

**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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Task 1

Part a

Developmental review

Guidance:

Task 1 part a asks you to use a model of reflection to reflect on your past practice and future developmental needs. It should be completed by taking into account the work you have undertaken since qualifying. In discussions with your mentor and/or supervisor/line manager identify your future developmental needs as part of your First Three Years of Practice Individual Plan under each of the 3 learning outcomes below.

You must meet the Learning Outcomes for this task (see appendix 4 of the handbook).

Please answer all elements of the question below.

Question:

Using a reflective model critically reflect on your professional development since qualifying as a social worker. Based on this and in discussion with your mentor/supervisor/line manager go on to identify and justify your future developmental needs over the coming 12 months under **each** of the 3 Social Care Wales (SCW) learning outcomes listed below providing at least one developmental need for each of the learning outcome below:

1. Applying analysis in assessment to inform interventions.
2. Working collaboratively with people in need of care and support, their carers and other professionals.
3. Intervention and application of professional judgement in increasingly complex situations.

This task must make reference to how the supervision, training, learning and research has and will inform your practice.

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

Throughout this task I will critically reflect on my experiences as a registered Social worker in Wales. I will be using the “ERA Cycle” of reflection (Jasper, 2013) ERA stands for Experience, Reflection, and Action. This was developed by Jasper (2013) and is based around building your understanding from experience, I will be using it to reflect on my experience working within the Community Mental Health Team, and my future goals.

Over the past 12 months I have as a social worker in mental health services I have come to experience the challenges we face working in an environment where the medical model is heavily used, Mental

Health Services are now generally organised and managed within health trusts, (*Nathan and Webber, 2010*)

When completing assessments I felt that I would be able to put a few things of support into place for the individual, and potentially get some medication advice and this would enable them to move forward and manage their day to day lives. Resulting in Individuals receiving short – term support in order to enable them and then them being discharged.

On reflection I found that I was supporting individuals with longer –term impairments and needs (*Hatfield, Sharma and Ryan, 2007*) they are often faced with other disadvantages and vulnerabilities, including housing issues, lack of employment and social isolation. As well as issues with motivation and potential side effects of prescribed medications.

Moving forward I will need to change the way I approach assessments and take a more objective look at the individual and their circumstances. I have been able to seek support in Peer support groups and mentoring sessions I had as a newly qualified Social worker where I could talk through a case and gain other perspectives on what may be available to support them longer term.

I will continue to be objective and although I will no longer be attending peer support groups I will be able to learn from my colleagues, especially the more senior members, I plan to shadow their work to have widen my knowledge.

There are many different professionals that make up the Community Mental Health Team and I have been able to learn about each individual role, and what support they offer to the individuals that we support.

On reflection working with other professions/professionals is something that I found difficult progressing into the role of a Qualified Social Worker, coming into large MDT meetings that are predominantly represented by Health Colleagues, I was initially very intimidated. I would often find myself backing down rather than speaking up for myself, I would rather accept that they were correct so as not to discuss my point of view in front of a group in fear of disagreements. This was not a good way of working collaboratively as I was unable to put my opinion/views across resulting in the individual potentially losing out on support that could benefit them.

Gould (2010) advised that social workers have a unique knowledge base that allows them to understand social problems in a structures manner, which sets them apart from other professionals.

Moving forward I would like to be able to build on my confidence and ability to speak up in these settings, I would like to do this by working alongside other professionals within the MDT and widening my knowledge, this way I will be equipped with the knowledge that I am signposting and offering support to individuals I support that is correct and going to be beneficial.

During supervisions with my Manger we were able to focus on the following three dimensions (*Mor Barak et al., 2009*): Task assistance – providing tangible, work related guidance to encourage me to book onto training courses to help develop my professional judgement; Social and emotional support – I was able to have a smaller protected case load in the first year to avoid burnout or stress; Interpersonal interaction – reflecting on dealing with these MDT discussions. By focusing on these dimensions I was able to remain accountable for the quality of my work and take responsibility for maintaining and developing knowledge and skills. (*Code of Professional Practice, 2017.*) I will continue to utilise supervisions as my ‘protected time’ to talk through cases as well as any other issues I may be facing.

