



Principles of Health and Social Care Practice

(BMHP5016)

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Component 1

Reflective Report

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1. Introduction

Health and social care across the UK is delivered under several key principles to ensure the best possible care is provided in a safe and effective way. These key principles of person-centred care, partnership working and ethical practice are a fundamental part of Health and Social Care practice today. These essential principles reinforce the work of professionals in all settings within Health and Social Care, ensuring the support they provide is delivered within individuals' rights, upholds their welfare and promotes joint decision-making with the individual and, where appropriate, others.

Task 1 of this report outlines the importance of these principles and their relevance to current services in the UK. Task 2 evaluates how these principles are put into practice using Joan's Story, a real UK case study, to evaluate how using personalised and coordinated care can have a positive effect for individuals using services. Task 3 explores how these principles will impact my professional development and daily practice as a health and social care worker.

T A S K - 1

2. Reflection on the Importance of Principles of Health and Social Care

Health and social care services are delivered safely, effectively and with compassion across the UK. These services are characterized by a set of fundamental principles that underpin health and social care practice, those being person-centeredness, partnership working and ethics in practice.

The practice of health and social care is governed by legislation and professional standards that aim to ensure individual service users' needs are met within their rights to promote their wellbeing and ensure quality in services they use. Support is given within health and social care by ensuring the individual is at the centre and involved in decisions and planning for their support. This way the individual's experiences, preferences and strengths are recognised, and support is given to them that will help promote their dignity, to enable their inclusion and to enable them to live the best quality of life possible (Brooker and Latham, 2016). Person-centred care can be linked to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943). This identifies the physical, psychological and social needs of individuals and aims to maximise engagement, satisfaction and health outcomes for them.

Partnership working between individuals and teams of professionals and between organisations within health and social care is important to manage increasingly complex service users with complex needs and to prevent fragmentation of care (Thompson, 2020).

The Health and Care Act 2022 recognises that effective support often requires several agencies to work together. Therefore, sharing best practice, working together to deliver care and delivering a more holistic approach to the needs of individual service users through partnership working is important. Quality of care and continuity of care are key, avoiding duplication of work already being carried out by others. Although organisations have different objectives and use different methods of communication, which can create barriers to effective working, information not being shared has been identified as a factor in some safeguarding failures.

Good working practice between professionals is important, but good working practice depends on good communication, mutual respect and shared accountability. Ethically delivering services and making decisions as health and social care services is crucial when deciding on a course of action and deciding on a person's wellbeing. Using knowledge and values with critical judgment to make decisions is essential in health and social care (Trevithick, 2012). The four principles that most health professionals are guided by are autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice (Beauchamp and Childress, 2019). However, there are many occasions when these principles conflict with each other. For example, an individual's right to choose could put them at risk of harm. Therefore, it is crucial that health and social care professionals use their critical judgment when delivering services and making decisions to meet their responsibilities towards that individual and make the best decision for them.

T A S K - 2

3. Practical Examples of Principles in Practice

According to NHS England, Joan's story provides a valuable example of how person-centred care, partnership working and ethical practice can be applied within UK health and social care services. For a lady with many health needs and regular contact with health services, a person-centred approach ensured that her care was focused on what was important to her. Examples of how the application of these principles led to positive outcomes for this lady were detailed and highlighted some of the challenges experienced in putting these principles into practice. This is further discussed below.

i) Person-Centred Care

Principles of person-centred care expect professionals to take decisions about Joan's care to establish her goals, preferences and priorities. In contrast to the more traditional medical way of working, which focuses on treating the illness, this approach concentrates on Joan's overall wellbeing and quality of life. The recognition of Joan's personal priorities by

practitioners throughout her care ensured that her psychological and social needs were also addressed. This assistance to meet more than her physical health care needs resulted in increased engagement and empowerment on her part. However, a person-centred approach to care requires time, good communication and flexibility on the part of the healthcare professional. However, within a busy healthcare environment, there are limitations to offering care that is planned around the individual's preferences and needs. This approach to improving outcomes requires organisations to support their staff in delivering the highest quality of care that is personalised to individual people's needs.

ii) Partnership Working

Joan's care support involves several different professionals and services working together to identify and work towards goals in her best interest. As the Health and Care Act 2022 looks to integrate health and social care services, the importance of partnership working and coordinated working to achieve best outcomes for the individual is increasingly recognised. As highlighted previously, Joan's care supported continuity and attempted to avoid fragmentation of her care by several services through effective partnership working and goal setting. Thompson (2020) argues that effective practice is improved by working collaboratively with others, drawing on different skills and perspectives to address complex needs to provide a holistic response. However, a practical challenge in multi-agency work is that communication problems, differing objectives between organisations and between professionals, and competing priorities may hinder better collaboration. Positive outcomes such as Joan's are, therefore, not just down to the number of professionals involved, but also to the quality of communication between them and the joint decisions that are taken.

iii) Ethical Practice

In addition to delivering good quality care to Joan, her care was delivered within an ethical framework. She was given the option to make choices within her care and the choices she made were respected in her care and to promote her wellbeing in her care. Professionals have a duty to respect the choices of individuals in order to keep them safe. However, the choices made by individuals may put them in danger and so there is a conflict of responsibility. As Beauchamp and Childress (2019) assert, ethics is often a case of balancing competing principles, and so there is no one principle that will be better than the others in every situation.

