

Professional Career Development in Health and Social Care (LCHS 4009)

Assignment 2 - Lina Solange Olivia

I.D. Number:2513888

Name of Tutor: Soban Sadia

INTRODUCTION

A portfolio is a collection of your work, skills, achievements and experiences

Examples: Assignments, certificates, work experience, skills, personal statement.

TASK 1

Contact Information:

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Personal Profile

Empathic freelancer carer with 20+ years of experience in supporting and providing special assistance to individuals with complex health care needs. Skilled in mental health support, with an emphasis on promoting and maintaining patient well-being and independence. I am also very much adaptable, dynamic and I always strive to provide high-quality, person-centered care to patients.

Education

College Degree at N.Y.S.

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Certhe level 4 Health and Social Care

Languages

English, French, Creole and Italian

Professional Experience

Bluebird Care — Full-Time Carer (01/2023 – Now)

I work as a Domiciliary Care Assistant at Bluebird Care, visiting clients in their own homes for one- or two-hour appointments. My duties include personal care, medication administration, meal preparation, light housekeeping, collecting prescriptions from the pharmacy, shopping on behalf of clients, and providing companionship. I find this role fulfilling because I know I am making a genuine difference in the lives of vulnerable people, and their happiness is what drives me every day.

Orchidea Blu — Full-Time Carer (09/2018 – 10/2022)

Provide compassionate, in-home care to clients, assisting with personal hygiene, meal preparation, medication reminders, mobility support, and daily routines. Ensure comfort, safety, and companionship while promoting independence and dignity in a home environment.

Progetto di Vita — Full-Time Carer (04/2009 – 08/2018)

Offering 24/7 companionship and support to elders, people with dementia and other similar conditions, helping them with mobility like washing, dressing, personal care, administering medication, preparing meals and housekeeping chores such as cleaning, cooking and laundry. Moreover, accompanying clients to appointments and social activities to allow them to pursue their hobbies and interests.

Fiordelmondo — Full-Time Carer (04/2002 – 04/2009)

Provide personal care and support to patients in a hospital setting, including assisting with daily activities such as bathing, feeding, mobility, toileting and medication. Monitor patients' well-being, support nursing staff, and ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all patients.

Caritas Volunteer (03/2004 – 09/2004, Evenings)

I volunteer with Caritas supporting vulnerable individuals and families in my local community. My responsibilities mainly include assisting with food distribution. This role has strengthened my teamwork, empathy, and ability to work effectively in high-demand environments.

Skills

Communication Skills - Caring - Patient - Determined - Reliable - Empathy - Compassionate

Interests

Sports - Outdoor Activities - Art - Design - Music – Reading

TASK 2

I am a trustworthy, compassionate, and caring person who is really interested in working as a care worker in the health and social care industry. My primary professional goal is to advance my expertise in this area and create a fulfilling career where I can truly improve people's lives. I am dedicated to helping people live with respect, dignity, and independence, and I am aware of the critical role that carers play in providing person-centred care. A carer must interact with clients courteously, pay close attention to their worries, and treat each person as an individual, considering their requirements, preferences, and background. I am aware of how crucial it is to always uphold confidentiality, privacy, dignity, and choice when giving care and assistance. I have developed a strong grasp of the fundamentals of safe and efficient practice—such as safeguarding, duty of care, equality and diversity, confidentiality, and person-centred approaches—through my studies in health and social care.

This knowledge has helped me understand how to protect individuals from harm while respecting their rights, choices and individuality. I also studied the importance of teamwork in high-quality care, health and wellness, and effective communication, which has improved my capacity to apply theory to real circumstances and prepared me for the day-to-day duties of working in a care setting. A care worker is essential in helping people with everyday tasks including meal preparation, mobility, personal care, and emotional support. I actively listen to service users, speak clearly, respectfully and professionally, and address their needs patiently and empathetically. I also understand how crucial it is to adhere to workplace policies and care plans so that assistance is secure, reliable, and tailored to each person.

