

North West Dignity Leads Network

Challenging Poor Practice Training Module & Community of Practice

Background

The North West Dignity Leads Network was established in 2009 to drive forward the dignity agenda and support the development of good practice in all health and social care settings. It comprises of representatives from a range of local authority, health and independent sector organisations who are passionate about putting dignity at the forefront of service delivery in the North West.

Responding to a key recommendation within the 'Delivering Dignity' report (Local Government Association, Age UK, NHS Federation, 2012) and the Francis Report (2013) the Network decided to carry out work that explored issues around the delivery of compassionate care. This involved creating a Challenging Poor Practice Guide for staff and setting up a Community of Practice where social care managers in Cumbria could consider how they could respond to reports' recommendations.

What we wanted to achieve

The North West Dignity in Care Network wanted to develop a training resource to support those working for health and social care organisations to:

- To support individuals who feel uncomfortable with something they have seen or heard and are looking for practical support on how to handle the situation.

- To act as a training manual for all health and social care workers so that they are better prepared to take action when they encounter poor practice.

The training resource aimed to include practical advice, case studies and a list of useful resources to help staff. As far as we could see nothing similar was available.

We also wanted to support the development of a Community of Practice in Cumbria that enabled social care managers to come together to discuss issues around the delivery of compassionate care. Communities of practice involve groups of people who share a concern or passion for something and who want to engage in a process of collective learning.

“ This pack really helped me understand more about challenging poor practice and if I need to do it I'll feel more prepared. ”

Care Worker

What we did

The project was led by the North West Dignity Leads Network and included input from Care Sector Alliance Cumbria (CSAC) and the Social Care Workforce Research Unit (SCWRU) at King's College London.

Activities undertaken to produce The Challenging Poor Practice resource included:

- bringing colleagues from health and social care together to write the pack.
- carrying out desk top research
- meeting with safeguarding leads
- gaining feedback from front line staff, as well as a group of individuals receiving care and support

Whilst early work was being carried out on the resource the Cumbria Community of Practice was initiated.

The focus of meetings was the delivery of compassionate care. Eight social care managers from six social care services attended 5 lunchtime meetings which were held every other month over a 10 month period. The meetings were facilitated by Dr Michelle Cornes from the Social Care Workforce Research Unit at Kings College London. As well as discussing the recommendations of the Francis and Delivering Dignity Reports, the group also considered the impact of negative media reports about abusive care on staff morale. They also commented on drafts of the Challenging Poor Practice resource and once the resource was finalised helped pilot it with their staff. Two organisations made individual copies of the resource available for their staff and provided specific time for them to read it. They then followed this up with a team discussion. The other two organisations left a few copies of the pack in a central point and asked their staff to read it. No specific time was allocated for this and no further discussion took place.

Soon after this a member of the project team visited the services and carried out a focus group discussion.

What we achieved

The Challenging Poor Practice resource provided simple to understand information about the different ways that poor practice can be challenged, e.g. tackling someone there and then or reporting it to a manager if it is inappropriate to tackle at the time or the individual doesn't have the confidence to do this themselves. The accompanying scenarios provided staff with an opportunity to practice making challenges in a safe environment so that if/when they need to do this for real, they are better prepared and more self-assured.

Educating and up-skilling staff so that they know when and how to take action, will inevitably improve the lives of individuals receiving care as they will experience greater wellbeing and are safer. "Nipping poor practice in the bud" also means that more serious safeguarding incidents are avoided later on.

With regards to the Community of Practice, managers welcomed the opportunity to learn from peers and discuss challenging issues. After the meetings they were able to share new ideas with their staff teams thereby improving the service that they offered.

“Whilst working in safeguarding vulnerable adults I have often considered how difficult it is for people to challenge poor practice at the time that they witness it. The Challenging Poor Practice training module is really valuable as it gives staff a basis for challenge and also advice on the least confrontational way of approaching others. The language is easy to understand without being patronising and because of this it can be used with a variety of staff groups. It is also useful as a resource that can be worked through by individuals and used as a point of reference.”

Noleen Devlin, Adult Safeguarding & Safety Lead, NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group

Next steps include work to produce a version for those working in children's social care.

The Challenging Poor Practice training module and scenario resources are available to download for free from Skills for Care's Learn from Others resource, as well as the North West Dignity Leads own website.

Following the release of this resource, the North West Dignity Leads were announced as the 2014 winners of the innovation category at the North West Great British Care Awards and will go forward to the National Awards.

What we learnt

The Challenging Poor Practice resource was welcomed right across Health and Social Care

Staff who were given an individual copy of the pack and dedicated time to read it, along with opportunities to practice making challenges using the scenario cards, were much more likely to understand the process and challenge poor practice in the future.

The cost of producing multiple copies of the pack is expensive and therefore the use of the electronic version is deemed more cost effective. However, staff in our trial valued being given their own hard copy.

As a learning approach, reflective practice sessions were particularly successful after individuals had the opportunity to read the pack. What was most appreciated was the scenario cards and how they raised good discussion for example, about practices that may not have been previously understood as 'poor practice.'

The discussions also prompted reflection on what was 'good practice'. Acknowledging good practice was as important in the sessions as raising awareness of poor practice.

The Community of Practice members viewed sessions as very worthwhile and recognised meetings as a safe venue to discuss difficult issues and gain support from peers.

Managers felt that much more could be done by Commissioners and Regulators to understand the issues and concerns they faced and build on their contributions and strengths.

They acknowledged the challenge in getting new managers to join as many are engrossed in their everyday job and need convincing of the benefits to give time to something else.

The group gained funding from the National Skills Academy and continues as the South Lakes Registered Managers Learning Network.



For more information please contact

Lesley Gill

lesley@dignityindementia.org

www.nwdignity.co.uk

www.dignityindementia.org

Skills for Care Recommends

Skills for Care does not deliver any direct training ourselves but our guidance can help care organisations and employers to consider appropriate training.

Recommendations for CQC Providers Guide

This comprehensive guide helps Registered Managers to comply with CQC expectations around various areas of workforce development.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc

Choosing Workforce Learning



This helpful guide provides information for employers considering appointing learning

providers. It helps you to ask the right questions to ensure the learning provider give a quality service and meet the workforce development needs.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/choosinglearning

Skills for Care
West Gate
6 Grace Street
Leeds

LS1 2RP

telephone 0113 245 1716

email info@skillsforcare.org.uk

web www.skillsforcare.org.uk

[@skillsforcare](https://twitter.com/skillsforcare)



www.facebook.com/skillsforcare



www.youtube.com/skillsforcare



www.linkedin.com/company/skills-for-care

