



**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE in Consolidation
of Social Work Practice
LEVEL 6 - 60 Credits
BMPF6044**

**LEARNER PORTFOLIO
(PORTH AGORED and UNIVERSITY OF WALES
TRINITY SAINT DAVID)**

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**Learner's University Registration Number:
1004304**

Cohort: 18 onwards

Task 2

Observation of Practice

Guidance:

*A learner must choose an observation of **direct social work practice** with people in need of care and support and/or their carers. The observation cannot be from giving evidence in court, contributing to strategy group meetings, case conferences or tribunals or any other indirect activity. The consent of the individual/s in need of care and support and/or their carers must be sought before the observation is undertaken. The observation must be undertaken by an observer who is social work qualified and has at least 3 years' experience (criteria set out in the Programme Handbook). The observation must be for a minimum of 30 minutes. The observer will gain feedback from the individual/s in need of care and support and/or their carers using either the pro forma below or one of the learner's own design at the end of the visit.*

The learner is responsible for providing a method of gathering feedback for the observer to use. This can be of their own design, and/or adapted to meet the needs of the individual. The provided pro forma can be used where appropriate. The method used will depend on age, ability and language/communication needs of the individuals in need of care and support and/or their carers.

This section will include examples of the ways in which effective communication impacts on practice in relation to language use, language needs and cultural sensitivity. You must demonstrate the principles of the "Active Offer" and make reference to "More than Just Words" (Welsh Government, 2012).

Please ensure you meet the Learning Outcomes for this task (See appendix 5 of the handbook).

Please answer the questions below.

Observation Summary

Please include name of the expert witness observing in learner's details section of the portfolio.

Date of observation: 10/3/23

To be completed by learner.

Question:

Context

Set out the social work objectives and give a brief description of the situation including geographical and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues, including how consent was gained and how you have considered the impact of the observation on the individual in need of care and support and/or their carers.

300 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

Child will be identified as 1, mother will be identified as 2.

The purpose of the task will be to share the initial child protection conference report with parent and gather their views and wishes. The visit has been arranged in the home of 2, this allows her to be in her own environment where she will be most comfortable. I will explain to 2 that following on from the Children's Act 1989 section 47 investigation the outcome that had been reached was that there was a need to escalate to Child Protection conference and I will then share the report I have prepared for the conference. The report has been prepared in the preferred language of the family and I have ensured that the observer was aware of the preferred language and could meet these needs. Consent has been gained from 2 via telephone. I explained the process of my being observed and the reason for this. I ensured that 2 was fully informed that my being observed did not have any impact on her or the process that was being followed for her and 1. I was mindful of ensuring 2 fully understood that the observation was nothing to do with her and 1 because 2 was so anxious about the process and felt like she had failed as a parent and everything was a criticism of her.

I will discuss with 2 the impact the process will have on 1 due to his age; he is 16 and deemed to have mental capacity (Mental Capacity Act 2005). I will discuss the impact of what this will mean for him but also for 2 due to the parental responsibility she retains. It is important that I draw on 2's strengths in order to ensure the identified desired outcomes are achievable and that I can voice them on behalf of 2 in the meeting.

Words: 318

Question:

Critically reflect on your communication methods and skills during the observation; including how you identified whether you had the necessary communication skills to work with the individual in need of care and support and/or their carers.

You must use a person-centred approach to demonstrate the integration of social work ethics, values and the Code of Professional Practice. This must include culturally and linguistically sensitive practice and the principles of the “Active Offer” and make reference to “More than Just Words” (Welsh Government, 2012).

1300 (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

Child will be identified as 1, mother will be identified as 2.

The purpose of the task was to share the report of evidence I had prepared for the initial child protection conference (ICPC) following the All Wales Safeguarding Measures 2019, unfortunately due to bail conditions in place I was unable to have 1 and 2 together therefore the report was shared separately. Sharing the report with 2 was a legal obligation as although 1 was over the age of 16 and had mental capacity 2 still had parental responsibility for 1 and therefore was required to be a part of the initial child protection conference.

Having worked with the family for some time I knew the preferred language was English, although 1 had been educated through the medium of Welsh the language of the family home was English and 2 could only understand a few Welsh words. The ‘active offer’ had been made at the beginning of my involvement this allowed me to provide 1&2 with a service through their language of choice. The “More than Just Words” framework is about promoting the Welsh culture as well as the language (morethanjustwords2013). 1&2 lived in a rural town in Wales and had done so for most of their life. They are known to the community and 2’s life’s challenges are well known within the town. 2 endures the small community being aware of her previous substance misuse which affected her ability to care for her older children and the stigma this brings.

I knew this would be a stressful process for 2 from her past negative experience. I ensured that clear concise language was used in the report, no jargon was used and I ensured that every concern listed in bullet point format had an example to follow. The report itself is lengthy therefore I kept the speed of my delivery at normal speed but the pauses allowed 2 to take in what was being said and to ask for clarification if needed. The report was left with 2 to re-read the report in their own time following on from my delivery.

Having introduced my mentor and confirmed again, that 2 was willing for our interaction to be observed, I set about explaining the process of the ICPC and that prior to each conference the reports are to be shared with each individual whether they are family or professionals. I then offered to allow 2 to read the report herself whilst we were there affording her the opportunity to ask questions face to face or

I could read it out to 2. 2 asked if I could read the report out to her which I confirmed I would. In reading the report I would stop regularly and check that the information recorded was correct and accurate, this meant 2 did not need to interrupt me to correct me as I knew 2 could be quite shy at times and felt a power imbalance between herself and professionals. I maintained as much eye contact as I could, and I sat straight making my body language to be open, it also allowed me to read 2 and respond better to her reactions.

