

Care Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Strength-Based Practice in Adult Social Care

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Strength Based Practice: Basis in Legislation

- *‘The core purpose of adult care and support is to help people to achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their life.’*
- *‘As part of this person-centred, outcomes-focused approach, the Act requires that social workers and care professionals ‘consider the person’s own strengths and capabilities, and what support might be available from their wider support network or within the community to help’ in considering ‘what else other or alongside the provision of care and support might assist the person in meeting the outcomes they want to achieve’.*
- (Care Act 2014)



Strength Based Practice

- In 2019 the Department of Health and Social Care published a guidance handbook and framework to support social workers and social care professionals in applying a strength-based approach to their work with adults.
- This guidance initiated our journey with Strength Based Practice



Dep. Health and Social Care: Strength-Based Practice, what leaders need to do.

- Give social workers the freedom to do things differently
- Use their expertise to design the paperwork co-produced with people who use them
- Trust their skills and knowledge and judgments



Strength Based Practice – the difference

Example of a person who has dementia, is lonely during the day, and their carer needs to know they have support whilst they are at work.

- Case management approach: attendance at a day centre
- Strengths based approach: identified that the lady enjoyed going to the hairdressers; arranged with her hairdresser for her to go every day; the lady knew her way there and it was very local so she could walk there; she would have some rollers put in, have several cups of tea, chat to her friends and paid the hairdresser a small contribution for the tea. No cost to the Council and the contribution to the hairdresser was less than the lady would have paid to attend the day centre.



Training Opportunities

- Mixture of formal classroom based learning, interactive workshops, mandatory training, role play and team discussions.
- All new colleagues (whether experienced or not) get specific training about our approach in Gateshead.
- 2023 commissioned Acting Out Productions. Acting Out Productions are a training organisation that use live drama to enable colleagues to observe live drama of interaction between social worker and individual and try different methods of engagement and strength-based practice.



Supervision

- How we communicate with each other as well as the people we support in the community.
- Strength Based Supervision Policy developed 2019.
- Training for all colleagues that provide supervision across the service from Strengthening Practice.
- Survey of employees experience of supervision undertaken 2023.



Supervision

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive:

I generally enjoy my supervisions which I think is a positive reflection on my supervisor as these always feel relaxed and I make good use of the time to reflect on cases and my mental wellbeing.

Formal and informal supervision continues to be essential to my overall wellbeing and support with my career development. I always look forward to my supervision and feel focussed and energised after.

I feel that supervision is an integral part of being able to practice effectively and I am receiving this regularly.

I genuinely look forward to my supervisions. my manager is very professional and covers all aspects from work related questions to general questions regarding my wellbeing. if I was having any issues within work, I would feel more than confident to discuss it with her in my supervision.



Quality Assurance Framework

- Our quality assurance framework sets our audit of casework schedule and has practice standards that work can be measured against.
- Auditing provides an indicator of how we are progressing in embedding strength-based practice and how we can develop our approach based on the findings.



Performance Indicators

- We have developed a set of performance indicators that can be used to measure how well strength-based practice is being embedded within the service.
- The performance indicators will be reported within the monthly performance clinic sessions so that we can respond in the correct areas of the service to ensure that strength-based practice is embedded.



Performance Indicators

- Trends and movement against those indicators would then be monitored to ensure progress, set targets and where necessary take action to address performance which is travelling in the wrong direction.
- Key indicators will be included in the Council Performance Management Framework that is presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



Documentation

- Week commencing 8/01/2024 we went live with MOSAIC our new case recording system
- This provides colleagues with access to the new strength-based assessment and support planning documentation
- It is intended that the new documentation will enable colleagues to better demonstrate the strength-based work they are going with people in the community.



Next Steps

- We are working with the National Development Team for Inclusion on their Community Led Support model
- 3 year programme of service change with a strong focus on coproduction with the people who use our services
- The main focus is on the Adult Social Care pathway
- However, will also include the wider council (in particular Localities working), NHS and VCSE partners



Questions?

