

Support individuals with difficult or potentially difficult relationships

Overview

This standard is about supporting individuals with difficult or potentially difficult relationships. It includes individuals where there may be a history of difficulties with relationships, where their behaviour may have been aggressive or abusive in the past, and where individuals may have been out of contact with others over a period of time, for example whilst serving a prison sentence.

It involves you supporting individuals to evaluate and make decisions about their relationships. It also includes helping individuals to establish and/or maintain contact, giving practical support where appropriate. You may have to deal with situations where there are tensions or conflict between the individuals' wishes and the wishes of those with whom they are trying to establish or maintain contact.

There are two elements

1. Support individuals in their decisions regarding relationships
2. Support individuals in maintaining and evaluating contact in difficult or potentially difficult relationships

Target group

This standard is applicable to those with responsibility for helping individuals with difficult or potentially difficult relationships, where such support has been agreed.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

Support individuals in their decisions regarding relationships

1. communicate using techniques appropriate to the individual and their needs
2. encourage an open exchange of views and information
3. encourage individuals to reflect on their relationships, identifying their needs in developing and maintaining relationships, and acknowledging any related consequences in developing and maintaining them
4. agree with individuals the support they require, and confirm this with relevant colleagues, in line with your organisation's procedures
5. discuss in a supportive manner the effects which contact may have on others, where appropriate
6. offer individuals relevant information about their relationship with others, where requested, and in line with your organisation's procedures
7. seek advice and support promptly when you are unable to provide the information requested or are uncertain how to proceed
8. discuss and negotiate options with individuals who want to make contact with others
9. discuss conditions regarding contact with those involved and establish a working agreement
10. discuss with individuals any obstacles to communicating with the identified people, and agree plans for overcoming these
11. discuss and agree with individuals how to proceed if they decide they do not want to make contact with a particular person, or if the person the individual wishes to contact does not wish them to do so
12. agree with individuals their decisions about making contact with others
13. communicate all relevant information to all authorised parties within agreed timescales, and establish a working agreement
14. maintain records in line with your organisation's requirements

Support individuals in maintaining and evaluating contact in difficult or potentially difficult relationships

15. establish the level of support required by individuals, consistent with any conditions laid down regarding the contact
16. support individuals to prepare for making contact, including acknowledging any anxieties
17. make facilities available for contact, and support individuals in using them
18. support and encourage individuals during contact with those who are significant to them, through the creation of an appropriate environment, and consistent with any agreements reached with individuals
19. help individuals to manage conflicts and tensions in their relationships

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constructively

20. give individuals sufficient opportunities for support and reflection following contact with others

21. take action to protect the individual's welfare, if their behaviour or condition gives cause for concern

22. seek advice and support from an appropriate person, if you are uncertain about how to proceed

23. maintain records of any changes in the individual's requirements in relation to contacts, in line with your organisation's requirements

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements

1. legal and organisational requirements which relate to assisting supporting individuals with their relationships, and their impact for your area of operations
2. legislation, policies and procedures relating to data protection, health and safety, diversity and their impact for your area of operations
3. the role of your organisation and its services, and the services which it provides in supporting individuals with difficult or potentially difficult relationships
4. organisational policy and procedures regarding confidentiality of information and the disclosure of information to third parties, and the specific circumstances under which disclosure may be made
5. organisational requirements relating to allowing others to be present in discussions with victims/survivors/witnesses, and the relative benefits and disadvantages that the presence of others can create
6. the limits of your authority and responsibility, and the actions to take if these are exceeded

Working within the justice sector

7. good practice communication techniques relevant to the situation and how to apply them
8. the impact of physical, social, psychological and emotional development upon the behaviour of individuals
9. the physical conditions and emotional factors which may have an effect on relationships
10. factors influencing the individual's ability to make decisions, including self-image
11. the importance of supporting to individuals with their relationships, including the significance of their development, growth and self esteem
12. why conditions might be attached to making contact, and why a working agreement should be reached with those involved
13. why the behaviours and conditions which give cause for concern should be reported promptly and to whom
14. why the effects of contact between individuals and others should be discussed
15. agencies relevant to making contact
16. when and how advocacy should be provided
17. the support which you may need when dealing with those who have difficult

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relationships

- 18. how relationships are formed and may change
- 19. the different types of relationships and family patterns
- 20. factors influencing different roles, and communication, within the family
- 21. counselling skills which may be appropriate to different situations

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