

West Sussex County Council

Making safeguarding personal

The Care and Business Support Team in West Sussex works with local services in the care sector, providing professional support to care homes (with and without nursing), and services supporting people in their homes.

The team take a particular focus on supporting employers with delivering safe and high quality care. With this in mind they wanted to raise awareness of and promote a personal centred approach to safety with 'front line staff', which would enable the person being supported to remain in control of their lives and so maintain their well-being.

Background

The 'Think Local Act Personal, Developing a wellbeing and strengths based approach to social work practice: changing culture' states that the "Making Safeguarding Personal initiative, (sponsored by the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) aims to develop person-centred responses to safeguarding so people who have experienced harm and abuse feel empowered and supported to get the outcome they want to see.

Peregrine House a care home in Whitby was the first service to have received an 'outstanding' rating in all five areas of key questions supporting the key lines of enquiry.

The CQC report stated:

"The service had a safeguarding champion, whose role was to be a specialist in this area, research best practice, support other staff with advice and to give talks in staff meetings. They also liaised with people, their families and stakeholders to ensure people received excellent safe care. Staff told us that they had developed their understanding around safety because of this support."

To support a personal approach to safeguarding the Care and Business Support Team are facilitating a pilot Person Centred Safeguarding Champion Programme.

What we did

The programme began in September 2016 assisted by funding from Health and Social Care Integration Innovation Fund – KSS. The programme currently supports champions from 44 care homes for older people (with and without nursing) across West Sussex.

This pilot is a 'preventative' 12-month programme, the target audience being 'front line' care staff focussing on people's feelings of safety and security promoting their involvement, choice, control, empowerment and wellbeing.

The objective is to improve service quality, reduce the number of serious safeguarding incidents (and support recovery) by knowing, understanding and acting upon what is 'important to' and 'for' the person.

Champions work together, share best practice, and provide a trusted point of contact for families to express concerns (in addition to the service's manager).

Programme aims - to provide a person centred approach to safety for older people, moving the focus from 'what's the matter?' to 'what matters'. This is demonstrated through the support offered to individuals, embedded through staff practice and championed through the Care and Business Support Team.

For people we support:

We will:

- Support people to increase their feelings of safety and security.
- Promote people's choice and control, to improve their confidence and self-esteem.
- Listen and respond quickly to concerns expressed by the person or their family and/or friends.
- Support people's recovery by listening and acting upon their wishes.

Staff will:

- Support each other, sharing best practice and new initiatives to reduce any fear or anxiety of safeguarding.
- Make safeguarding 'real' and a focus of our everyday support.
- Aim to motivate and inspire others by sharing skills, celebrating success, demonstrating commitment and passion for all we do.

Services will:

- Advocate at service/public forums how to support people to feel safe both within their home and their local community.
- Work together to create resources ('fink cards', Safe Charter, I statements) to support people to 'feel safe' wherever they are.

With their managers support the Person Centred Safeguarding Champion works with all staff members to:

- Develop and encourage the use of range of person centred approaches, knowledge and skills
- Support services to design person centred policies and procedures that focus on a person centred approach

- Support new initiatives to engage/involve/consult with people when looking at their personal view of safety.
- Develop a range of recording mechanisms
- Focus on awareness of any cultural needs and changes that need to be implemented.
- Follow-up activity that will record learning that can be used to inform practice.
- Making sure people were much better informed about what safeguarding is.

The programme focuses on using person centred approaches and tools to support meaningful positive conversations with people 'seeing people as experts in their own lives'.

What we achieved

Staff taking part in the programme have said they "feel more motivated, enthusiastic, skilled in person centred approaches and are less anxious of safeguarding".

Other comments include:

What I have learned

- "Not to label a person, someone may be trying to express a need through behaviours".
- "Important to listen, expand questions - delve deeper".
- "Importance of communication, seek to understand first".
- "Details are so very important, safeguarding starts before the incident it's not just about reviewing the event after".
- "How to deal with conflict, different ways best ways of communicating".
- "The importance of appropriate communication methods. The importance of accessible information needs awareness".

The members of the steering group includes two family members (Orchid View Action group), one person who uses services, three service managers, CQC manager, Safeguarding Adults Board Manager, representative from Learning and Development (West Sussex County Council), Senior Care Home Support Nurse Integrated Response Team, Contracts Manager for Adults and Later Life, and members of the Care and Business Support Team.

Comments expressed by the steering group.

- “This is a really exciting programme”.
- “I can really see our champion growing in confidence”.
- “Champion comes back really buzzing from their meeting”.
- “It was great being part of yesterday’s meeting I found it really encouraging”.
- “I am impressed with what I have seen of the programme so far, I would want to see that this pilot has been money well spent, that people have benefited as a result and that the Champions themselves remain supported and listened to”.
- “I think this project is really worthwhile”.

Through partnership working with the Safeguarding Nurse Specialist from the Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust we have planned a joint champion event in July (care home and hospital champions). This will provide an opportunity to improve the experience and reduce fear and anxiety for people accessing and/or transferring to/from health and social care services.

Success factors will include people stating or describing that they feel happier and safer, and have been supported to maintain relationships and make new friends. This will be evidenced through the completion of impact evaluation and external quality monitoring and review by the steering group (which includes the adult safeguarding board, and partners).

From the evaluation and audit we will be able to confirm if people have maintained control over situations, been involved in making decisions, exercised choice, and that they feel able to protect themselves and that they know where to get help.

Outcomes of the programme will also support services when signing up to accreditation kite-marks, including the Social Care Commitment and Making it Real.

Champions attended a one day person centred thinking awareness session to ensure they have the knowledge and tools to carry out the role.

Champions also attend a half day quarterly meeting to provide peer support to each other, present progress and share good practice, new initiatives and ideas.

Throughout the programme the Champions compile:

- ‘Good’ questions from their interactions with people in their service that will form a resource pack (‘fink’ cards’ around ‘feeling safe’). The cards will support other staff to engage in a meaningful conversation to ensure the persons personal safety.
- Pledges (promises) from staff will support a ‘West Sussex feeling safe charter’
- ‘I’ statement’s from people being supported that confirm their feelings of safety for example “I feel safe because staff always have time to listen”.

Stage 2 of the programme will look at recruiting volunteers to work alongside the champions and will extend opportunities to other services to join the programme.

What we learnt

We are just embarking on this area of work and will need time to reflect and evaluate on lessons learnt but we are confident that we will experience positive results

Top Tips

- Make sure that staff and managers know that this role is part of a staff members every day role – it is not separate
- Make sure managers are on board to support fully their champion
- Facilitate opportunities for services to network locally so champions have peer support.
- Provide dates of meetings well in advance to support services to plan rotas.
- People telling their personal stories engage people much more than signposting.

For more information please contact

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Skills for Care recommends

We have lots of resources to support employers with their safeguarding practices and help them develop the skills and knowledge of their staff.

Adult safeguarding

These resources can help you ensure your workforce have the right skills and knowledge regarding adult safeguarding.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/safeguarding

Supporting people with learning disabilities

These resources can help you support your workforce to care for people with a learning disability including guidance about positive behavioural support.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/learningdisability

Restrictive practices

This guide supports employers who want to minimise the use of restrictive practices.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/restrictivepractices

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