

# Why is critical thinking an important skill in professional practice in health and social care?

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# What is critical thinking?

- Critical thinking involves analysing information, evaluating evidence ,and making reasoned decisions.
- Essential for effective health and social care practice
- Helps professionals assess situations objectively
- Critical thinking goes beyond accepting information at face value and it helps
- Its improves service-user outcomes and satisfaction.
- Tailors care plans to each person.

Critical thinking improves health and social outcomes by empowering you to make evidence-based decisions, avoid impulsive actions, and better navigate complex information

### References (Harvard style)

- Cottrell, s (2017) critical thinking skills ;effective analysis, argument and reflection.
- HSCNI (health and social care northern ireland 2021)critical thinking and decision-making guide.

# Practical example

- As a care worker in a residential care home ,I may notice that an elderly resident who is usually sociable has become withdrawn and confuse Instead of assuming that this behaviour is simply due to old age, I would use critical thinking to consider other possible causes, such as dehydration, an infection, medication side effects ,or emotional distress. I would continue to observe and record any changes, speak to residential.