BTEC Level 3 in Health and Social Care

Assignment Brief

Unit 1 | Developing Effective Communication in Health and Social Care

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Introduction

This is a core unit within the programme, recognising the fact that effective communication is central to all work in the health and social care sectors. Professionals within the sectors require good communication and interpersonal skills to perform their roles effectively, work cooperatively with colleagues and build supportive relationships with people using services. It is, therefore, important for all those embarking on a career in the health or social care sectors to gain knowledge, understanding and the skills associated with communication, so that they are able to develop effective interpersonal skills.

Initially, learners will investigate what is meant by effective communication and interpersonal skills and how these may affect the outcomes for people who use services. Learners will consider the factors that influence communication and interactions, analysing theories which may help to explain why there may be difficulties, possible breakdowns in communication and ways to overcome these. The benefits of effective communication for people who use services will be explored.

The unit will give learners opportunities to reflect on their performance, and that of others, consolidating their learning by demonstrating their skills in a one-to-one and a group interaction in a health and social care context.

The knowledge and skills gained from this unit will support achievement in all units within the BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Health and Social Care. There are particular links with Unit 6: Personal and Professional Development in Health and Social Care as a period of work experience provides opportunities for the development and assessment of communication skills.

Introduction

Grading Criteria	
P1	explain the role of effective communication and interpersonal interaction in a health and social care context
P2	discuss theories of communication
P3	explain factors that may influence communication and interpersonal interactions in health and social care environments
P4	explain strategies used in health and social care environments to overcome barriers to effective communication and interpersonal interactions
P5	participate in a one-to-one interaction in a health and social care context
P6	participate in a group interaction in a health and social care context
M1	assess the role of effective communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care with reference to theories of communication
M2	review strategies used in health and social care environments to overcome barriers to effective communication and interpersonal interactions
M3	assess their communication and interpersonal skills in relation to each interaction
D1	evaluate strategies used in health and social care environments to overcome barriers to effective communication and interpersonal interactions
D2	evaluate factors that influenced the effectiveness of each interaction

Learning Outcomes and Criteria Targeted:

Learning outcomes	Grading criteria covered
Learning outcome 1 Understand effective communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care	P1, P2, M1
Learning outcome 2 Understand factors that influence communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care environments	P3, P4
Learning outcome 3 Understand ways to overcome barriers in a health and social care environment	P4, M2, D1
Learning outcome 4 Be able to communicate and interact effectively in a health and social care environment.	P5, P6, M3, D2

Assignment 1 Task		Grading criteria covered
Task 1	Case studies	P1 P2 M1

Assignment 2 Tasks		Grading criteria covered
Task 2	Leaflet	P3

Assignment 3 Tasks		Grading criteria covered
Task 3a	Identifying barriers	P4
Task 3b	Review	M2 D1

Assignment 4 Tasks		Grading criteria covered
Task 4a	Paired discussion	P5
Task 4b	Group debate	P6
Task 4c	Discussion review	M3 D2

Unit Content

1 Understanding effective communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care

Contexts: one-to-one; groups, e.g. formal, informal, between colleagues, between professional and people using services, communication with professionals, multi-agency working, multi-professional working

Communication: forms, e.g. text messaging, written, oral, signing, symbols, touch, music and drama, objects of reference, arts and crafts, technology

Interpersonal interaction: types, e.g. speech, language (first language, dialect, slang, jargon), non-verbal (posture, facial expression, touch, silence, proximity, reflective listening)

Communication and language needs and preferences: the individual's preferred method of communication, e.g. language, British Sign Language, Makaton, Braille, the use of signs, symbols, pictures and writing; objects of reference, finger spelling, communication passports, human and technological aids to communication, variation between cultures.

2 Understanding factors that influence communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care environments

Theories of communication: Argyle's stages of the communication cycle (ideas occur, message coded, message sent, message received, message decoded, message understood); Tuckman's stages of group interaction (forming, storming, norming, performing)

Environment: factors, e.g. setting, noise, seating, lighting, space, time

Barriers: factors, e.g. type of communication (difficult, complex, sensitive), language needs/ preferences, sensory impairment, disability, personality, self-esteem, anxiety, depression, aggression, submissiveness, assumptions, value and belief systems, jargon, cultural variations, use and abuse of power, effects of alcohol/drugs.

3 Understanding ways to overcome barriers in a health and social care environment

Communication and interpersonal interaction: possible strategies, e.g. staff training, assessment of need, using preferred method, promoting rights, confidentiality, defusing aggression, assertiveness, appropriate verbal/non-verbal communication, building relationships, appropriate environment, attitude, confidence

Aids to communication: human (advocates, interpreters, translators, signers, mentors, befrienders), technological aids (hearing aids, text phones, minicom, voice activated software, relay systems, loop systems).

