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Introduction

This report will show the importance of effective communication with service users and their families in relation to the case study of Mrs. Thompson.

Mrs. Thompson is 84 years old. She has been discharged from hospital with pneumonia, she lives alone, in sheltered housing, and she has two visits a day from domiciliary carers. She suffers from dementia and forgets to take her medication. For two days there were medications missed; she needs a medication review. She has also been found outside wearing inappropriate clothing.

Effective communication is a fundamental aspect of high-quality health and social care, enabling professionals to build trust to promote dignity, and provide person-centered support. (Thompson ,2019). Clear and compassionate communication is particularly important as age-related illnesses may affect their ability to express their needs and preferences. (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, 2023).

The report will examine communication models including the iceberg model of communication. It will also consider relevant legislation, including the care act 2014 (Great Britain, 2014). and the equality act 2010,(Great Britain ,2010)

1) Communicating Effectively with the service user and her families

The equality act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination on the grounds of protected characteristics, including age and disability Mrs. Thompson would be protected under the act and has the right to receive information and support in a way that meets her communication needs. (great Britain,2010). Health and social care professionals should make reasonable adjustments to ensure communication is accessible and effective.

When communicating with the service user, carers should use clear, simple language, speak slowly, maintain eye contact, and allow extra time for her to process information and respond. They should minimise distractions, use a calm and reassuring tone, and support verbal communication with visual prompts or gestures where appropriate. These approaches help to reduce confusion and anxiety, enabling Mrs. Thompson to participate in decisions about her care as much as possible.

Communication with family members is equally important. With the service users' consent, or where appropriate under the mental capacity act 2005, carers should keep family members informed about changes in their healthcare needs and wellbeing. Professionals should listen to families concerns, answer questions honestly and involve them in care planning while respecting the service user's privacy and dignity. This collaborative approach promotes person centred care and ensures that everyone involved has a shared understanding of individual needs.

By following the principles of the equality act 2010, carers can provide inclusive, respectful and non-discriminatory communication that supports the service user's rights, promotes independence and improves quality of care Mrs. Thompson receives.

The iceberg model of communication demonstrates that only a small part of communication is conveyed through spoken words, while much of the message is communicated through non-verbal behaviours, emotions, attitudes, and underlying feelings. This model is relevant when caring for Mrs. Thompson as she has dementia, and it may affect her ability to communicate verbally. Carers should therefore pay close attention to non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, eye contact, body language, and changes in behavior to gain a better understanding of her needs and emotions. For example, if Mrs. Thompson appears distressed or becomes withdrawn during personal care, carers should explore possible underlying causes, such as fear, confusion or discomfort, rather than assuming Mrs. Thompson is being uncooperative. Family members can also provide valuable information about Mrs. Thompsons usual behaviours preferences and methods of communication, enabling carers to respond in a way that is person centered and respectful. Using the iceberg model of communication helps professionals build trusting relationships, reduce misunderstandings and deliver care that meets Mrs. Thompsons physical and emotional needs.

2) The importance of good administrative skills within professional practice

Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 requires providers to Good administrative skills are fundamental to effective professional practice within the health and social care sector. They support the delivery of safe, high-quality, and person-centred care by ensuring that information is managed accurately, confidentially, and efficiently. Administrative tasks such as maintaining records, scheduling appointments, communicating with multidisciplinary teams, and storing information securely contribute to effective service delivery and continuity of care. Professionals who demonstrate strong organisational and administrative skills help reduce errors, improve decision making, and ensure compliance with legal and organisational requirements.

One of the most important administrative responsibilities is accurate record keeping. Health and social care records provide a clear and factual account of an individual's assessment, care planning, treatment, and progress. Accurate records enable professionals to communicate effectively with colleagues, ensuring continuity of care and reducing the risk of mistakes. Records should be clear, legible, factual, dated, and signed, while avoiding personal opinions or unnecessary information. poor record keeping can result in medication errors, safeguarding failures and compromised patient safety. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Code (2018) states that professionals must maintain clear, accurate, and timely records to protect people receiving care.

Good administrative practice also requires compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 alongside the UK General Data Protection (UK GDPR), establishes principles for processing personal information lawfully, fairly and transparently. Personal data should only be collected for legitimate purposes, kept accurate, stored securely, and retained only for as long as necessary. Individuals also have rights regarding access to their personal information and how it is used. Health and social care organisations must ensure that confidential information is protected through secure storage systems, password protected electronic records, and restricted access to authorised staff. Failure to comply with these legal requirements can result in disciplinary action, financial penalties, and loss of public trust.

Professional practice is also guided by wider legislation and policy frameworks. The maintain accurate, complete, and contemporaneous records to ensure safe care. The care act 2014 promotes person centred care, safeguarding and information sharing where appropriate to protect individuals from harm. In addition, the NHS Records Management Code of Practice

(2021) provides guidance on creating, storing, retaining, and securely disposing of records throughout their lifecycle.

3) the importance of working collaboratively in a multidisciplinary team

Working collaboratively with other professionals is essential in health and social care to ensure that service users receive safe, person-centred, and coordinated care. Effective multi-agency work involves professionals such as general practitioner, (GPs), community nurses, and domiciliary care workers sharing information, expertise, and responsibilities to meet an individual's physical, emotional, and social needs. Collaboration improves continuity of care, reduces the risk of errors, and promotes better health outcomes (NICE, 2023).

Several approaches can foster effective collaboration. Regular (MDT) multidisciplinary team meetings enable professionals to discuss care plans, review progress, and make joint decisions based on the service users changing needs. Clear communication using accurate record keeping and secure information sharing systems ensures that all professionals have access to current and relevant information while complying with the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and data protection act 2018. In addition, adopting a person centred approach encourages

Professionals to involve the individuals and their families in decision making ensuring care reflects the persons preferences values and goals (NHS England,2024).

Despite its benefits, multi-agency working can face challenges, including poor communication, differing professional priorities, unclear roles, and confidentiality. These barriers can lead to fragmented care and delays in decision-making. Strategies to overcome these challenges include establishing clear roles and responsibilities, developing shared care plans, promoting mutual respect between professionals, and providing interprofessional training to improve teamwork and understanding of each other's roles. Strong leadership and effective conflict resolution also help build trust and encourage collaborative practice. By working together effectively, healthcare professionals can deliver integrated care that improves the quality of life and wellbeing of service users while ensuring care remains safe, efficient, and responsive to individual needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, effective communication, strong administrative skills, accurate record keeping, and collaborative working are fundamental to delivering high-quality health and social care. Applying legislation such as the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) helps ensure that care is delivered safely, ethically, and in a way that respects the rights and dignity of service users.

Maintaining accurate records supports continuity of care and enables professionals to make informed decisions, while effective communication builds trusting relationships with service users, families, and colleagues. Furthermore, collaborative working between GPs, community nurses, domiciliary care workers, and other professionals promotes coordinated, person-centred care and improves health outcomes. Although challenges such as communication barriers and differing professional priorities can arise, these can be addressed through effective leadership, shared care planning, and regular multidisciplinary work. Overall, these principles contribute to safe, effective, and compassionate practice, ensuring that service users receive holistic care that meets their individual needs and supports their wellbeing.

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