

Written Report

1. Introduction

In this report, the position of a Support Worker within adult social care is examined, and key job descriptions are summarized and assessed, with tools and techniques being proposed for improved job performance. The position is accountable for caring for adults with varying requirements, ranging from physical, emotional, and cognitive needs, and directly promotes safe and person-centred approaches, which are essential for all positions within the sector as promoted by the national standards set by the (Care Quality Commission, 2014). The position is also guided by various laws and professional standards, as explained by the (Department of Health and Social Care, 2014, and NICE, 2015).

2. The role and background description

A Support Worker delivers hands-on, emotional, and social support to adults within either home, community, or residential environments. The range of tasks may include personal care, mobility, nutrition, medication cues, community access, social activities, and accurate recording, and must be carried out within remits set by professional standards to respect and preserve dignity and safety (Care Quality Commission, 2014).

The job demands an appropriate level of respect and communication, maintaining awareness, being confidential, working within equality and diversity, and being competent within human rights in social care (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018). The Support Workers work in partnership with families, senior personnel, and other professional groups, reporting any concerns as part of safe delegation and supervision (Royal College of Nursing, 2019). The crucial competencies are safe moving and handling, recognizing signs of deterioration, and encouraging independence, all of which are critical components of high-quality social care (Skills for Care, 2020).

3 Evaluation: What Knowledge/Skills Are Important and Why?

Support Workers must have wide-ranging knowledge and skill sets in order to provide both safe and person-centred care. Some of the most important skill sets are those which underpin the provision of safe and person-centred communication. This enables the Support Worker to understand the needs and preferences of the service user. Supporting communication is the basis for creating and sustaining dignity and is reflected in national fundamental standards on quality of care as identified by the (Care Quality Commission in 2014).

Another essential skill is observation, monitoring, and accurate recording. Support Workers spend most of their time with service users, so they are best suited to recognize any early signs of change in health, behavior, or mood. The capability to recognize early signs, like loss of appetite, mobility, confusion, and pain, is essential as it will help in averting any decline in

health. Reliable recording and reporting will help in ensuring health continuity and are in line with safe supervision and delegation standards (Royal College of Nursing, 2019).

Protecting the knowledge and understanding of the legal framework is crucial, as Support Workers are very important in the process of safeguarding vulnerable adults. The workers should be aware of the signs and symptoms of negligence, exploitation, and abuse and should understand how and when to refer to these concerns. This is required by the Care Act 2014 (Department of Health and Social Care, 2014). The understanding of mental capacity and consent will also help in decision-making practices in line with the NICE decision-making and capacity process (NICE, 2015).

Key practical skills associated with caring, ranging from personal caring, nutrition, mobility, and infection prevention, are also core to the job. Effective use of moving and handling techniques will go on to secure the client and the caregiver, thereby helping to achieve the standards set by the Care Quality Commission on safety and effectiveness (Care Quality Commission, 2014).

Empathy and other interpersonal and emotional competencies, and qualities like patience and resilience, must also be emphasized as they are as important as other competencies. Support Workers often work with clients experiencing crisis, ill health, and loss, and so they will require 'emotional intelligence' to handle the situations and, at the same time, maintain right-based caring practices (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018).

In conclusion, teamwork, management of time, and working together are essential in ensuring all activities are carried out safely and on time, in addition to the timely exchange of information. (Skills for Care, 2020) cites teamwork as an essential skill for the whole adult social-care sector, as it enables very efficient collaboration with other professionals.

Together, the skills identified provide the basis for safe, caring, and compliant support. Lack of this skill set will increase risk and deteriorate the level of support.

4 Tools and Techniques to Improve Performance in This Role

Increased efficiency within the role of the Support Worker demands as well as promotes achievable and realistic approaches, which boost confidence and develop both technical and communication competencies. The most successful technique as far as this topic is concerned is reflective practice. Workers are required to reflect on their behavior and set improvement and development goals for themselves, thereby working towards meeting the requirements set by (Skills for Care, 2020) in relation to continuous professional development.

Regular supervision and peer observation are also important. Supervisions with senior members provide opportunities for feedback, discussion of role and management of workload or emotional issues. This is according to best-practice models of delegation and supervision (Royal College of Nursing, 2019). Peer observation enables Support Workers to observe and gain from other practitioners, compare approaches, and benefit from immediate and positive feedback.

Another useful resource is micro-learning and e-learning, which consists of taking online courses on various levels of training, including safeguarding, dementia, mental capacity, and infection control. The benefit of this program is that it enables the employee to complete the training in small learning sessions on a regular basis, so overall training becomes more attainable. The training is used to provide employment and flexibility in relation to training under the Care Act (Department of Health and Social Care, 2014) and mental capacity (NICE, 2015).

Practice through simulation and role-play enhances skill development. The notion is that practicing moving and handling, de-escalation, communication, and emergency procedures within a safe and controlled setting reduces the risk of error and enhances confidence. This is within the requirements set by the CQC on delivering safe and competent caring practices (Care Quality Commission, 2014).

Practical tools for working within an organization, for example, use of checklists, organized handover systems, and daily care cues, will also go a long way in ensuring improvements in consistency. The aim is to provide coverage and ensure tasks are never overlooked and communication is clear among various staff members (Royal College of Nursing, 2019).

The use of person-centred approaches through tools such as one-page profiles and life history summaries enables more personalised approaches to care. This is because the tools allow workers to understand an individual's communication styles, routines, and significant relationships, and enable human rights approaches to practice (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018).

Finally, stress management and resilience techniques, like mindfulness, wellbeing workshops, peer support groups, and regular break times, are useful techniques in order to maintain employee wellness and reduce burnout. Since the social working environment is also potentially emotionally draining, managing employee well-being enables them to provide high-quality caring support (Skills for Care, 2020).

Collectively, this set of tools provides a well-structured and enabling platform for professional development, and it improves competency, confidence, and the overall level of care.

5. Conclusion

Support Workers are critical to the promotion of safety, dignity, and independence in adult social care. The strengthening of communication, the promotion of knowledge, and resilience will directly improve the level of support being offered. Methods such as supervision, reflection, training, simulation, and person-centred planning will add value to the required standards of safe and effective health and social care delivery (Care Quality Commission, 2014; Department of Health and Social Care, 2014). On-going development through these approaches will remain beneficial within health and social care and can benefit service users, staff, and health and social care as a whole.

References

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