
CRITICAL THINKING IN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

**Module title – Professional Career Development
within Health and Social Care**

Assignment No – ASSIGNMENT 1

Module number - LCHS4009_LON

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE USE OF AI

I confirm that I have not used any form of AI in my assignment. I
confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes and other resources
I have used to prepare my assignment.

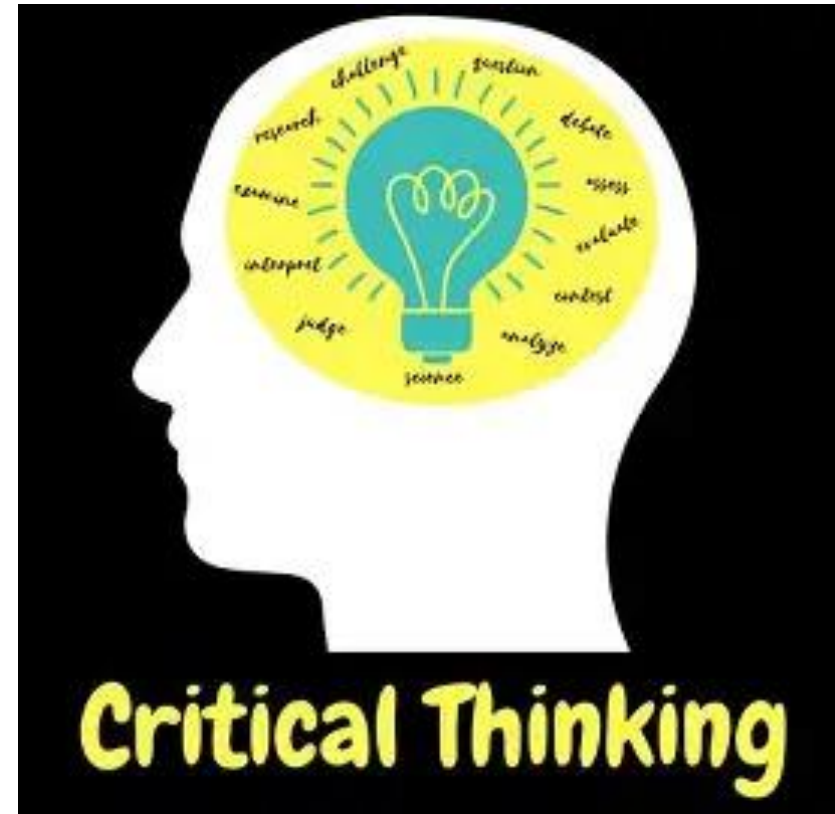
WHAT IS CRITICAL THINKING?

- Looking at information carefully
- Focussing on keeping people safe
- Checking facts and evidence before making decisions
- Making clear reasoned decisions