Being understanding, patient, trustworthy, and composed under pressure are some of my personal strengths. I have a strong desire to learn and keep improving, and I'm ready to take on responsibility as needed. I work well with coworkers and contribute to an encouraging work environment, drawing on strong teamwork and communication skills. I also have strong organisational skills, attention to detail, and time management, all critical in a hectic care environment. These attributes, along with my training and genuine passion for the industry, would enable me to offer effective, dependable, and excellent support.

I am eager to bring my skills, dedication and caring nature to a role where I can grow professionally while making a meaningful difference in people's lives, and I am confident this commitment would make me a valuable addition to your care team.

TASK 3

Part A: SWOT Analysis – Social Care Worker

Strengths

In relation to my chosen role as a Social Care Worker, I have identified several personal strengths. I am a good active listener, and people find it easy to talk to me about difficult or sensitive issues, which is essential when supporting vulnerable service users. I am reliable and punctual, rarely missing shifts, and I stay calm under pressure, particularly during emergencies or challenging behaviour. I also have genuine empathy and patience and am physically fit enough to manage the manual handling tasks the role requires.

Weaknesses

Alongside these strengths, I have identified weaknesses to address. At present I have limited formal qualifications, not yet having completed an NVQ/QCF Level 3 Diploma or equivalent. My written communication and record-keeping could be more concise and accurate, and I sometimes take on too many tasks rather than delegating. I have limited experience with specialist conditions such as dementia or autism and can find it difficult to switch off emotionally after a difficult shift.

Opportunities

There are also clear opportunities available to me. My employer offers funded access to the Care Certificate and Level 3 Diploma, and there is growing national demand for social care workers, meaning good job security and clear progression routes. I can shadow senior care workers on site, and there are free short courses locally covering safeguarding, first aid and dementia awareness. In time, I could specialise in mental health, learning disabilities or palliative care.

Threats

Finally, there are several threats to consider. High workloads and staff shortages across the sector increase the risk of burnout, and pay is relatively low compared with the responsibility involved. Policies and inspection standards, such as those set by the CQC, change frequently and require ongoing awareness. The work is emotionally demanding, carrying a risk of compassion fatigue, and there is competition for progression into senior roles.

Part B: Personal Development Plan

Based on the weaknesses and opportunities identified in my SWOT analysis, I have set three SMART goals to help me prepare for and progress within the Social Care Worker role over the next two years. My first goal is to achieve the Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care, or an equivalent qualification, within eighteen months. I will enrol on the employer-funded programme, complete all mandatory and optional units including safeguarding and person-centred care, and build a portfolio of evidence from my day-to-day practice, running from month one to month eighteen. I will monitor progress through termly meetings with my course assessor, tracking completed units against the qualification checklist, and six-monthly supervision meetings with my line manager. My second goal is to improve my written communication and record-keeping to a consistently professional standard within six months. I will attend workplace training on report writing and documentation, ask a senior colleague to review two records each month, and use care-plan templates consistently while proofreading entries, running from month one to month six. My line

manager will audit a sample of my records monthly for accuracy, I will self-review using a checklist covering clarity, accuracy, timeliness and confidentiality, and there will be a formal check-in at three and six months. My third goal is to develop specialist knowledge of dementia care and gain a recognised award within twelve months. I will complete an accredited dementia awareness course, shadow the dementia lead for half a day each month, and apply techniques such as person-centred communication, reflecting on these in a learning journal, running from month three to month twelve. I will monitor progress by keeping my certificate as evidence, reviewing my journal with my mentor every two months, and seeking feedback from families where appropriate.

To monitor and evaluate my progress overall, I will hold formal supervision with my line manager at least every three months to review progress against all three goals. I will keep a reflective practice journal to record my learning, the challenges I face, and how I have applied new skills day-to-day. I will request structured feedback from colleagues, my mentor, and, where appropriate, service users and their families. I will formally review this Personal Development Plan at the six, twelve, eighteen and twenty-four-month marks, updating goals and timescales if my circumstances or service needs change. I will also maintain a portfolio of certificates, appraisals and other evidence to support future appraisals and job applications.

By the end of year one, I aim to have completed my dementia awareness training and made significant progress on the Level 3 Diploma, alongside a clearly improved standard of written record-keeping. By the end of year two, I aim to have completed the Level 3 Diploma in full, be recognised as competent in specialist dementia care, and be in a strong position to apply for a senior care worker or team leader role.

