

Dementia Care

NQF Level 2: BTEC Short Course - 2½ days

About the Course

The aim of this course is to provide opportunities for learners to develop understanding of the meaning of the term dementia, possible causes of dementia, the needs of individuals with dementia, and how such individuals can be supported and cared for.

As an umbrella term for a variety of conditions, misconceptions frequently may arise as to the definition of the term dementia, and this unit aims to clarify this.

The course has been developed with the emphasis on the person-centred approach of focusing on the individual first and the dementia second, with the development of a person-to-person supportive relationship with individuals.

Learners will develop an understanding of the different working roles of those who work with individuals with dementia, and there is a focus on communicating and reporting effectively to avoid additional unintended meanings that language can sometimes convey.

Learners will also investigate the impact of the onset of dementia and the implications for individuals and their friends and families, and the role of legislation and guidelines in the care and support of individuals with dementia.

This course has been developed from the Knowledge Set for Dementia developed by Skills for Care, and will be useful for those working in health and social care settings or learning about the workplace prior to commencing work.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this course a learner should:

- 1 Know how to define dementia
- 2 Understand how to support and care for individuals with dementia
- 3 Understand roles, responsibilities and boundaries when caring for individuals with dementia
- 4 Understand legislation and guidance relevant to the care of individuals with dementia.

Unit content

1 Know how to define dementia

- Definition of dementia
- Difference between dementia, depression and confusional states
- Importance of diagnosis; implications for support and care of individual
- Types and causes: eg Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, Pick's disease (Fronto-Temporal), dementia with Lewy bodies; Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD), Huntington's disease
- Common signs and symptoms of dementia: eg decline in memory, decline in reasoning and communication, changes in behaviour, loss of skills to carry out normal daily activities

2 Understand how to support and care for individuals with dementia

- Person-centred and strengths-based approach to the support and wellbeing of individuals with dementia: seeing the person first and the dementia second.
- Communicating effectively so that the individual has the opportunity to make decisions
- Where appropriate acting in the best interests of an individual and in the least restrictive manner.
- Developing a person-to-person relationship with the individual
- Involving the individual with dementia in their own care planning
- Taking account of history, eg personal, family, medical
- working towards meeting the needs of the whole individual; adhering to the value base of care — identity, dignity, respect, choice, independence, privacy, rights, culture; taking account of the individual's personal beliefs including spiritual beliefs, emotional needs and preferences
- Maintaining a responsive and flexible approach to the individual, taking account of changing needs
- Recognising and responding to feelings and issues that are commonly experienced by people with dementia, eg around loss of control, loss of community involvement
- Supporting and working with family and friends of the individual: using a person-centred approach; providing information about services and support networks available, eg support groups, specialist organisations such as the Alzheimer's Society
- Protecting the individual from abuse, injury and harm: types of abuse — physical, sexual, racist, emotional, financial, institutional, neglect

- Staff awareness and training; involving family and friends; use of independent advocacy
- Use of assistive technologies, eg pressure mats, door alarms linked to staff pagers, personal pendant alarms, colour-coded handrails, pictures/images on doors
- The effect an environment can have, eg space choice and access to gardens
- An enabling and safe environment, eg circular paths, floor coverings/soft furnishings that are not heavily patterned, distinct difference between walls and ceilings through use of colours and textures
- Awareness of the possibility of an increased risk of falls
- Maintaining the general good health and wellbeing of the individual with dementia: food, nutrition, eating and drinking at regular intervals
- Appropriate exercise and activities specific to the needs of the individual
- Personal care including measures to reduce risk of infection; living in a clean and enabling environment
- Potential links between physical illness and/or medication and confusion
- Positive and effective communication with the individual with dementia: recognise that the individual's behaviour will often be directly related to their need to communicate about their feelings and needs
- Look and listen carefully and take account of what a individual is communicating; respond appropriately and positively to an individual's various forms of communication using non-threatening body language and tone of voice, use of simple sentences, being calm and unrushed
- Give encouragement and focus on the individual's strengths and abilities
- Managing challenging behaviour
- Activities, therapies and medication: conventional medicines; complementary therapies and activities, eg herbal medicine, acupuncture, aromatherapy and massage, sensory therapy, music therapy

3 Understand roles, responsibilities and boundaries when caring for individuals with dementia

- Roles, responsibilities and boundaries: individual; family and friends of individual, independent advocate, care worker, manager, social worker, general practitioner, specialist personnel eg psychiatrist, therapists, community psychiatric nurse
- how team work and support can lead to better support of individuals
- Communicating, reporting and recording effectively: distinguishing between subjective and objective language, fact and opinion
- Using clear, objective statements in care plans, reports, daily logs, handover reports
- Using appropriate language and avoiding the use of negative statements and language when describing a person with dementia

- Roles and responsibilities of services: care homes with personal care or nursing care, hospitals, domiciliary, respite and day services, sheltered accommodation and supported housing
- Voluntary and charitable organisations, eg Alzheimer's Society, Mental Health Foundation, Age Concern, Anchor Trust, MIND

4 Know legislation and guidance relevant to the care of individuals with dementia

- Legislation and guidance: relevant sections of, eg Mental Health Act 1983, Enduring Power of Attorney Act 1985, Community Care Act 1990, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Data Protection Act 1998, Human Rights Act 1998, Health Act 1999, Care Standards Act 2000, Mental Capacity Act 2005, National Service Framework for Older People
- Organisational policies and procedures: eg visitor policy, no secrets policy