2 did become emotional during the reading of the report, it became evident the feelings of guilt she had surrounding her ability to manage 1's behaviour but also how 1 would use that against 2 in any situations of conflict. 2 shared that she felt like a terrible mother and had failed all her children. I sat back and listened to 2 share her feelings and allowed her the time to fully share her emotions, I felt it was important for me to fully understand how 2 felt to empower her to continue to support 1 but also maintain her own wellbeing. 2 shared that she was not sleeping, she felt she was consuming more alcohol and was using this as a coping strategy which she knew had a knock-on negative effect. 2 is an adult who does have capacity; alcohol consumption and substance misuse had been an issue in the past and I did discuss with 2 the potential negative implications of excessive alcohol consumption would have during this time. 2 understood this and agreed to attend the GP to discuss her mood. I felt as a practitioner I supported 2 to make an informed decision which in turn promoted her wellbeing, voice choice and control whilst supporting her to stay safe. We discussed 2's rights as an adult to live her life the way she wants to but also discussed the potential impact on 1 and his feelings. This allowed me to have further insight into 1 and 2's relationship and the co-dependency they have on each other. I was able to have an open and honest discussion with 2 about the plan moving forward and depending on the outcome of the ICPC what steps would need to be taken and how the LA would be able to support no matter what plan was in place whether that be a child protection plan or a care and support plan. This seemed to put 2 at ease and I felt like she was able to have trust in the support we would provide.

Systems theory was used during the preparation and the observation itself. Systems theory allows professionals to look holistically at conditions and environmental factors that have an impact on service users, this was done whilst working with 1&2 as many of the issues 1 faced were because of his engagement with peers and the community which then spilled into the home environment (onlinemswprograms).

The observation was positive and although I shared some very difficult information I feel that I was able to gather the views and wishes of 2 effectively and clearly, I clarified with 2 that she was happy for me to share her views and wishes within the ICPC and if she felt she was unable to share her own views and wishes she was happy for me to advocate on her behalf. Although I was the social worker for 1 a part of my role is to ensure that the views and wishes of the individual and their carer is gathered. I feel that I was able to achieve this with 2, she was attending the ICPC on her own and she

felt extremely nervous and recognised that she would not be able to voice her wishes clearly, 2 was offered an advocate which she declined at the time, I advised she could change her mind at any time.

I do feel that the piece of work was a success and although I had recommended that 1 should be registered on the child protection register I feel that I was able to explain clearly to 2 why this was and provide enough examples which supported my concerns. The face-to-face visit to deliver this report was crucial as it allowed me to ensure that 2 had a full understanding of the concerns of the LA, I feel that the face-to-face visit also allowed 2 to ask all the questions she needed as I had felt that 2 did become distracted over the phone. I did offer a follow up phone call to discuss the report further if 2 felt that there was something to discuss further, and I offered a further visit to ensure the actions discussed in relation to her own wellbeing were being met. I feel as the social worker for 1 it was crucial that 2 knew I was available to support her so that she knew she had support to implement plans put in place to keep 1 safe.

Thinking about the visit on reflection I would have asked 2 to close her dog in the kitchen, with the dog being quite young and demanding I do feel that it did distract 2 at times. I did overcome this by repeating what I said and at times would ask 2 to relay the information back to me so I was clear she did have an understanding of what had been shared. I am aware that at times this can seem patronising and therefore I ensured to explain clearly to 2 why I was asking this of her maintaining the open and honest dialogue. 2 explained that she wished to keep the dog with her for support and I did understand this as she was nervous and therefore used my skill to overcome this hurdle.

Words:1,412

Feedback and comments from individual in need of care and support and/or their carers

Information for the observer

This section of the Observation should not be completed in the presence of the learner.

No formal written feedback is required from the observer on the learner's practice. However verbal feedback should be provided to the learner as soon as possible after the observation. If the observer is not the mentor, then feedback should also be provided to the mentor.

Some or all of the questions below may be used by the observer who can rephrase and add explanations and prompts as required. The observer should record responses from the individual in need of care and support and/or their carers below, or by using an alternative method if required/provided.

Before asking the questions, the observer must explain to the individual comments will be shared with the learner. It may be useful to explain that it is used as a learning tool for the learner to develop their own practice.

If the observer is unable to gain feedback, they should briefly say why.

Was the social worker on time? Or, if delayed, did he or she contact you?	Anest was on time. I wasn't kept waiting. She kept me posted as to when she was on her way.
Did the social worker get your permission in advance for the observer to be present? Did they explain why they were being observed?	Anest sought my permission to be observed. Anest explained the reason for the visit.
Were you clear why the social worker met with you today?	Yes, she was clear and I understood the reason why
How well prepared do you think the social worker was for his or her meeting with you?	She was prepared despite technology problems with getting the report printed
How has the social worker listened to you and respected your views and wishes?	Yes she understood the issues and I felt hear
Did the social worker talk to you in a way that you understood? Did the social worker consider your language needs?	Yes she was clear to understand. She has always been clear with me. She understood my english
How has the social worker's involvement met your expectations for this visit?	She explained everything clearly and met my expectations
Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make?	Not that I can think of. I'm not very good with things like

