

Dignity in Dementia
on behalf of **South Lakes Social Care Registered Managers Learning Network**

'Let's Talk' - Toolkit for health and social care integration

The South Lakes Registered Social Care Managers' Learning Network is a community of practice that comes together once a month in Kendal, Cumbria to discuss pertinent issues in the health and social care sector. It comprises of a range of services including care home managers, safeguarding leads and visiting speakers.

Background

The network recognised the need for integrated health and social care as one of the ways to deliver improved care, as well as improving better outcomes from cost-effective methods. The group felt a 'toolkit' to assist inter-professional team working would be highly beneficial in the area, and agreed that Dignity in Dementia would manage the project with support for evaluation and action research around implementation provided by the Social Care Workforce Research Unit at King's College London

Dignity in Dementia is a social enterprise operating across the South Lakes area. They seek to ensure the dignity of people with dementia and their family carers is maintained by providing innovative support and approaches, which help make their

lives as normal and positive as possible. They also work with social care providers to deliver dementia training and carry out project work that contributes to improved services.

What we wanted to achieve

With the percentage of the population over 85 set to double in the next 20 years, it is widely accepted that the current system does not always deliver the integrated care that people need, with gaps and miscommunication between different services and sectors.

With increasing financial constraints, one of the ways to deliver improved services in a more cost effective way is to integrate services.

To support integration, the group felt that a toolkit that could assist inter-professional team working and help strengthen skills and competencies would be beneficial.

The ultimate aim was to strengthen good team working and the skills needed to do so in order to enhance safe dignified and compassionate care.

What we did

A wide range of people were involved in the production of the training pack:

1. We asked individuals from health and social care organisations to provide us with actual situations where communication across teams was either very good or could be improved.

2. From these situations, a script was written to address how integration could improve communications and was sent to members of the South Lakes Social Care Registered Managers Learning Network for discussion.

3. Upon agreement, a film was produced using actors from a local amateur dramatic society alongside health and social care staff.

4. An accompanying workbook was produced to be used alongside the film.

5. Once the resources had been developed, we brought together different professionals to discuss the scenarios, including GP's, district nurses, social workers, care home assistants and registered managers.

What we achieved

We found that when different health and social care professionals came together to consider the various situations, everyone appreciated the opportunity to discuss from different perspectives.

The video and accompanying workbook is available for health and social care professionals to use to improve integration in their services, and can be downloaded from [here](#).

The feedback from people who took part in the trial said they had a better understanding of the need to:

- Build successful relationships with health and social care partners
- Develop understanding and empathy for others
- Understand the impact of their behaviours and communication

- Work together to achieve true person centred care
- Raise concerns about safety

The network are applying for further funding from new sources with a view to running more facilitated sessions to bring together other individuals and teams.

☾ 'Let's Talk' really drives home the message that everyone is trying to do their best but things can get a bit disjointed because we are all seeing our slot and not all of us together ☽☽
Care home manager

What we learnt

The key learning from our project is that when you provide an opportunity for people from different disciplines and teams to come together in a facilitated way they get a great deal from it and can develop empathy and understanding for others situations.

The most challenging parts of our project related to statutory organisations continuing to have restructures and us not being able to get the involvement/commitment from senior managers that we had earlier been promised as they left the organisation or changed roles.

Our recommendations to other employers considering a similar approach would be to talk to a wide range of people at the outset to gain their support and help as the project develops.



☾ 'Let's Talk' certainly changed awareness that everyone is under pressure to deliver good care, not just you. Everyone from carers, social workers, district nurses and GPs ☽☽

Senior care worker

For more information please contact

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Skills for Care Recommends

Safeguarding is an important for all of those working in adult social care. From inducting new colleagues to their longer-term development, Skills for Care resources can help

The common core principles for Dignity

These principles can be used to support good practice by any member of the workforce across difference settings.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dignity

The common core principles for supporting people with Dementia

These principles support the social care and health workforce in caring for people who are living with dementia.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dementia

The principles of workforce integration

These principles have been developed to support practitioners, managers and organisations to think through what is meant by integration, and how workforce development can contribute to its introduction, implementation and sustainability.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/integration

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