

SFHOP1

Communicate with older people and their carers



Overview

This standard is about communicating effectively with older people and their carers. It covers establishing relationships, identifying the most effective methods of communication, and enabling older people and their carers to participate in communication. The main focus of the standard is in relation to the health and well-being of the older person. The standard is relevant to practitioners who deliver services for older people. Practitioners working in this area require specialist communication skills that take account of age-related, as well as other, communication needs and differences in order to plan, deliver and evaluate services for older people.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

SFHOP1

Communicate with older people and their carers

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 introduce yourself to the older person and their carers, and provide all the relevant information necessary to begin working with them
- P2 ensure that the older person and their carers are made to feel comfortable, and that they understand that their needs are important and are being addressed
- P3 explain to the older person and their carers your role and responsibilities in relation to their care, and outline the constraints that could limit your involvement
- P4 discuss with the older person and their carers their own role and responsibilities for the care of the older person
- P5 respond to any concerns that the older person and their carers might have about your ability to work with them
- P6 encourage the older person and their carers to ask questions and to seek clarification on any issues
- P7 attempt to establish a rapport with the older person and their carers that enables a good relationship to develop
- P8 respond sensitively to any issues raised by the older person and their carers
- P9 respect the human rights of the older person and their carers
- P10 provide clear information on how to contact the service to obtain assistance if required.
- P11 establish any communication differences that exist, and how these will influence your communication methods
- P12 agree the purpose of the communication with the older person and their carers, and identify their preferred ways of communicating
- P13 confirm with the older person who they wish to be involved in the communication

SFHOP1

Communicate with older people and their carers

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the legislation which relates to working with older people including: health and safety, confidentiality and information sharing, the provision of services, the rights of older people, anti-discriminatory practice, capacity and consent, relevant mental health legislation and care programme approach
- K2 how to interpret and apply legislation to the work being undertaken
- K3 the professional standards and codes of practice for your area of work within older people's services and how to interpret and apply these
- K4 how to balance your responsibilities as a professional with organisational and contractual requirements
- K5 the nature, aims, objectives, values, policies and systems of the organisation in which you work
- K6 the contractual arrangements relating to the services which you offer through your organisation
- K7 the nature, extent and boundaries of your work role and its relationship to others in the organisation
- K8 the roles of other health and social care practitioners and how they relate between and across agencies
- K9 the ethics concerning consent and confidentiality, and the tensions which may exist between an individual's rights and the organisation's responsibility to individuals
- K10 the rights of older people to make decisions for themselves and to take risks in the context of their own lives
- K11 methods of obtaining informed consent from older people, and how to confirm that sufficient information has been provided on which to base this judgement
- K12 the actions to take if the older person withdraws their consent
- K13 how to recognise when older people are not able to exercise their rights to make informed choices
- K14 the legal framework for making decisions for, or acting on behalf of, an older person without capacity, and how the best interests of an older person without capacity should be determined
- K15 the situations when consent may not be required e.g. under relevant mental health legislation
- K16 how to deal with issues of confidentiality and who has the right of access to information that has been recorded
- K17 the main issues, debates, and policies relating to the health and well-being of older people
- K18 the guidance that is available for your own practice, and the sources of the guidance
- K19 evidence based practice, and its role in improving services

SFHOP1

Communicate with older people and their carers

- K20 the main trends and changes relating to the health and well-being of older people
- K21 the ageing process and how it affects the needs of older people
- K22 the main health conditions that affect people as they age
- K23 the drugs and interventions which are used to manage the main age-related conditions and the effects of these on the overall health and well-being of older people
- K24 how to seek advice on conditions and drugs
- K25 the impact of social relationships and environment on the health and well-being of older people
- K26 how the needs of older people may affect others
- K27 why it is important to clarify with the older person whether they need and have carers, and to confirm with the older person whether they accept their carers as having any say over their care
- K28 how to communicate effectively with older people and their carers
- K29 the ways in which carers should be involved in communication in order to deliver the most effective outcome for the older person
- K30 the type of communication and relationship difficulties that can occur with and between older people and their carers, and what to do to overcome them
- K31 the importance of focussing on the older person as an individual
- K32 the importance of respecting the different backgrounds and values of older people
- K33 the impact of the ageing process on older people's communication needs e.g. sensory impairment, cognition and confusional states
- K34 the effects of environments and contexts on communication (particularly institutional settings)
- K35 the ways in which communication can be modified and altered for different needs, contexts and beliefs
- K36 the ways in which conditions experienced by older people can affect the communication process
- K37 how the environment in which communication is taking place can affect communication
- K38 the importance of acknowledging your own feelings, beliefs and values and those of others as part of the communication process
- K39 how an individual's feelings, beliefs and values can affect the communication process
- K40 the importance of taking into account cultural differences as part of the communication process
- K41 the range of other practitioners who are available to support communication with older people
- K42 how to work with communication experts in an effective way
- K43 how communication may be misconstrued
- K44 the importance of avoiding the inappropriate use of jargon
- K45 what communication is, and the different forms it may take (e.g. speech,

SFHOP1

Communicate with older people and their carers

- signs, symbols, touch and writing)
- K46 the type of assumptions that are made about older people and their carers arising from communication differences
- K47 the types of communication differences that older people may experience
- K48 the sources of information available on the communication differences of older people and their carers
- K49 how communication differences affect the communication methods that you use
- K50 the range of feelings which people may experience when there are communication differences
- K51 the principles of active listening, and its application
- K52 the need to reflect back your understanding of what has been communicated
- K53 the way questions should be phrased and presented in order to obtain information and enable participation of the older person and their carers
- K54 the types of non-verbal cues that people give as part of communication (e.g. facial expression, tone of voice, body language)
- K55 how verbal expression may not be indicative of level of understanding
- K56 the types of communication aids that are used in older people's services
- K57 the reasons why communication may fail to develop or break down

SFHOP1

Communicate with older people and their carers

Additional Information

External Links

This standard has indicative links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 1 Communication

SFHOP1

Communicate with older people and their carers

Developed by Skills for Health

Version number 1

Date approved June 2010

Indicative review date June 2012

Validity Current

Status Original

Originating organisation Skills for Health

Original URN OP1

Relevant occupations Health, Public Services and Care; Nursing and Subjects and Vocations Allied; Health and Social Care; Public Services; Health Professionals; Healthcare and Related Personal Services

Suite Older People

Key words elderly, old, communication