

## **Module 1: The values, roles and responsibilities required of the care worker**

### **Module learning outcomes**

This module is intended to be an introduction to the knowledge and understanding you will require to effectively support individuals in your care setting, when carrying out the necessary care skills. Further study is required (e.g. Health and Social Care Level 2 NVQ) to develop your knowledge, understanding and practice.

#### **On completion of this module, the learner will be able to:**

- Explain and demonstrate how to maintain a client's independence and identity
- Understand how to support equality and diversity and the need to challenge discrimination
- Understand your responsibilities in relation to the GSCC Code of Practice for Social Care Workers
- Describe your role and the role of others within and outside your care organisation
- Describe rights and choices and ensure these are fostered, supported and promoted at all times
- Describe your responsibilities in relation to emergency first aid
- Define the meaning of risk assessment and explain ways risk assessment is used in your care setting
- Describe how fire safety is promoted in your workplace
- Understand and show how you ensure the security of yourself and others in the workplace
- Recognise and respond to abuse and neglect
- Describe your responsibilities to develop as a worker and the workplace provision for this to take place

### **Introduction to values, roles and responsibilities**

In this unit we will look at the values, roles and responsibilities required of you, the care worker. We will also explore how these relate to the individuals in your care.

#### **Valuing and respecting individuals**

##### **Maintaining individuality**

It is the right of each person to be treated as an individual. This will make them feel valued and respected. You, as a care worker, can achieve this by the way you treat your clients.

- Always find out the name they prefer to be called. Do not assume everybody prefers first name terms, or endearments such as 'gran' (this may be seen as belittling to the individual)
- Talk with and listen to clients, key people and others to assess needs, wishes and preferences
- Find out about the clients daily routine, their family and friends, hobbies and interests
- Plan care holistically
- Be polite, helpful and show empathy
- Ensure individuals have contact with family and friends
- Encourage personal items, e.g. photographs, furnishings, ornaments etc.
- Do not clothe clients in items that belong to the care establishments
- Encourage the wearing of day clothes
- Give choices and uphold rights

### **Partnership**

All care should be planned, carried out and evaluated in partnership with the care team, the individual, their family and other key people.

### **Independence**

The independence of each individual should be maintained. This will ensure that they continue to do what they are able for themselves, make their own decisions and maintain their self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities. Self-management should be encouraged (not forced) and assistance offered where this is necessary, or is requested by the individual.

### **Privacy and dignity**

The Human Rights Act and the Care Standards Act state that a person has the right to privacy, dignity and respect.

Care workers can show respect and preserve dignity by always supporting clients' choices and upholding their rights, being polite and helpful. An abrupt, impatient or intolerant attitude will humiliate and dehumanise the individual and should be considered abusive. Care settings where care practices are institutionalised, do not maintain dignity, privacy or show respect.

### **Rights**

A right is something you are entitled to receive. Rights and choices are a vital part of good practice. You, as a care worker, should be aware of clients' rights and choices and ensure these are supported and promoted at all times. Following the introduction of the Care Standards Act 2000, organisations have had to revise and overhaul policies and procedures. Speak to your manager if you are unsure or need further information.

## Legal rights

Legal rights exist to ensure that every client living in any care establishment has the same protection from the law as anyone else

## Moral rights

These are more general and include:

- The right to complain
- The right to protest
- The right to hold your own values and beliefs
- Freedom of self-expression
- Freedom of speech

## The right to choose

We all expect that we have a right to choose. It makes us feel in control of our lives. Being cared for does not alter this right.

### Activity 1 relates to the above

## Equality, diversity and care

Diversity – ‘variety, differences’

All people must be treated with respect and receive the equal rights to which they are entitled. Recognising and respecting the diversity of people is vital. It is unfair to discriminate or form prejudices against someone because they are different from our idea of ‘normal’.

It is essential that care workers behave in a way which clearly demonstrates that they accept the diversity of people and are not passing judgement. People have a right to express and communicate their beliefs and views. We are all diverse individuals, with differing personalities, skills, interests and talents and the benefits of this diversity to individuals and society as a whole, must be acknowledged.

Remember – ‘*different is different*’ not ‘*different is wrong*’.

It is vital that you as a care worker recognise that you have a ‘duty of care’ to all clients, regardless of their race, sex, religious background and apparent lifestyle choices. The service you provide should be delivered equally and inclusively.

Specific plans should be developed within the workplace to deal with any behaviour which affects how well you can work with different individuals and groups.

## **Discrimination: meaning and effect**

To discriminate means 'the unfair treatment of a person, racial group or minority'.

