

Unit 5 - Awareness of Mental Health, Dementia and Learning Difficulties

Learning Outcomes for this Unit:

The overall focus for this unit is to make sure that learners understand some illnesses they may encounter in their practice and ways they can deal with these issues and therefore better care for the people they are looking after.

Evidence for learning in this unit:

Most evidence here will be demonstrated on the job and witnessed and recorded by assessors and mentors. Learners may also record reflections in a learning journal.

Detailed Guidance for the Delivery of this Unit:

1. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of mental health, dementia and learning difficulties

1.1 I can understand the needs and experiences of people with mental health conditions, dementia or learning difficulties

Learners will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of the people's needs and experiences in their care.

Additional information and guidance

This is a wide range of conditions, and not all learners will have direct experience as it will depend on where they are working within the sector. However, they should at least be aware of some of the main characteristics of people with these conditions so that they are fully aware if they do come across them in their practical activities. Obviously the terms are undefined and the term "mental health" covers a wide range of conditions, but some examples will be enough.

If learners can not gather information about all of these conditions, then one in depth, perhaps the one they are directly working with, for example in a children's care setting, will be enough at this level.

1.2 I can explain how these conditions may influence a person's needs in relation to the care that they may require

Learners will be able to give some examples based on their understanding to reinforce their understanding.

Additional information and guidance

As with 1.1 above, the direct experience of a condition that learners have will dictate what they can write about and comment about here. If they are working in an organisation that specialises in helping people with dementia, then they will have good hands on experience of how this operates and what they can do to help. This will also allow them to articulate, verbally or in writing, what needs to be done to assist the people in their care that have the condition. They need to show they know what the needs are and give examples in relation to the condition. Therefore, they might discuss what actions they take to support a person in their care who suffers from dementia.

2. Understand the importance of promoting positive health and well-being for an individual who may have a mental health condition, dementia or learning disability

2.1 I can explain how positive attitudes towards those with mental health conditions, dementia or learning disabilities will improve the care and support they receive

Learners will be able to demonstrate a positive attitude in the interactions and understand what impact these have.

Additional information and guidance

It may well be difficult at times as some people in the learner's care, through no fault of their own, may find interactions difficult and may not always respond in a positive way to interactions, but they will always foster a more positive environment over the long term. It is important for learners and the people they care for to be positive as it will help improve overall resilience in the face of challenging circumstances. As long as learners can discuss this and show an awareness of it this will fulfil the criterion.

2.2 I can identify the adjustments which may be necessary in care delivery relating to an individual who may have a mental health condition, dementia or learning disability

Learners will be able to demonstrate some level of flexibility.

Additional information and guidance

The nature of people suffering from some of these conditions is that their behaviour may be quite variable. It may be possible to make huge advances in the improvement of a person's condition, only to see this be reversed over night. Learners need to be flexible and to try different approaches and not be too disheartened if one particular element was working but no longer seems to work. They can try different things and keep challenging their desire to find the best care.

2.3 I can explain the importance of early detection of mental health conditions, dementia and learning disabilities

Learners will be able to show some understanding of the importance of early intervention for many issues.

Additional information and guidance

Many of these conditions are difficult to reverse once they take hold, such as dementia, but early detection can at least put into place some practices that may make the symptoms less onerous on the people affected by them. Learners should demonstrate a basic understanding of the life cycle of some of these conditions and be able to show they understand some early signs that may present themselves. They might be looking after a person with a completely different condition and notice early signs of one of these conditions and might therefore be able to make a small difference to their overall care.

3. Understand policy and local guidelines relating to mental health conditions, dementia and learning disabilities

3.1 I can explain how the work based guidelines listed may affect the day to day experiences of individuals with mental health needs, dementia or

learning difficulties

Learners will be able to explain their working environment and their overall effectiveness.

Additional information and guidance

The work based guidelines will be the policies and procedures they will be asked to understand and follow at their place of work. These will clearly vary depend on where they are working, but in general, learners should be able to discuss what they think about them, if they agree with what is being asked and if they understand the importance of what is asked to be done. This should give their assessor a good idea of their overall appreciation of the job and people in their care. It would be useful to make some reflective notes on any work guidelines to show that there has been some consideration of them.

3.2 I can identify the meaning of mental capacity in relation to how care is provided

Learners will be able to define this term.

Additional information and guidance

The term mental capacity can perhaps be seen as a rather derogatory term, but is an official term defining what people are capable of understanding and therefore what help they require in their day to day lives to make sure they are autonomous and well cared for.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/making-decis...> [1]

Once they have shown they understand the term, they can give some simple examples of how they understand it in terms of the care they will provide.

3.3 I can explain what is meant by the terms “capacity” and “consent”

Learners will be able to define the terms with simple examples.

Additional information and guidance

The link in 3.2 above gives a good definition of capacity and learners can use this for their own working definitions, as well as work based ones they will have been shown. In terms of consent, they need to understand the rights of the people they care for, as well as their immediate family, to ensure that everything they do for and with the people in care is something they have agreed to.

Consent from people is important in terms of their legal rights and should be central to the learner's working practise. In some cases, they may need to get written and agreed documentation to show this before proceeding with anything.

Source URL: <https://theingots.org/community/emcare11u5x>

Links

[1] <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/making-decisions-for-someone-else/mental-capacity-act/>