

Communication, Administration and Multi-Agency Working in the Care of Mrs Thompson

STUDENT NAME	Aakriti Sapkota
STUDENT NUMBER	2523605
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CASE BACKGROUND SCENARIO

Mrs Thompson is an 84-year-old woman who recently returned home after staying in hospital because she had pneumonia. She lives alone in sheltered housing and receives care from domiciliary care workers two times each day. Mrs Thompson has mild dementia, so she sometimes forgets to take her medicine. She missed her medication for two days, which made her more confused. The care workers reported this through the incident reporting system, and her GP has been asked to review her medication. Another concern happened when she was found outside in cold weather without wearing warm clothes. Because of these concerns, the local council is reviewing her care needs to make sure she is safe.

Introduction

This report looks at three important parts of Mrs Thompson’s care. The first part explains why good communication is important and how health and social care workers should communicate with Mrs Thompson and her family. The second part explains why good administration, record keeping, and protecting personal information are important. The final part explains why different health and social care professionals need to work together to provide safe and high-quality care.

1. Importance of Effective Communication

Good communication is one of the most important parts of health and social care. It helps people understand information, builds trust, and makes care safer. When communication is poor, mistakes can happen, and people may not receive the care they need. Mrs Thompson has mild dementia, so she may forget information or become confused. Because of this, care workers should speak slowly, use short and simple sentences, and give her enough time to answer. They should not rush her or speak too quickly.

Care workers should also use good listening skills. They should listen carefully to Mrs Thompson, allow her to ask questions, and make sure she feels respected. They should watch her body language because people with dementia sometimes find it difficult to explain how they feel. Smiling, making eye contact, and speaking calmly can help Mrs Thompson feel comfortable and safe.

Her family should also be included in her care if Mrs Thompson agrees. Family members know her daily routine, likes, dislikes, and any changes in her behaviour. They can remind her to take medication and tell health professionals if they notice any problems. Good communication between care workers, family members, and health professionals helps everyone understand Mrs Thompson's needs and provide the best care.

The **Equality Act 2010** is important because it protects people from unfair treatment. Mrs Thompson is protected because of her age and dementia, which is recognised as a disability under the Act. Health and social care workers must treat her fairly and make reasonable changes to meet her needs. For example, they can speak clearly, explain things more than once, use written reminders, or give information in a way that is easier for her to understand. They should always respect her dignity and involve her in decisions about her care.

A communication model that can be used is the **Shannon and Weaver Communication Model (1949)**. This model explains that communication starts with a sender who gives a message to a receiver. The message can sometimes be affected by "**noise**", which means anything that makes communication difficult. In Mrs Thompson's case, dementia is a type of "**noise**" because it affects her memory and understanding. Care workers can reduce this problem by speaking clearly, avoiding difficult medical words, checking that she understands the information, and asking questions to make sure the message has been understood. Feedback from Mrs Thompson helps staff know if communication has been successful.

Good communication also supports person-centred care. This means Mrs Thompson should be treated as an individual, not just as a patient. She should be involved in decisions whenever possible, and her wishes, choices, culture, and values should always be respected. Good communication helps build trust, reduces confusion, prevents mistakes, and improves the quality of care.

2. Importance of Good Administrative Skills

Good administration is very important in health and social care because it helps people receive safe and organised care. One of the most important administrative duties is keeping accurate records. Care workers should write clear, correct, and honest information as soon as possible after giving care. Good records help everyone understand Mrs Thompson's health, treatment, and any changes in her condition.

In this case, Mrs Thompson missed two days of medication, which caused her confusion to become worse. The care workers correctly completed an incident report. This record allows the GP, pharmacist, and other professionals to review her medication and decide if she needs extra support or changes to her treatment. Without accurate records, important information could be missed, which could put Mrs Thompson at risk.

The care workers should also record that Mrs Thompson was found outside without warm clothes. This information may show that her dementia is becoming worse or that she needs more supervision. Recording this information helps professionals understand the risks and decide if her care plan needs to be changed.

The **Data Protection Act 2018** protects people's personal information. Mrs Thompson's health records, medication details, address, and personal information must be kept safe and private. Only professionals who are directly involved in her care should be allowed to see this information. Care workers should never share her personal details with friends, neighbours, or anyone who is not involved in her care.

The **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** also says that personal information should only be collected for a clear reason, kept up to date, stored safely, and shared only when necessary. Following these rules protects Mrs Thompson's privacy and helps build trust between her and the care team.

The **Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014** says that care providers must keep accurate and complete records. These records help different professionals work together and reduce the chance of mistakes. Good records also show that care workers have followed professional standards.

Other important policies include safeguarding and incident reporting. Safeguarding means protecting adults who may be at risk of abuse, neglect, or harm. Reporting incidents quickly allows managers to investigate problems and prevent them from happening again. In Mrs Thompson's case, reporting her missed medication and unsafe behaviour helped identify that she may need more support.

Good administration also includes arranging appointments, updating care plans, checking medication records, answering phone calls professionally, and reporting concerns immediately. These duties help make sure that Mrs Thompson receives safe, effective, and high-quality care. Poor administration can lead to medication mistakes, delayed treatment, poor communication, and harm to vulnerable people. Therefore, good administration is an important part of professional practice.

3. Importance of Collaborative Working

Mrs Thompson needs support from many different professionals. These include her GP, community nurse, domiciliary care workers, pharmacist, social worker, and the local council. Each professional has different skills and responsibilities, but they all work together to improve Mrs Thompson's health and safety.

The GP can review her medication and check if it is still suitable. The pharmacist can explain how medicines should be taken and may suggest using a monitored dosage box to help Mrs Thompson remember her medication. The community nurse can monitor her recovery after pneumonia and check her overall health. Domiciliary care workers visit her every day, support her with daily activities, and report any concerns. The social worker and local council can review her care needs and decide if she needs extra services or more support.

Good teamwork depends on clear communication, respect, trust, and sharing information safely. Team meetings, regular updates, and shared care plans help everyone know what is happening and what changes are needed.

Sometimes there are problems when different organisations work together. Staff may have different working hours, different priorities, or delays in sharing information. These problems can affect the quality of care.

These challenges can be reduced by keeping accurate records, holding regular meetings, respecting each other's opinions, following data protection rules, and sharing information at the right time. When professionals work well together, they make better decisions, reduce risks, prevent mistakes, and provide safe, person-centred care for Mrs Thompson.

Conclusion

In conclusion, good communication, good administration, and teamwork are all very important in Mrs Thompson's care. Good communication helps her understand information, feel respected, and stay involved in decisions about her care. Following the Equality Act 2010 ensures she receives fair treatment and the support she needs.

Good administrative skills, including accurate record keeping and following the Data Protection Act 2018, protect Mrs Thompson's personal information and improve the quality of care. Reporting incidents and updating care records help professionals make safe decisions and reduce risks.

Finally, working together with the GP, community nurse, pharmacist, domiciliary care workers, social worker, and local council helps provide joined-up care. Sharing information, respecting each other's roles, and working as one team improves Mrs Thompson's safety, health, and wellbeing. By following the law, professional standards, and person-centred care, health and social care workers can support Mrs Thompson to live safely and independently for as long as possible.

References

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