



Student name: Nicola Ferguson

Student ID: 2334635

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Lecturer name: Bianca Sanfilippo

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Introduction

Health and social care in the UK is based on important principles that help professionals provide safe and effective care. Three key principles are person-centred care, partnership working, and ethics. These ensure that individuals are treated with respect and that their needs are met properly. This report will reflect on why these principles are important, give an example of how they are used in practice, and explain how they will influence my future work, including what I have learned from my placement in community care.

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

Person-centred care means putting the individual at the centre of everything. Instead of only focusing on their illness, it looks at their personal needs, preferences, and feelings. This is important because everyone is different, and care should be tailored to each person. This idea links to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which explains that people have different levels of needs, from basic physical needs to emotional well-being (Simply Psychology, 2023).

Partnership working is also very important in health and social care. It involves different professionals working together, such as doctors, nurses, and social workers. It can also include the individual and their family. Working together helps make sure care is organised and consistent. Good communication is important because it reduces mistakes and improves outcomes (SCIE, 2022).

Ethics is another key principle. Ethics helps professionals make the right decisions and treat people fairly. Important ethical principles include respect for choice, doing good, avoiding harm, and treating people equally (NHS, 2023). For example, patients have the right to make decisions about their own care.

In the UK, these principles are supported by laws such as the Care Act 2014 and the Health and Care Act 2022. These laws focus on protecting individuals and improving how services work together (Gov.uk, 2014). Overall, these principles help improve the quality of care and ensure people are treated with dignity and respect.

Another important part of person-centred care is helping individuals stay as independent as possible. This means supporting people to make their own choices and take part in decisions about their care. This is important because it helps people feel more in control of their lives, which can improve confidence and well-being. It also links to shared decision-making, where individuals are involved in planning their care rather than just being told what will happen. NICE (2021) highlights that involving people in decisions helps improve their experience and leads to better outcomes.

Partnership working is not just professionals working together, but also services sharing information and working in a joined-up way. This is important because many people use more than one service, especially if they have long-term or complex needs. When services communicate well, it helps avoid delays and mistakes and makes care more consistent (SCIE, 2024).

Ethics is especially important when decisions are difficult or sensitive, such as end-of-life care or disagreements between families and professionals. In these situations, professionals need to balance different views while always focusing on what is best for the individual. The Health and Care Act 2022 also support this by encouraging services to work together more effectively so care is more focused on the person (Gov.uk, 2022).

Task 2: Practical Examples of Concepts in Practice

An example of these principles can be seen both in general care settings and in my placement in community care. During my placement, I supported individuals living in their own homes who required assistance with daily activities.

Person-centred care was very important in this setting. For example, everyone had their own care plan based on their needs and preferences. I observed that some individuals preferred to follow a specific daily routine, such as eating at certain times or receiving support in a particular way. Respecting these preferences helped them feel more comfortable and independent in their own home.

Partnership working was also clearly shown during my placement. Community care involves working with different professionals such as district nurses, GPs, social workers, and family members. I saw how important communication was, especially when sharing updates about a person's condition or needs. For example, if an individual's health changed, this information would be shared with other professionals to ensure they received the right care. Ethics was also a key part of my experience.

I learned the importance of always maintaining confidentiality and respecting individuals' dignity. In some cases, individuals needed support with personal care, and it was important to ensure this was done respectfully and sensitively. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 also applies in community care, meaning decisions must be made in the person's best interests if they are unable to decide for themselves (NHS, 2023).

Policies such as safeguarding guidelines were also followed to protect vulnerable individuals (SCIE, 2022). However, I noticed that challenges such as limited time and workload could

sometimes affect how care was delivered. Despite this, applying these principles helped improve the quality of care and ensured individuals were treated with respect.

During my placement in community care, I saw how important it is to adapt care to each individual. No two people were the same, so support had to be flexible depending on their needs. Some people needed very little help and wanted to stay independent, while others needed more regular support.

