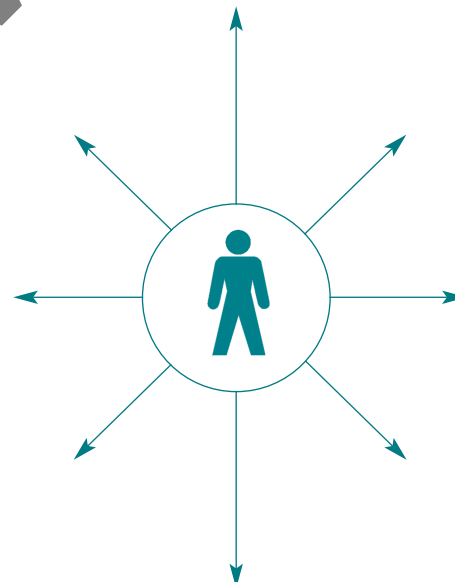
Why people need to communicate

People need to communicate for a range of reasons in different situations in a health and social care setting.



Activity 3

Complete the spidergram to show different reasons why people might need to communicate.



Now compare your ideas with the list on the following page.

Communication can be used in many ways, for example:

- Sharing information.
- Expressing or sharing feelings.
- Enjoying companionship and friendship.
- Expressing needs and making choices.
- Developing relationships.
- Giving support, comfort and reassurance.
- Expressing ideas and opinions.
- Establishing trust.
- Expressing our individuality.
- Demonstrating that we value other people.
- Reporting and recording work activities.

In order to communicate effectively, you have to take into account who you are communicating with, for example an individual receiving care or a work colleague. You also have to think about the situation, for example whether it is formal or informal.

Key point

Being able to 'put yourself in someone else's shoes' is called empathy, and is essential for effective communication.

Effective communication in health and social care

The way you develop working relationships with others depends on your attitude and behaviour towards them.

People you communicate with

The people you communicate with in your work role may come from inside or outside the setting, and include people who use the services and their supporters.

**Activity 4**

Think of the different people you interact with in your working day and list them below.

SAMPLE

Your answers will depend on the work role you have chosen but your list might look similar to this:

- individuals receiving care
- colleagues
- social workers
- domestic staff
- reception staff
- administrative staff
- therapists (physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, etc)
- religious ministers/spiritual leaders
- supporters
- pharmacists
- catering staff
- visitors
- GPs
- maintenance staff
- nurses (community psychiatric nurses, district nurses, therapeutic nurses)

You may have identified other people who are not on this list, but it is likely you communicate with a wide range of people in your work.

How communication affects your work role

If you are going to relate to other people in different situations, you need to be able to communicate effectively with them. Being part of a successful team means that all members should feel able to communicate openly and honestly with each other. They should be open about their feelings, ideas, problems and achievements. This includes being able to admit to making a mistake or sharing a problem and asking others for advice and guidance. It means being able to accept feedback from other people, and most of all listening to and respecting others.

Forms of communication

Now you have looked at the different people you communicate with, think about the forms of communication you could use for different aspects of your job role.



Activity 5

Which forms of communication do you use in your job role? Make a list in the space below.

LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE IN PREPARING TO WORK IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE

This assessment is designed to meet the assessment criteria for Principles of communication in adult social care settings (L/602/2905).

Unit 1 assessment: Principles of communication in adult social care settings

After completing your assessment please return it to your assessor

ADVICE TO ALL CANDIDATES

- Please complete your personal details and candidate statement below.
- Complete all questions in this assessment.
- Write your answers in the spaces provided. Add any additional work for any of the questions on plain paper and attach to this assessment.
- You do not need to return your completed activities in the unit – just this assessment.
- If you require any assistance or guidance please contact your assessor.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name _____

Contact address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone no. (evening) _____ (day) _____

Email (home) _____ (work) _____

CANDIDATE STATEMENT

I certify that I have read Unit 1 and completed all sections in this assessment.

I confirm that this is my own work.

Signature _____ Date _____

For office use only

Candidate ref: _____

Assessor: _____

IV: _____

Passed

Date _____

Re-submit

Date _____

Assessor feedback:

Written

Telephone

Personal tutorial

SAMPLE

Unit 1: Principles of communication in adult social care settings

(The reference in brackets at the end of each question refers to the assessment criteria and is for your assessor's use.)

1. Identify different reasons why people communicate. (1.1)

2. Explain how communication affects different aspects of adult social care in relation to: (1.2)

a) Working with individuals

b) Working with colleagues

SAMPLE

2. *continued*

c) Keeping records

3. When you communicate with another person, it is important to observe their reaction to what is being said. Explain why this is important. (1.3)

SAMPLE