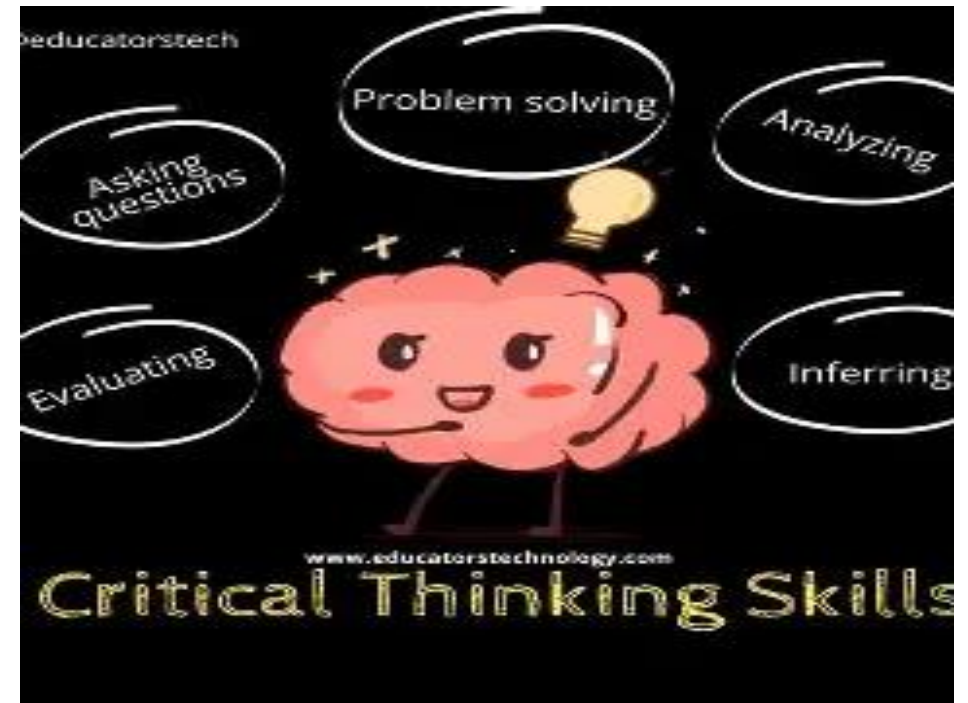
WHY IS CRITICAL THINKING IN H&SC IMPORTANT?

- Make safe and informed decisions
- Provide evidence-based care
- Reduce the risk of mistakes
- Adapt to difficult or changing situations



WHY IS CRITICAL THINKING RELEVANT IN H&SC?

- Helps health and social care workers make informed and safe decisions
- Health workers can spot risks early and prevent mistakes
- Stronger communication
- Team-work



PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

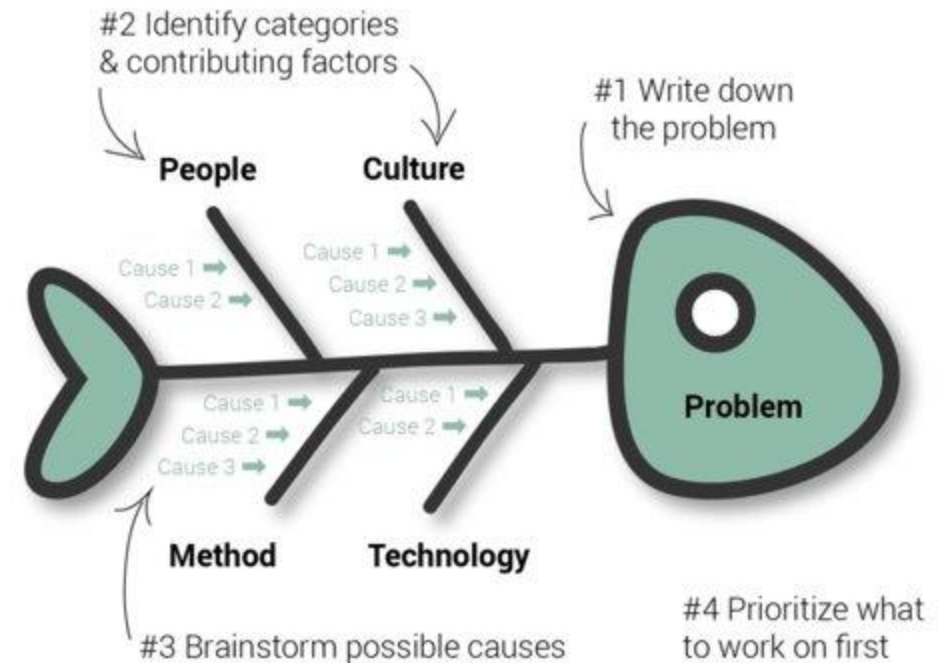
You are a GP and a patient comes in with unusual chest pain. The 1st thing you think is their age and sex, because this can change how serious the pain might be. For example, chest pain in an older person could be linked to heart problems, while in a younger person it might be something less serious, like muscle strain or anxiety.



