

## Working with dignity

Staffordshire County Council aimed to develop and deliver two training courses (an e-learning course and a one-day workshop combined with distance learning) to promote the idea of 'working with dignity' and encourage a more person-centred approach to care, particularly among the harder-to-reach social care workers.

### Background

The Care Market Development Team, part of Staffordshire County Council, supports the workforce development, quality and market shaping of social care providers across Staffordshire.

The idea of 'working with dignity' has always been a key priority for the team: they have worked closely with Dignity Champions and have promoted dignity awareness within Staffordshire, including running bi-annual award ceremonies within the local authority.

After a lot of bad media highlighting poor practice within the social care sector, the team also hoped to promote the sector in a more positive light. They had already developed a Level 1 QCF Dignity award which they were delivering to 160 14-18 year old social care students so the funding came at the perfect time to allow them to pilot the course to a wider audience within the social care sector.

### What we wanted to achieve

The course promoted the importance of upholding dignity and promoting person-centred care, to the harder to reach social care employees.

This included delivering training via a traditional classroom-based taught course as well as through an e-learning package to reach the wider workforce. The training also included developing an action plan, to ensure that the learnings were immediately applicable and could be embedded into practice.

The course delivered training to lone workers, Personal Assistants, domiciliary and resident care workers.

### What we did

Activities undertaken with the funding included:

- Designing the training materials including student handbooks, workbooks for independent study, and the e-learning programme;
- Providing a one-day training event and workbook course;
- Delivering an e-learning course incorporating video exercises and online assessment. This course differed from other e-learning courses because it required a significant amount of independent working and writing projects which would then be uploaded onto the online platform; and

- Development of a Dignity Network which meets regularly, and brings together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss best practice and future opportunities.

## What we achieved

The team were pleased with the number of people who attended the course, and evaluation feedback was 'really positive', although they did not reach as many Personal Assistants as they had hoped for. In total, nine workshop-based courses were delivered resulting in the training of 142 individuals and a further 22 individuals piloted the e-learning course. Attendance at the regional Dignity Network meetings was also 'really positive', especially because it was the first time the team had delivered something like this at such a large scale across the West Midlands.

The course also indirectly benefited individuals requiring care and support. One student went back to their organisation and detected poor practice by another employee - the employee concerned was subsequently suspended. Another student felt the course was very relevant to the challenges she faced in the workplace, addressing a topic for which little other training existed. Although she felt she was already working with dignity, watching video clips of residents' thoughts and feelings made her explain her actions more to them, as well as helping her to engage with them on a much more personal level, sharing her own personal experiences with them.

More generally, the training raised awareness of the role the Council plays in the Dignity Awards, promoting dignity more widely within the sector, as well as raising awareness of the qualifications that are available to social care workers. Since

the end of the funding year they have rolled out the e-learning training to an additional 100 students, using Council funding, and the course is now available on the OCN website for other organisations to use for a small fee. They have also written a level 2 qualification which is currently going through the QCF-accreditation process.

## What we learnt

Post-training evaluation forms provided evidence that students have disseminated what they learnt to their wider team, and are also working differently as a result of the training. The learnings from this project were used to change the workbook they were currently using for 14-18 year old students. In addition, after delivering the workshop-based course, they learnt that although enjoyable, it was expensive and quite labour-intensive so have decided not to offer the taught course again, but instead concentrate on the e-learning package.

The team found that designing an e-learning course requires it to be tested with learners and reviewed a number of times to ensure a quality product. In future, they would use the learnings and participant feedback from the taught course to inform the development of the e-learning modules. The team also highlighted problems they faced with getting students to complete and return their workbooks or the e-learning assessments – chasing people for missing work was very time consuming and the quality of the returned work was sometimes quite poor. Two or three individuals were allowed to finish the course well after the initial deadline in order to give everyone the chance to submit their workbook, but in future they agreed they needed to be much stricter with deadlines, in order to reduce the administrative burden.

“ People felt that the training was really relevant to their work and they enjoyed meeting with other people to share best practice...students realised that just changing some of the words they used when speaking to people who need care and support could greatly improve the care relationship ”

Project manager

## For more information please contact

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## Skills for Care Recommends

We have produced resources to help employers recognise the importance of dignity training and practically provide this to their people.

### Common Core Principles for Dignity Guide



The guide shows how the seven common core principles can be put into practice. It explains the principles, provides good practice guidance, easy-to-use teaching and discussion aids and action plans.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dignity](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dignity)

### Dignity training pack

The pack will support those involved in learning and development to continue to deliver the message of the importance of dignity in adult social care using tried and tested resources.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dignity](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dignity)

### Recommendations for CQC Providers Guide

This comprehensive guide helps registered managers to comply with CQC expectations around various areas of workforce development. Section 5 highlights the importance of dignity training as part of the induction process.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc)

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