I have been able to identify personal development goals for the future, I would like to undertake relevant training to Mental health including eating disorders and Mental Capacity Act (2005), and working towards completing my AMHP (Approved Mental Health Practitioner) training course. By completing training in these areas I would be able to develop my critical analysis and give me the tools to be able to make professional decisions in complex situations, especially around the Mental Health Act 1983/2007.

Word Count 789

Task 1

Part b

Developmental Review

Guidance:

Task 1 part b is a 2-part question and a continuation of task 1 part a and you **must** refer to a reflective model in this task.

Please ensure that you meet the required learning outcomes for this task (See appendix 4 of the handbook) and that you answer both parts of the question.

Please answer all elements of the question below.

Question

Use a reflective model to critically reflect on the learning needs you identified in task 1 part a under each of the 3 SCW learning outcomes.

This must include reference to training, learning, research and supervision and reflection with your mentor/supervisor/line manager on the extent to which your learning outcomes has been achieved.

Identify your learning needs to support your development in the transition to becoming an experienced practitioner in your future career following the completion of this programme.

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

Throughout this section I plan to reflect on my professional development throughout the last year since starting CPEL. To Analyse and assess my progress and whether I have achieved my identified goals in section A, I will use the "ERA Cycle" (Jasper, 2013), which includes Experience, Reflection, and Action. I will be focusing on the progress I have made over the last year and the Goals that I set while discussing with my manager/mentor throughout supervision sessions.

One of my goals was to develop my professional identity and collaborate better with professionals within the MDT and individuals requiring support, I made myself available to other professionals within the team. By doing this I have been able to widen my knowledge and learn the key aspects of, Anti oppressive practice, communication skills, development of reflective capacity and critical awareness (Le Riche, 2006). I have been able to witness other ways to approach certain situations, in particular when individuals' we support are experiencing crisis with their mental health. I have been able to better my professional identity, with more knowledge comes more confidence, I have felt far more confident

speaking out in Multi-disciplinary meetings. This growth will continue as I improve my professional learning, I will begin to bring my feelings and thoughts to meetings without even thinking about it as my professional identity develops.

Another of my goals was to take a more objective look with working with an individual and carrying out assessments, I have looked into and completed some training on Motivational interviewing skills. *Miller and Rollnick, 2002* suggest that MI presumes service users will commit to change when they are motivated, or when they see the importance of making a change. I have tried to utilise this method throughout my interactions with the individuals I support, by expressing a genuine interest in their feelings and experiences, I will take time to listen to their past and their life story. I will however listen for discrepancies in how they are behaving and discuss these with them, while working with them in these times in suggesting future goals. I have made a conscious effort over the last 12 months to ultimately, have a genuine belief in their ability to change. This is something that I will continue to carry through my career as I believe when individuals feel they are being listened too it leads to better collaboration.

In order to enhance my professional judgement, over the last 12 months I have taken on a lot more Mental Capacity Assessments (MCA, 2005) These started with support from senior members of staff and discussions in Supervision's which has now resulted in me completing them independently. As well as capacity assessments, I have chaired best interest meetings to support colleagues and the wider MDT.

I have enjoyed the assessment part of my role over the last year and have now identified my next learning goal is to become an Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP). I am aware that the role of an AMHP will involve complex decision-making processes which will balance care and control (Campbell et al., 2006). I have begun to make contributions to Mental Health Act (1983) tribunals and have begun to shadow some of my AMHP colleagues within the team while they conduct the Mental Health Act (1983) assessments. I will start this Course in September 2024.

I feel that I have achieved the goals that I set myself earlier in the year, I have worked on my confidence and found my professional identify (*Gould, 2010*), this will continue to grow, I will gain more knowledge and experience as the years go on and be able to support newly qualified Social workers in the same way other professionals have supported me over the last 12 months.

Word Count 627

Question

Reflect on feedback that you have received from individuals in need of care and support and/or their carers and explain how this information has helped shape your practice and future professional development.

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

Total task 1 part b 750 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

I was given some feedback from an individual that I can sometimes come across as a little straight to the point and abrupt.

Individual 1 explained that although they respect and work well with my ability to remain focused and explain things simply and directly, when they have been struggling or not feeling well, this approach is often not as easy for them to work with.

From this feedback I have been able to accept that majority of the time I am focused with the way in which I work with people, however, peoples way of dealing with things do change. Therefore when individuals are struggling or working through something particularly difficult my directness may not be helpful to them and taking a more soft approach is be needed.

Word count 129