

BTEC Health and Social care Transition Task sheet 1

People skills

In health and social care People skills are highly needed by professionals when providing care for people various health needs. People skills are the skills that help us to get on with other people, and so develop relationships with them. Some of these skills are:

- ▶▶ **empathy** – the ability to share and understand the emotions of others, such as sadness, anxiety or happiness
- ▶▶ **patience** – the capacity to accept or tolerate problems without becoming annoyed or anxious
- ▶▶ **engendering trust** – the ability to get people to trust you
- ▶▶ **flexibility** – being able to fit in with others and change your own plans if necessary
- ▶▶ **a sense of humour** – being able to see the funny side of situations
- ▶▶ **negotiating** – the process by which two parties with different interests or perspectives attempt to reach agreement, for example a doctor and a patient
- ▶▶ **honesty** – being truthful and sincere
- ▶▶ **problem solving** – the ability to ask the right questions and find an answer to a problem.

Case study

Toni, a 45-year-old woman with chest pain, is brought to the Accident and Emergency Department (A&E) in the middle of the night. The junior doctor tells her that she has had a minor heart attack and needs a surgical procedure on her heart to make sure that this doesn't happen again. However, the pain has receded and Toni feels much better. She is worried and agitated because her husband, who is severely disabled, is home alone and she is his only carer. She says she'd rather come back the next day.

The junior doctor is near the end of a double shift, is very tired and, although he clearly tells Toni the risks, he is rather abrupt and aloof with her and doesn't ask her why she wants to go home, before he is called away to another emergency. Toni discharges herself, but is brought back in an ambulance a few hours later in cardiac arrest, which leads to more serious damage to her heart.

Check your knowledge

- 1 Which of the people skills did the doctor use in dealing with Toni? How do you know this from the case study?
- 2 Which people skills could the doctor have used better? Explain your answer.



BTEC Health and Social care Transition Task sheet 2

Multidisciplinary working

A multi-disciplinary team is made up of professionals from the same service who have different roles. These professionals work together to support an individual or a family facing complex situations. Effective multi-disciplinary working means that the individual gets a better service and better outcomes from the service provider. This is possible because the team takes a holistic approach to providing care, looking at all the person's needs and how they can be met. Multi-disciplinary working also helps avoid duplication of roles and responsibilities. The team must work together to be aware of conflicts that may arise between professionals, or between the service provider and user, to make sure the service user's wishes are acknowledged. You need to know the specific roles and responsibilities of a variety of health and social care professionals within a multi-disciplinary team which relate to meeting an individual's health and social care needs.

Healthcare professionals

Multi-disciplinary teams are formed based on the individual's specific needs. For example, for someone diagnosed with cancer, the team might be made up of an oncologist, a radiologist, a haematologist, a dietician, a clinical nurse specialist and other specialist nurses. Each team member has a different role and responsibilities

Voluntary sector workers

A multi-disciplinary team of voluntary sector workers may include:

- ▶▶ **Macmillan nurses:** Macmillan nurses are funded by the charity Macmillan Cancer Support. They are specialist nurses who provide guidance and support to individuals with cancer, and to their families.
- ▶▶ **Family support worker:** a family support worker's job is to provide emotional and practical help and advice to families with short- or long-term difficulties, such as drug or alcohol addiction, marital or financial difficulties, disability, problems accessing services due to a language barrier or having a parent in hospital or prison. The family support worker helps the family to deal with the situation, maybe by teaching them new skills or encouraging them to seek help from various other health and social care professionals. A family may be referred to a family support worker by a social worker.

Case study

Maria's story

When Maria was 27 years old she was involved in a serious road traffic accident, and has to use a wheelchair. She is now 33 years old and stays at home to look after her 5-year-old son and 3-month-old daughter. Her husband Sven works on a production line in a local factory and has just been diagnosed with bowel cancer. He needs radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Sven has been told that he may need an operation later on and regular tests to make sure the cancer has not spread to other parts of his body.

Check your knowledge

- 1 How do you think Maria will be feeling?
- 2 What practical problems will the family now face?
- 3 How could a multi-disciplinary team of voluntary sector workers help them?