This showed me how important person-centred care really is in practice. I also saw shared decision-making happening in real situations. People were encouraged to make choices about their daily routines, such as when they wanted support or how they preferred things to be done. This links closely to NICE (2021), which says that people should be involved in decisions about their own care wherever possible.

Communication was a big part of partnership working during my placement. Care workers shared updates with nurses, social workers, and family members so everyone was aware of any changes. This helped make sure care was safe and consistent.

Ethics was always part of the job. Staff always asked for consent before helping someone and made sure they respected privacy and dignity. I also saw how important confidentiality was, especially when dealing with personal information (NHS, 2023).

One challenge I noticed was time pressure. Sometimes, the staff were very busy, which meant they had less time with each person. Even so, they still tried to give respectful and safe care.

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

As a future health and social care professional, I understand that person-centred care, partnership working, and ethics will be very important in my daily work. My placement in community care has helped me see how these principles are applied in real life. Person-centred care will influence how I support individuals.

During my placement, I saw how important it was to listen to individuals and respect their preferences. For example, some individuals preferred to do certain tasks themselves, even if it took longer. Supporting their independence while still ensuring their safety is an important part of person-centred care.

In my future role, I will continue to involve individuals in decisions about their care and treat them with respect. Partnership working is also something I experienced during my placement. I observed how different professionals communicated and worked together to support individuals living at home. This showed me how important teamwork is in providing effective care. In my future role, I will make sure I communicate clearly with

colleagues and share important information when needed. I will also involve families where appropriate, as they play an important role in supporting individuals. Ethics will guide my behaviour and decision-making.

During my placement, I learned the importance of maintaining confidentiality and respecting individuals' dignity, especially when providing personal care. I also understand the importance of supporting individuals to make their own choices whenever possible. If I face difficult situations, I will follow policies and guidelines to ensure I act in the best interests of the individual. One of my strengths is my communication skills. During my placement, I was able to build positive relationships with individuals by listening to them and showing empathy.

I am also a caring and patient person, which is important in health and social care. These strengths will help me provide person-centred care. However, I recognise that there are areas where I need to improve. For example, I need to develop more knowledge about laws and policies such as the Care Act 2014. During my placement, I also realised that I need to build my confidence when dealing with more complex situations. In addition, I would like to gain more experience working with different professionals. To improve, I plan to continue learning through training and education. I will also ask for feedback from supervisors and colleagues to help me improve my skills. Reflecting on my experiences will also help me develop, and I can use models such as Gibbs' Reflective Cycle to guide this process (SkillsYouNeed, 2024).

In the future, I want to become a confident and skilled professional who provides high-quality care. My placement in community care has given me valuable experience and helped me understand how important these principles are in practice. By continuing to develop my skills and knowledge, I will be able to provide effective and compassionate care.

Thinking more about my placement, I now understand how important it is to follow guidance and policies in real practice. The Health and Care Act 2022 focuses on making sure health and social care services work together better, which I saw happening during my placement when different professionals communicated to support individuals (Gov.uk, 2022).

I also realised how useful NICE guidance is in real care settings. It helps professionals make better decisions and ensures people are involved in their own care. This is something I saw in practice when individuals were given choices about how they wanted their support to be delivered (NICE, 2021).

I also learned that working in care can sometimes be emotionally challenging. You need to stay calm, professional, and patient, even when situations are difficult. Because of this, it is important to use support from colleagues and supervisors when needed.

One of my strengths is still communication. I found it easy to build relationships with people by listening and being patient. However, I know I still need to improve my confidence when speaking with more senior staff. To improve this, I will try to get more involved in discussions and ask for feedback. Overall, my placement helped me understand what working in health and social care is really like. It showed me that being a good professional is not just about knowledge, but also about attitude, communication, and continuous learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, person-centred care, partnership working, and ethics are essential in health and social care. They help ensure that individuals receive safe, respectful, and high-quality care. My placement in community care has helped me understand how these principles are applied in real life and how important they are for providing good care. I will use these principles in future to ensure that I can give the best care possible in any job in healthcare I am part of.

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