

Reflective Report: Principles of Health and Social Care in UK Practice

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Assignment Title: Reflective Report on Principles of Health and Social Care

Task 1: Reflection on the Importance of Principles of Health and Social Care

The principles of person-centred care, partnership working, and ethics form the foundation of high-quality health and social care practice within the United Kingdom. These principles are embedded within national legislation, professional standards, and organisational frameworks, shaping service delivery across health and social care settings. They are central to promoting dignity, safeguarding rights, improving outcomes, and ensuring accountability in practice. Person-centred care places the individual at the heart of all decision-making processes. Rather than focusing solely on illness or service provision, this approach recognises individuals as unique people with personal histories, preferences, strengths, and aspirations. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding person-centred care. Maslow argued that individuals must have their basic physiological and safety needs met before progressing towards psychological wellbeing and self-actualisation. In practice, this means recognising that emotional security, belonging, respect, and autonomy are just as important as physical health. The Care Act 2014 reinforces wellbeing, personal choice, and control in adult social care. The Act requires professionals to consider the individual's wishes, beliefs, and outcomes when planning support. This demonstrates a move away from paternalistic care towards empowerment and co-production. Partnership working is equally significant. Health and social care services operate within interconnected systems involving multiple agencies. The Health and Care Act 2022 strengthened integrated care systems (ICSs), encouraging collaboration to reduce health inequalities and improve outcomes. Ethics underpin professional practice. Core principles include autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 protects individuals who may lack capacity and ensures decisions are made in their best interests using the least restrictive option. Together, these principles promote dignity, safety, accountability, and high standards of care across UK health and social care services.

Task 2: Practical Examples of Concepts in Practice

A practical example of these principles can be observed in dementia care within a residential care home setting in England. Supporting an older adult living with moderate dementia requires the application of person-centred approaches, collaborative working, and ethical decision-making. Person-centred care was demonstrated through an individualised care plan based on the resident's life history, preferences, and cultural background. Family members were consulted to understand meaningful routines and communication styles. Familiar activities and structured routines reduced anxiety and enhanced emotional wellbeing. Partnership working was evident through multidisciplinary meetings involving care staff, general practitioners, community mental health teams, and family members. Effective information sharing improved medication management, mobility support, and risk assessment. Ethical principles were applied when the resident refused medication. A capacity assessment was conducted under the Mental Capacity Act 2005. When capacity was lacking for that decision, a best interests meeting was arranged to determine the most appropriate course of action. Although staffing pressures can challenge implementation, strengthening workforce training and communication systems can enhance collaborative and ethical practice. This example illustrates that when person-centred care, partnership working, and ethics are integrated effectively, individuals experience improved wellbeing, dignity, and safety.

Task 3: Self-Reflection as a Health and Social Care Professional

Reflecting on my role as a health and social care professional, I recognise that these principles significantly shape my daily practice. Person-centred care influences how I interact with service users. I listen actively, respect privacy, and involve individuals in decisions about their care. I promote independence and dignity in line with the Care Act 2014. Partnership working shapes my communication with colleagues and external professionals. Clear documentation, respectful collaboration, and shared responsibility ensure continuity of care. The Health and Care Act 2022 reinforces the importance of integrated practice. Ethical practice guides my safeguarding responsibilities and responses to dilemmas. I apply the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 by presuming capacity and supporting informed decision-making. I maintain confidentiality and uphold professional standards. My strengths include empathy, patience, communication skills, and teamwork. However, I aim to build greater confidence in leadership and deepen my understanding of complex ethical issues. To improve, I plan to undertake continuing professional development in safeguarding, dementia care, and ethical leadership. I will engage in reflective practice and seek mentorship to enhance my professional growth. By embedding person-centred care, partnership working, and ethical principles into my daily work, I will contribute to safe, compassionate, and high-quality care while continuously developing as a professional.

Reference List (Harvard Style)

Care Act 2014. London: HMSO. Health and Care Act 2022. London: HMSO. Maslow, A.H. (1943) 'A theory of human motivation', *Psychological Review*, 50(4), pp. 370–396. Mental Capacity Act 2005. London: HMSO.