Discrimination must always be challenged when it occurs. This can be difficult, especially if you are the only one making the challenge. Educating and informing others who are discriminating against people is vital, as is sending a clear message that discrimination is unacceptable, and, in many cases, illegal, and will not be tolerated.

Report any incidents to your manager and make a clear, accurate and legible record. You may need the support of your manager and senior colleagues to challenge individuals in an effective manner.

### **Activity 2 relates to the above**

## **Confidential information**

Confidential: 'to be kept secret; not to be disclosed'.

As a health care worker you are in an extremely privileged position, as, during the course of your work, you will receive some very personal or highly sensitive information about people. Whether to share this and who with can be quite difficult at times, so it is important that you know what confidentiality means, and understand how it affects your practice.

Your contract of employment means you have a responsibility to your employer and clients to maintain confidentiality. If you disclose confidential information you may find yourself subject to disciplinary action.

## **Sharing information**

You must always seek advice before deciding whether to share information. Confidential information can be disclosed to an appropriate health care professional, if it is relevant to the care of that client. It is justified on the basis that the client may suffer if that information is withheld, e.g. not passing on the fact that a client has an understanding difficulty may result in client's needs not being identified.

You have a duty of care to protect vulnerable clients from abuse. If a client reveals that they are being abused you must reveal this to your manager to protect your client.

If a client indicates that their health and social wellbeing is at risk, or that they are suffering symptoms which may be signs of ill-health (mental or physical), which are in the plan of care and need to be acted upon, you must report and record this. Information which directly affects the care organisation and its

effectiveness must be reported. Clients must be told that the information cannot be kept secret, must be reported and why.

### Activity 3 relates to the above

#### Person centred approach

The term 'person centred' means a care approach to the individual that revolves around, that is, 'centres' on the individual. All care is planned, carried out and evaluated with the needs and preferences of the individual as central to everything you do. The person's needs and preferences cannot be fully met if care is not person centred.

#### Taking a history

A person centred approach can only be applied if you, as a care worker, truly 'know' the person. This is why the importance of finding out the history, needs, wishes and preferences of people you support cannot be overstated.

#### Using an individual's care plan

All care workers should have access to, and know how to use, the individual's care plan, which should be accurate, legible, complete and up to date. Depending on your role, you may be responsible for making entries into individuals care plans, be involved in recording assessments, writing or reviewing and evaluating care plans. Whatever your role, you should be reading and following the instructions in the individual's plan of care before each care activity. Additionally, the individual should be fully aware of the contents of their care plan and be involved in planning, implementation and review, in order to support the individual's choices.

### Activity 4 relates to the above

#### Health and safety

##### Risk assessment

A risk assessment may be defined as an identification of the hazards present and an 'assessment' of the extent of the risk involved, taking into account whatever precautions are already in place. For instance, a sharp knife left in a washing up bowl is a **hazard**, receiving a cut from putting your hand in is the **risk**, a **control measure** is not to leave sharp knives in he bowl. Where five or more persons are employed, that assessment must be written down.

The government is responsible for developing laws that require all employers to ensure the health, safety and security of their employees and visitors in the workplace. Different workplaces and individual employees are affected by

different risks so the government introduced the Health and Safety in the Workplace Act 1974 (HASWA). This requires employers to review legislation e.g. Moving and Handling Regulations, Food Hygiene Regulations and then provide the employees with a written Health & Safety Policy and procedures for completing work activities in a safe manner.

**Activity 5 relates to the above**

Other pieces of legislation came into being in subsequent years, the main ones being:

**The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) (2003)**

**Environmental Protection Act (1990)**

**Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (1981)**

**Food Hygiene Act (1995)**

**RIDDOR** – The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (1995).

**Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992)**

These regulations concern the moving of objects within the activities carried out at work. This includes any type of physical movement such as:

- Pulling
- Lowering
- Pushing
- Lifting

The employer is expected to avoid the need for manual lifting, wherever this is possible. A risk assessment should be carried out, efforts made to minimise the risk of injury and the need for equipment identified. All care staff should be fully trained to move and handle and use equipment safely. This will reduce the risk of injury to staff and clients. You must not use moving and handling equipment unless you are trained to do so.

**Fire action**

It is vital that you are familiar with policies and procedures so you know what to do if a fire occurs. To respond in case of fire, close the door of the affected room to delay the progress of the smoke throughout the building as more people die or are affected smoke inhalation than burns. Sound the fire alarm and then follow the procedures in your workplace, which should include available escape route, warning systems, and availability of means to fight fires. (Only fight the fire it is safe to do so).

In the event of a fire, your premises should have an evacuation procedure. This will be displayed at various points around the building on clearly visible notices. Make sure you are aware of what to do and best escape routes available.