The case of Joan highlights how professionals can act to balance the competing principles in order to keep someone safe while at the same time respecting their human rights as enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998. Joan's story highlights the interconnectedness of person-centred care, partnership working and ethical practice and how they can bring about positive results for people using services and their carers. However, delivering these approaches

depends upon communication, individual professional judgement and organisational support being put into practice consistently in health and social care settings across the UK.

T A S K - 3

4. Self-Reflection as a Future Health and Social Care Professional

i) Description

Effective health and social care involve studying person-centred care, partnership working and ethical practice. Before commencing this module, I thought effective health and social care was about meeting the physical needs of individuals and ensuring their safe care. However, through studying these key principles of effective health and social care, I have also gained insight into how respecting individuals' choices, promoting dignity and working in partnership with others is also important. I will utilize these key principles of effective health and social care in my future role within health and social care as they have aided my understanding of effective professional practice. Feelings These principles have helped me to understand more the good and bad points of myself as a person and future member of health and social care services. My confidence in working with people at all levels and having respectful communications is good. My past experiences as a teacher, manager and dispenser in pharmacy have given me good qualities in communicating with others, maintaining confidentiality and working in partnership with others. However, I do lack confidence in challenging more experienced individuals and making decisions in complex situations.

ii) Evaluation

I consider myself to be an empathetic person and am always trying to see things from another person's point of view and treat them with respect. I believe that this supports the person-centred care approach by listening to and valuing people's preferences. Teaching children and maintaining good communication with parents has helped me to further develop these skills. I am also confident in relation to partnership working. In my previous roles, I worked with colleagues to complete tasks to a high standard and communicated effectively to achieve objectives. However, through reflection, I recognize that I need to become more confident in highlighting concerns and contributing to discussions within multidisciplinary meetings.

iii) Analysis

This module has shown that person-centred care is more than being kind and caring for others. The module has highlighted the importance of wellbeing, choice and control as set out

in the Care Act 2014. This means that in care planning the individual must be involved and that the care professional must share decision-making with the individual and respect their autonomy. Partnership working is an important element of our work, highlighting communication and teamwork. I acknowledge the fact that, while I value working as a team, the team consist of different professionals with different priorities and views, which I must respect. Ethical practice has been a major point of consideration for me in this module. Even though the principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice appear simple in practice, it can be more complicated. For example, a user's choice may conflict with a health and social care professional's perception of their best interest and their safety. Again, as noted by Trevithick (2012), our professional judgments are developed through our experiences and our reflective practice, not just by our knowledge of the policies and procedures. Thus, ethical practice and continuing professional development are also key considerations for me in my practice. The strengths of self in practice include a positive attitude to all people, being an empathic and a respectful person to all individuals, able to work within a team and hold respect for all people's diversity. The areas of practice that require development include increasing confidence in all multidisciplinary meetings, furthering advanced communication skills, understanding and making appropriate ethical decisions in complex situations. This increased self-awareness and subsequent learning within health and social care will continue to develop.

iv) Action Plan

Additional communication skills, safeguarding and making ethical decisions will help to develop my professional practice. The legislation that affects the work I do as a care worker will continue to be reviewed such as the Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Health and Care Act 2022. Feedback from colleagues and line managers, participation in multidisciplinary meetings where possible, and use of a reflective journal using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle will help to ensure that I am becoming more confident and using my professional judgment to deliver a high standard of person-centred care in the future.

5. Conclusion

Health and social care in the UK is based upon several core principles including person-centred care, partnership working and ethical practice. This report has explored the contribution that these core principles can make to promoting the wellbeing of individuals, protecting their rights and delivering quality in their care. Using the example of Joan's Story, the report explored how different approaches can support individuals and improve outcomes through personalised, coordinated care. My future practice as a health and social care professional will draw on my existing strengths and weaknesses. Delivering good quality care in the future will require a commitment to ongoing learning, communication, ethics and to

working in collaboration with others. This way of working will enable health and social care professionals to deliver good quality care that leads to positive outcomes for individuals and is delivered with compassion.

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