TASK 4

INTRODUCTION

Reflection is an important part of personal and professional development because it allows an individual to consider an experience, identify strengths and weaknesses, and plan improvements for the future (Jasper, 2013). Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988) provides a structured approach consisting of six stages: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan. This reflection uses Gibbs' (1988) model to reflect on my experience of delivering a university presentation, considering my thoughts, feelings, performance, verbal feedback received and areas I need to improve.

DESCRIPTION

The experience I am reflecting on was a university presentation completed as part of my Health and Social Care studies. I was required to research a selected topic and present it to my lecturer and classmates. Beforehand, I researched the subject, prepared my slides and practised what I wanted to say. During the presentation, I explained the main points and attempted to communicate clearly with the audience. Although nervous at the beginning, I completed the presentation, an experience important for developing my communication, confidence and presentation skills.

FEELINGS

Before the presentation, I felt anxious, concerned I might forget information or make mistakes, and worried about speaking in front of other students. However, I felt more comfortable once I started, having prepared beforehand. As I progressed, I became more confident, realising the audience was listening and responding positively. After finishing, I felt relieved and proud, though I recognised that my nervousness had affected my eye contact and confidence at the start.

EVALUATION

Overall, the presentation had both positive and negative aspects. My research was thorough, my slides

were clear, and I stayed within the time limit, managing my initial nerves well enough to complete the task fluently. However, there were weaknesses too. My lecturer's verbal feedback noted that, although my content knowledge was strong, my eye contact was limited because I relied too heavily on reading from my notes and slides. I was also told my pace was slightly too fast, particularly at the start, which may have made it harder for the audience to follow my key points. I agree with this feedback, as I recall rushing through my introduction due to nervousness.

ANALYSIS

Looking more closely at why these issues occurred, I believe my anxiety was the main underlying cause. Because I was nervous, I subconsciously used my notes as a safety net, which reduced my ability to engage with the audience through eye contact and natural pacing. This links to Gibbs' (1988) view that emotional state directly affects performance and behaviour. My lecturer's feedback also highlighted that my slides contained plenty of information, a strength for demonstrating understanding, but this may have encouraged me to read rather than speak naturally, since I felt I needed to cover everything written down. In contrast, the strengths identified, such as clear structure and good subject knowledge, suggest my preparation process was effective and should continue in future. This shows that good preparation alone is not enough; delivery skills such as pacing, eye contact and audience engagement also need to be practised deliberately (Bulman and Schutz, 2013).

CONCLUSION

This experience taught me that thorough research and preparation are valuable, but they must be paired with confident delivery techniques to be fully effective. Nervousness can manifest physically through rushed speech and reduced eye contact, even when underlying knowledge is solid. My lecturer's feedback was particularly useful in helping me recognise gaps between how I felt I performed and how I was actually perceived. Without it, I may not have noticed how much I relied on my notes. This reflection has reinforced the importance of seeking feedback regularly, as it offers an external perspective self-assessment alone cannot provide.

ACTION PLAN

Going forward, I plan to make several changes to improve my presentation skills. First, I will practise presenting using only brief prompt cards rather than full scripts, so I rely less on reading and improve natural eye contact. Second, I will rehearse my presentations aloud in front of others beforehand, so I can receive feedback on pacing and adjust accordingly. Third, I will practise deep breathing or grounding techniques before presenting to help manage anxiety, since my analysis showed nervousness was the root cause of several issues. Finally, I intend to seek feedback more proactively after future presentations, as this reflection has shown how valuable external perspectives are for genuine improvement. By applying these strategies, I hope to become a more confident and engaging presenter in future academic and professional situations.

REFERENCE LIST:

- Bulman, C. and Schutz, S. (2013) Reflective Practice in Nursing. 5th edn. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.*
- Gibbs, G. (1988) Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods. Oxford: Further Education Unit, Oxford Polytechnic.*
- Jasper, M. (2013) Beginning Reflective Practice. 2nd edn. Andover: Cengage Learning.*

