Enable individuals to maintain contacts in potentially isolating situations

Overview

This standard is about providing support to enable individuals who are in potentially isolating situations to maintain physical and/or social contact. This includes supporting individuals in maintaining social contacts by offering encouragement and practical assistance, and through obtaining specific information and literature.

It involves supporting those individuals who are receiving long-term care away from their home, and those who may have restrictions placed on their freedom and movement, including those who are subject to electronic monitoring, have been detained in custody, or held under the Mental Health Act. It also includes individuals isolated by their communication differences, including language differences or sensory impairment, and those isolated through emotional distress, including those affected by bereavement, crime or anti-social behaviour.

There are two elements
1. Support individuals in maintaining social contacts
2. Obtain specific information and literature for individuals

Target group
This standard is applicable to those with responsibility for helping individuals in potentially isolating situations to maintain social contacts.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

Support individuals in maintaining social contacts

1. communicate using techniques appropriate to the individual and their needs
2. encourage individuals to reflect on the social contacts they have made, identifying their needs for, and interest in, maintaining social contacts
3. assist individuals who express an interest in contacting or meeting others to explore opportunities and offer appropriate support
4. provide appropriate support to individuals who have difficulty in communicating, using techniques which maintain their dignity and respect
5. provide appropriate support and assistance to individuals to help them maintain their contacts, consistent with their needs and wishes
6. give support and companionship consistent with the plan for working with the individuals, using techniques appropriate to their needs and choice, and in line with your role and responsibilities
7. make appropriate efforts to promote broader interests, where individuals appear to be losing interest in areas outside of their immediate environment
8. pass information to an appropriate person, when individuals are at risk of losing a sense of purpose or interest, in line with agreed timescales

Obtain specific information and literature for individuals

9. offer individuals sufficient time, opportunity and encouragement to express their needs and wishes for information and assistance
10. encourage individuals to obtain information about services and facilities for themselves, and to be as self-managing as possible
11. provide assistance to those who request it, appropriate to their needs and consistent with the plan for working with the individual
12. discuss potential sources of information with individuals, checking their suitability with the individual
13. provide information relevant to individuals within agreed timescales and in a suitable format
14. provide information which is current, accurate and checked as being consistent with the request, needs and understanding of individuals
15. encourage individuals to give feedback on the information provided and to make further requests
16. take appropriate action where the information provided produces strong or adverse reactions in the individual in line with their needs
17. explain any problems arising to the individual, if they ask for information or literature which you find unethical and against the worker's personal beliefs and preferences, whilst acknowledging the individual's rights

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements

1. legal and organisational requirements which relate to supporting individuals in potentially isolating situations, 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 enabling individuals to maintain contacts in potentially isolating situations
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 and 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 factors which may cause individuals to become potentially isolated, including limited mobility, sensory disability or discrimination
9. the effects of isolation on the relationships of individuals
10. why you should encourage others to make relationships
11. why social contacts are important and why it might be appropriate to encourage and develop them
12. why the wishes of individuals to relate or not to relate to others should be recognised
13. why any attempt to encourage relationships must be within the boundaries of confidentiality and privacy
14. why individuals should be encouraged to be as self managing as possible
15. the importance of matching the help given to the needs of individuals
16. why the wishes of individuals must be taken into account when they do not want to take up available benefits and services
17. the rights of individuals to confidentiality regarding the information which they choose to access, and how this can be maintained or enhanced
18. own rights in explaining to individuals that there may be certain information

which you are uncomfortable about accessing, and the ways in which such conflicts can be handled

19. different forms of assistance, support and companionship

20. sources of information about different services

21. the likely impact of information upon individuals

22. different approaches and responses which can be used in supporting individuals with communication difficulties

23. how your views regarding the appropriateness of information and literature may influence the support you give to individuals

24. how communication difficulties and differences may vary in different settings and at different stages of development

25. methods for encouraging individuals to maintain an interest in, and contact with, the outside world

26. ways of encouraging individuals to engage in discussion regarding the information, including methods for extending the individual's interest beyond their immediate concern

27. ways of recording information in a suitable format to meet the different needs of individuals

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