

Collaborative Communication Skills Programme

Our staff and their skills are our greatest resource. We need to support them to work in an outcomes focused way.

We want to move away from having heavily process-driven interactions where staff use a set of predetermined questions and solutions towards staff having empowering conversations with families which allow them to understand their unique circumstances.

Social Care Wales has formed a partnership agreement with ASC Ltd to deliver a training programme to organisations called Collaborative Communication Skills. This training allows organisations to invest in developing the skills and understanding of their workforce and a system that supports this approach.

This training takes into consideration the wider organisational implications and practicalities of embedding an outcomes approach. The training considers:

- theories of human behaviour that inform effective responses
- principles that underpin our professional responses
- skills and strategies that practitioners can use to engage with people at times of challenge and stress
- how organisational systems can support effective practice

The programme is made up of four phases:

Phase 1

An initial half day planning/ briefing session with senior management – to include head of service, service managers and workforce managers.

Objectives:

- Commitment from senior management to whole organisation transformation
- Commitment from senior management to engage in the process, support staff, challenge and change process and paperwork to support the approach going forward
- Ownership from senior management

Phase 2

Two full training days with subsequent follow-up sessions. The training will be delivered to groups of no more than 15 to allow for meaningful consideration of practice issues. Ideally full teams attend together.

Objectives:

- Build a clear vision of best practice
- Build confidence in staff to have 'different' more empowering conversations
- Deepening empathy and understanding

- Considering and practicing meaningful conversations with professionals, families and each other through reflective practice
- Introducing conversational structures
- Refocusing of the human psychology and family dynamics
- A paradigm shift from assessing risks and applying services, to engaging with families to resolve their dilemmas
- A confident workforce able to describe their best practice and carve out the space to do it

Phase 3

A further two full days training for those identified as mentors (practice champions). This recaps on key learning from Phase 2 and goes on to explore how the outcomes approach can be promoted across the department and with partner agencies. It also focuses on supervision arrangements, promoting practice standards and reflective practice.

Objectives:

- build confidence to work with 'strengths', 'priority risks' and 'good enough outcomes'
- embed practice, build worker confidence, capture and disseminate impact stories
- influence and help fill protected time for meaningful, effective, reflective practice run workshops - win hearts and minds
- build a cross organisation team to support the practice
- influence organisational change, offer advice on system change
- inform the transformation agenda
- participate in a national network of coaches and mentors

Phase 4

We return to meet with senior management team for a final session. Mentors also attend to give a presentation which includes examples of good practice, achievements, barriers and solutions. A draft plan and strategy for how to take the work forward is made together.

Objectives:

- promoting best practice, tackling poor practice
- capturing service user stories
- capturing evidence from supervision and reflective groups (quality assurance and accountability)
- tackling barriers and building on achievements
- keeping a clear direction - avoiding slipping back to default practice and decision making
- capturing reliable information about impact
- clarify and agree indicators of success, e.g. better outcomes for families; service user feedback; reduced agency staff (better retention and higher staff satisfaction); hearing 'strengths' and 'outcome language' being used; number of forms honed / streamlined to better reflect the approach; seeing family outcomes rather than service outcomes used

If you would like to know more, please contact jessica.matthews@socialcare.wales