A fire drill should be held periodically to alert staff to this procedure.

### **Actions in an emergency**

It is very important that you know what to do in response to an emergency, accident or illness.

This programme does not provide detailed aspects of emergency first aid. It is vital that you undertake emergency first aid training, so that, not only, do you understand basic first aid techniques, but what you should **not** do in relation to emergency first aid and dealing with accidents and incidents.

### **Activity 6 relates to the above**

### **Prevention of infection**

This can be done in a number of ways:

- Hand washing should take place before and after any client contact, after using the toilet and before handling food
- Wear gloves and apron and any other recommended Personal protective Equipment (PPE). Use only once and change between clients
- Dispose of contaminated waste properly. This should be disposed of in bags and bins used for this purpose and collected by approved companies for disposal
- Contaminated clothing and linen should be placed in appropriate bags
- Contaminated clothing and linen should be boil washed separately. This is often done after linen is placed into coloured bags that dissolve in hot water. This protects the care worker and laundry worker from handling contaminated linen
- Waste containers should be returned to and stored in the appropriate area
- The client should be assisted to wash him/herself following use of the toilet or incidents of incontinence
- The environment should be restored to clean conditions at all times
- Spillages should be cleansed with appropriate materials. There will be a policy and procedure set down by your organisation. You must make sure you are aware of this. Any spillage must be reported immediately and a warning sign put in place. Dispose of the container and contents immediately and appropriately
- Keep all working areas clear and clean. Have a cleaning routine.

## **Care worker health and hygiene**

You, as a care worker, have a responsibility to those you have contact with, to ensure that your health and hygiene do not pose a threat. Looking after your own health and hygiene is vital:

- Keep fit by taking regular exercise
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat a healthy diet
- Seek advice if you are unwell
- Maintain high levels of personal hygiene
- Wash and change your clothing daily
- Control stress levels and maintain mental health
- Have regular health checks (blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol levels)
- Ensure vaccinations are up to date
- Seek advice and treatment for illness
- Always wash your hands thoroughly before and after client contact, after using the toilet and handling contaminated waste and before handling or serving food.

You, as a care worker will be handling and disposing of waste contaminated with bodily fluids during the course of your work. It is important that you protect yourself, your clients and colleagues from transmitting infection this way.

Care workers who have pain or injury to the back and joints, infection, are pregnant or overweight must seek the advice of their manager, as their health and safety and that of others may be affected. Advice and treatment must always be sought if other health problems or illnesses occur that may affect your well-being and ability to do your job.

Frail, ill individuals are particularly vulnerable to infections transmitted by poor hygiene and contagious diseases. Colleagues and others may also transmit infections following exposure to a care worker's poor health and hygiene.

## **Security**

The client should be able to lock their door, but should understand that monitoring has to take place, and access has to be possible in an emergency.

## **Whereabouts of individuals**

It is important to know the whereabouts of all those on the premises. This will protect from abuse, ensure that staff are able to access colleagues especially

in an emergency, and protect all those in the event of a fire. You must ensure that the appropriate people know where you are at all times.

### **Property and premises**

Property should be protected. All valuables and monies should be held in a secure place, and access limited. Records should be kept of clients' finances and property. Access to certain areas should be restricted, e.g. there is no reason why a clients' visitor should wander in and out of other clients' rooms, or into 'staff only' areas. The security of the client's room should be assured, especially for clients occupying ground floor rooms, which may be more accessible from outside. Ensure that your workplace is secure, especially at night.

### **Visitors**

Always ask unidentified visitors for identification, before they enter the premises. This should be done in a polite manner. Check, also, the purpose of their visit:

- Professional – Doctor etc.
- Social – friend or relative

Obtain the advice of your manager if you are unsure; do not admit the person until you have been advised.

Abuse must be prevented. The risk can be reduced by not allowing unidentified people onto the premises. Those who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or other substances may create problems, and present a health and safety risk. If in doubt, take advice from your manager.

### **Activity 7 relates to the above**

### **Health care procedures**

It is essential that you understand your organisation's policies and procedures with regard to health care procedures and administration of medication, so that you can safely apply these to your care practice. You must know which procedures are within your care worker role and what your responsibilities are. It is equally important that you know what you are not allowed to do in relation to health procedures and administration of medication. For example, you must not administer medication until you have been trained to do so.

### **Recognising and responding to abuse and neglect**

It is important that you are aware of the legislation, policies and procedures in relation to abuse and neglect. A very important aspect of your role is the protection of those you care for. This will include the prevention of abuse and neglect and an understanding of your role and responsibilities with regard to recognising and reporting suspicions of abuse and neglect.

You should know what constitutes abuse and abusive practices.