FISHBONE (ISHIKAWA DIAGRAM)' MODEL

- The Fishbone diagram helps identify the possible causes of a problem. (NHS QI Academy, 2024)
- Encourages healthcare workers to see a problem systematically rather than only on obvious causes.
- Helps identify root causes of issues such as waiting times, patient safety incidents or medical errors.

Fishbone Diagrams | NLFT QI



CONCLUSION

- Critical thinking is essential in healthcare
- It improves patient care and safety
- Supports problem-solving in real situations
- It improves communication and teamwork
- Overall, it leads to better outcomes



REFERENCES

- **BMJ** (2026) *Critical thinking in healthcare and education*. Available at: <https://www.bmj.com> (Accessed: 3 March 2026).
 - **London School of Planning and Management** (2026) *The importance of critical thinking in health and social care management*. Available at: <https://www.lspm.org.uk> (Accessed: 3 March 2026).
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 - **North London Mental Health NHS Trust** (2026) *Fishbone diagrams*. Available at: <https://qualityimprovement.northlondonmentalhealth.nhs.uk/qi-academy/resources-and-tools/fishbone-diagrams> (Accessed: 10 March 2026).
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WORD SPEECH

- **Slide 2 - Critical thinking** in health and social care is the ability to objectively analyse information, question assumptions, evaluate evidence and make clear decisions to provide safe, effective and person-centred care.

Slide 3- Critical thinking in the NHS is important because it helps healthcare workers make smart decisions, solve problems and give patients the best care possible. It means being able to look at information properly, not just believing the first thing you hear and checking if the evidence actually makes sense.

This skill matters for everyone in healthcare, no matter their job role. It helps them make better choices, deal with challenges and communicate clearly with their team and patients. The NHS understands how important critical thinking is, which is why it includes it in its main skills and training programs, especially for advanced clinical practitioner roles.

By building strong critical thinking skills, NHS staff can think more clearly, fix problems faster and improve the overall quality of care patients receive.

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- **Slide 4 – 1st bullet point** - critical thinking helps h&sc workers make safe, informed decisions by carefully looking at all the facts before choosing what to do. **2nd bullet point** – by questioning information and checking evidence, health care workers can spot risks earlier and prevent mistakes that could have a negative impact or could harm patients. **3rd bullet point** – thinking clearly helps health care workers explain information in a simple way to patients, families and colleagues and it will also help reduce any misunderstandings. **4th bullet point** – it helps your colleagues to listen to different opinions, challenge ideas respectfully and work together to choose the best plan of care for the patient.
 - **Slide 5** - u would then ask important questions, such as:
 - When did the pain start?
 - Where exactly is it?
 - Does it spread anywhere else?
 - Do they feel sick, dizzy or short of breath?

As you listen, you are already thinking about possible causes, such as a heart attack, indigestion or anxiety . You would decide what tests might be needed, like blood tests or sending the patient to hospital if necessary. You would also think about what treatment to give and how urgently it is needed. At the same time, you need to explain clearly to the patient what might be happening, reassure them if appropriate and possibly speak to their family or other healthcare workers.

Some of these decisions happen quickly because of training and experience. However, you also have to stop and think carefully about the evidence, the risks and what is safest for the patient. This is critical thinking — carefully analysing information, considering different possibilities and making the best decision based on facts rather than assumptions.

- **Slide 6 – Conclusion**

Critical thinking is essential in healthcare, it helps health workers make safe, informed decisions rather than relying on assumptions. It will also improve patient care and safety by analysing symptoms carefully and checking evidence, healthcare workers can reduce mistakes and provide the right treatment. **2nd** it will help with problem-solving in real situations, whether it's chest pain or another health issue, critical thinking helps professions assess the situation and choose the best care plan. **3rd** by improving communication and teamwork, clear thinking makes it easier to explain decisions to patients, families and other healthcare staff. **Overall**, when healthcare workers think clearly, patients receive higher-quality, safe and more person-centred care.