Unit Content

4 Communicating and interacting effectively in a health and social care environment

Contexts: formal; one-to-one; group; with people using services; with professionals/colleagues

Communication skills: verbal and non-verbal, eg listening and responding, tone, pace, language, appropriate environment, proximity, clarifying or repeating, questioning, responding to difficult situations, defusing anger

Effectiveness: group and one-to-one situations, e.g. awareness of needs and preferences, interpersonal skills, attitudes, overcoming barriers, adjusting interactions, assertiveness.

Assignment 1 Tasks

T1

Task 1: Case studies

P1   Explain the role of effective communication and interpersonal interaction in a health and social care context.

P2   Discuss theories of communication

M1   Assess the role of effective communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care with reference to theories of communication.

Scenario: Read each of the following case studies carefully. Thinking about the theories of communication that you have looked at, and the different factors that can affect effective communication, hold a **group discussion** in which you **describe** what you would need to do in each situation to support the communication taking place, and **explain** and **assess** the role of effective communication and interpersonal interaction in each scenario. You should record this discussion and upload it to this page. Alternatively, you can produce a written report recording what was discussed.

Case study 1
Mrs Scott lives in a residential setting and is showing signs of dementia. She is 76 years old. Mrs Scott is becoming confused easily, forgetting her family and friends, and is becoming increasingly frustrated, upset and angry, both with members of staff and her loved ones. You have been asked to be the keyworker for Mrs Scott, and will need to report to both your team leader, and the other members of the team about how best to support this lady.

Case study 2
Mr Jankelavic has recently moved to the area with his family from Lithuania. He speaks limited English, and needs to register both himself and his family with the local GP, but is unsure of what he needs to do.

Case study 3
You are working in a school environment, and you have been asked to work with a young lady who has hearing difficulties. Sarah uses a hearing aid, but also a combination of British Sign Language and lip reading as her main forms of communication, as her hearing is very limited. Sarah's speech can also be difficult to understand.

Consider:
- Why it is important to ensure effective communication is taking place
- What could influence the communication
- How you could adapt your communication style to best support the interaction
- How you could encourage others to adapt their communication to best support the communication taking place
- How effective communication impacts on the services offered.

Give as much detail as possible to show your knowledge and understanding.

Assignment 2 Tasks

T2

Task 2: Leaflet

P3   Explain factors that may influence communication and interpersonal interactions in health and social care environments.

Scenario: Carry out research into the factors that influence communication and interpersonal interactions in health and social care environments. Study the theories of communication, environmental factors, barriers to communication, and the positive and negative factors that influence communication. Produce an information leaflet explaining these factors.

Assignment 3 Tasks

T3a

Task 3a: Identifying barriers

P4   Explain strategies used in health and social care environments to overcome barriers to effective communication and interpersonal interactions

Scenario: Take each of the different types of communication that you have looked at within this unit. For each, identify the barriers that could be encountered, the strategies that could be used to overcome these barriers, and the alternative methods of communication that could be used.

T3b

Task 3b: Review

M2   Review strategies used in health and social care environments to overcome barriers to effective communication and interpersonal interactions

D1   Evaluate strategies used in health and social care environments to overcome barriers to effective communication and interpersonal interactions

Scenario: Review and evaluate strategies used in health and social care environments to overcome barriers to effective communication and interpersonal interactions.

Refer back to the the strategies you explained in Task 3a, and review and evaluate these in your answer. Upload your review and evaluation.

Assignment 4 Tasks

T4a

Task 4a: Paired discussion

P5   Participate in a one-to-one interaction in a health and social care context

Working in pairs, conduct a one-to-one role play that demonstrates your communication skills. One of you will be a service provider, while the other will be a service user. The conversation you hold is to last around five minutes, and can be videoed or sound recorded. Use the skills and techniques that you have looked at so far – for example, body language, questioning, and active listening, to deal with the service providers needs.The evidence of the conversation needs to be recorded. An observation record completed by your tutor that supports the evidence you provide will also need to be uploaded.

T4b

Task 4b: Group debate

P6   Participate in a group interaction in a health and social care context

Take part in a group discussion based on a health and social care issue. Some controversial topics that will get the group communicating could include assisted suicide, abortion, and how living in different areas of the country may mean you have access to life saving medications not available in other areas. The conversation will need to be video recorded so that the group can watch it back. Everyone should be encouraged to take part and contribute to the discussion. Consider both verbal and non-verbal skills.The evidence of the conversation needs to be recorded. Upload your file using the facility below.

T4c

Task 4c: Review

M3   Assess their communication and interpersonal skills in relation to each interaction

D2   Evaluate factors that influenced the effectiveness of each interaction

Consider both verbal and non-verbal skills and how effective these were in both Task 4a and Task 4b. When reviewing your discussions, you will need to record how well the interactions went, how well verbal and non-verbal skills were used, and how effective you were at making your point within the discussion.

Consider:

- What went well?
- What didn't go well?
- What influenced the effectiveness of the interaction?
- What other forms of communication could have been used to support the interaction?

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