## **Types of abuse**

### *Physical*

- Starvation
- Burning and scalding
- Hitting, slapping, pinching, biting
- Excessive cold or heat
- Torture
- Over sedation

*Sexual* (Unlawful bodily contact of a sexual nature)

*Racial abuse* (abuse directed at individuals due to prejudice with regard to race)

*Emotional abuse* (Verbal aggression, intimidation and humiliating behaviour which may be seen to be unreasonable)

*Material abuse* (the unauthorised extraction of money or goods)

*Self abuse* (inflicting pain or harm on oneself).

## **Self abuse/neglect**

It must not be forgotten that clients may abuse or neglect themselves. This may either be through:

- Choice – although this may be difficult to understand, some people may choose to neglect themselves. This can take many forms and may include neglecting one's personal hygiene, health or social well-being
- Vulnerability – many individuals are unable to care for themselves fully, due to their own vulnerability and may self-neglect because they have no choice. Their vulnerability may be due to a variety of facts including:
  - Age e.g. the very young
  - Fragility, illness and disability, affecting the person's ability to attend to their own needs
  - Mental health issues may affect motivation, the ability to make choices, coping mechanisms and the person's grasp of reality
  - Deprivation resulting from financial and social issues/problems.

It is extremely important that you undertake training and education supported by your colleagues and care organisation in order that those you care for, yourself, your colleagues and others can be protected from abuse and neglect. Care should be taken when administering medication to reduce the risk of clients stock piling medication. Evidence of self-harm, such as self-mutilation, should be acted on immediately.

**Activity 8 relates to the above****The role of the care worker****Roles and responsibilities**

A role is a collection of related activities that is undertaken by an individual. It is accompanied by an organised set of expected behaviours.

Roles in health and social care are shaped by organisation requirements and users' needs and expectations, and it is these that are used to create a specific job description.

To fully explore your role within the care team it is important that you have a good understanding of the job you are expected to carry out, the standards you must achieve and who you are responsible to. Your job description should describe all aspects of your job role, in detail. It is essential that you are very clear about exactly what is expected of you and know when your responsibilities begin and end.

**Roles of others**

It is also important that you understand the role of others who provide care and services to the client. Others will include care professionals from within and outside your care organisation and unpaid care workers. You should spend time listening and talking to others whose role differs from yours.

**Limits of the care worker relationship**

You must understand the limits of your relationship with the clients you support. A professional, supportive relationship with good communication and mutual respect is essential so all care needs can be met. A dependant, emotional or sexual relationship would be totally inappropriate and would be considered abusive.

**Develop as a care worker**

General Social Care Council (GSCC) Code of Practice for Care Workers  
The GSCC code is a list of statements that describe the standards of proper conduct and practice required of social care workers as they go about their daily work. This code, set at national level reflects good practice and lets social care workers know what is expected of them.

Social care workers have a responsibility to ensure they meet the standards in their work, and contribute to protection of individuals they support by employing the safe effective practice. In relation to your own training and development, the code states that social care workers must:

*“Be accountable for the quality of their work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge skills”.*

This means that's someone can judge your practice for competency and you have the responsibility to keep your skills and knowledge up to date and ensure your work is of the appropriate standard.

To achieve this, you need to ensure you work to legislation, policy and procedures for all aspects of your work. You are responsible for taking up opportunities for education and training, in order to increase and enhance skills and knowledge as identified in your job description.

### **Legal aspects**

You have a responsibility to keep your practice up to date and access education. However, this does not exclude your manager from their legal responsibilities. The Care Standards Act (2000) requires all managers to ensure that training is provided to care workers, covering a number of aspects of care practice intended to develop work related skills and practice.

**Activity 9 relates to the above**

### **Employer's responsibilities for knowledge and skills development**

Under the Code of Practice, employers have a role and responsibility in relation to staff training and development. They must provide opportunities for staff to develop skills and knowledge, including organisational and vocational procedures and standards.

Initially you will have received an induction to the ways of working of the organisation, and introduce your roles and responsibility. Training should be ongoing for all staff in order to meet the Code criteria for professional development. You must be supported by your employer in continuing development and it is its responsibility to make sure staff feel competent in their role. This can be achieved by a thorough supervision and appraisal procedure, which is a two way process, with full involvement from yourself.

You need to be familiar with requirements that are the responsibility of your employer to promote and ensure safe effective working systems and processes. Employers must make sure that their staff are sufficiently experienced and trained to meet the needs of the individuals requiring care and support.

You should now have a basic understanding of the background knowledge you require to carry out the care skills covered in the following modules, although it must be emphasised that, further, more detailed knowledge and training are recommended.

**Activity 10 relates to the above**