**Unit 1 Developing effective communication in health and social care**

**Learning Objectives**

LO1 Understand effective communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care

LO2 Understand factors that influence communication and interpersonal interaction in health and social care environments

LO3 Understand ways to overcome barriers in a health and social care environment

LO4 Be able to communicate and interact effectively in a health or social care environment

**Useful resources**

**Books**

Bateman, N. (2000) *Advocacy Skills for Health and Social Care Professionals*, London, Jessica Kingsley. Burnard, P. (1992) *Communicate! Communication Skills Guide for Health Care Workers*, London, Hodder

Arnold.

Moss, B. (2007) *Communication Skills for Health and Social Care*, London, Sage Publications.

Stretch, B. and Whitehouse, M. (2010) *BTEC National Health and Social Care Book 2*, Oxford, Pearson.

**Websites**

**East Anglia Communications Skills Cascade**

Resources to promote and support the teaching of communication skills in health care <http://www.skillscascade.com/>

**National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence**

Provides guidance on promoting good health and preventing and treating ill health <http://www.nice.org/uk/>

**British Sign Language** [http://www.britishsignlanguage.com](http://www.britishsignlanguage.com/) **The Makaton Charity** <http://www.makaton.org/>

# Tina talks to Mary

**VC5**

* 1. While watching the video clip, make notes on the communication skills Tina is demonstrating. What does Tina say or do to demonstrate each of the skills listed?
	2. After watching the video clip, work in pairs and compare your notes, watching the clip again if necessary.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Communication skills** | **Notes** |
| Listening |  |
| Responding |  |
| Tone |  |
| Pace |  |
| Language |  |
| Appropriate environment |  |
| Proximity |  |
| Clarifying or repeating |  |
| Questioning |  |
| Responding to difficult situations |  |

**Types of interpersonal interaction**

**AS1**

Test your communication skills. Look at the faces below and decide what each character is feeling. Compare your answers to those given by other members of the group. Do you agree?



**Mirroring,** or **reflective listening**, is an effective way to show people that you are really listening.

With a partner or friend practise reflective listening. One person speaks and the other must mirror their actions and their words. Do not make it obvious that you are doing this. You can say things like:

‘So are you saying that…?’

‘Have I heard you correctly? Did you say…?’ ‘You’re looking very sad. Do you feel sad?’

Ask your partner for feedback. Were you being too obvious? Did you put your partner at ease? Did they feel that they wanted to open up and share more with you?

**Slang** is language outside conventional usage. Use the table below to decide the meaning of each of the words and then compare your answers to your friend’s answers.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Slang word** | **Your interpretation** | **Your friend’s interpretation** |
| Sad |  |  |
| Cushy |  |  |
| Ace |  |  |
| Sick |  |  |
| Savvy |  |  |

1. Think of a word or two of your own and ask your partner for their interpretation of it.
2. Did you both agree on all the words? If not, why do you think you had different answers?
3. Why do you think it is important not to use slang within health and social care settings?
4. Ask parents for their interpretation of the above words. Why do you think the meaning of some words changes over time?

### Stretch

Visit the website below and test your ability to read emotions in people’s eyes. <http://glennrowe.net/BaronCohen/Faces/EyesTest.aspx>

# Non-verbal communication: Personal space

**AS3**

There are different expectations about personal space.

Fill in the chart below by considering who you would allow to enter each area.

Personal space

Close relationships

Personal space with friends

Public space

In small groups discuss your answers to the following questions:

1. If an elderly client was feeling upset, would you give them a hug?
2. You are in a meeting with your team leader and a client you support. Where would you sit in relation to each other?
3. A young child you are looking after falls over and scrapes their knee. How would you respond?
4. An adult with learning difficulties slaps your hand away as you try to help them fasten their coat. How would you respond?
5. An elderly client has soiled himself but is refusing your help to clean him up. What would you do?

### Stretch

Research the work of Edward Hall (1966) into personal space. You may also want to look at research into gender differences (e.g. Fisher and Byrne, 1975) and cultural differences (e.g. Smith, 1979).

# Assessing your own skills

**AS2**

In groups of three carry out a one-to-one discussion about the course content and thoughts on what you will learn. The third member of the group observes the interaction, records the communication skills of one of the participants and then gives feedback to that participant in preparation for interactions within the workplace.

Rotate the roles until everyone has observed and been assessed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Communication skills** | **Notes** |
| Listening |  |
| Responding |  |
| Tone |  |
| Pace |  |
| Language |  |
| Appropriate environment |  |
| Proximity |  |
| Clarifying or repeating |  |
| Questioning |  |
| Responding to difficult situations |  |

### Stretch

You may also wish to video your interaction and assess your own skills.

# Assess your own non-verbal skills

**AS4**

Read the table below before you begin.

Plan a short conversation with a partner. While you are talking check your own non-verbal communication by using the table. Then team up into groups of four and assess each other’s skills.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Eye contact** | How often do you make eye contact with the person you are talking to? Do you stare at them or do you avoid looking into their eyes? How do you feel when the person looks at you? |
| **Facial expression** | Does your face reflect what you are saying? Are you too inexpressive, showing little emotion? Are you over-exaggerating or feigning your interest? |
| **Posture** | Does your body look too relaxed? Are you too still and rigid? Are your arms or legs crossed? What are you doing with your hands? Are you facing the person you are talking to? |
| **Touch** | Do you touch the person you are talking to? Why do you touch them? Could this be interpreted differently by the other person? |
| **Silence** | Are you talking non-stop? Are you allowing enough time for the other person to respond? Are you waiting too long before giving your own response? |
| **Proximity** | Are you standing/sitting too close or too far away? |

#### Gestures and body language

The following are mixed up. Draw a line from each non-verbal cue to its correct explanation.

Hands on hips Open and relaxed

Sitting with legs crossed Authoritative

Sitting with legs apart Lack of self-confidence

Arms crossed on chest Defensive

Hand on cheek Openness, sincerity

Touch or rubbing the nose Boredom or defensive

Rubbing the eye/s Disbelief, doubtful

Open palm/s Lying, doubtful

Touching hair Thinking, evaluating

Steepled fingers Aggression or readiness

**Stretch**

Next time you watch a TV programme practise identifying what people are really saying through their body language.

# The Communication Cycle

**AS7**

Message coded

Ideas occur

Message received

Message decoded

**The Communication Cycle**

Message understood

For each stage of the communication cycle give an example using the beginning of the case study in Student Book 1, page 19 where Karen is talking to Jasmin, whose partner has died. Imagine you are Karen and you need to respond. Once you have finished, check how your responses compare to Karen’s responses.

Message sent

**Idea: Message coded: Message sent: Message perceived: Message decoded: Message understood:** For each stage of the scenario above, consider ways in which communication could be hindered.

#### Idea: Message coded: Message sent: Message perceived: Message decoded: Message understood:

# Factors that influence communication and interpersonal interaction

**AS5**

Fill in the boxes with your ideas of factors that could influence communication and interpersonal interaction within a health and social care setting.



# Factors that influence communication

**AS6**

Using the table below consider which factors may enhance (improve) communication and which factors may inhibit (hinder) communication. Some factors have been included to get you started.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Factors** | **Enhancing factors** | **Inhibiting factors** |
| Physical environment |  | Distractions |
| Emotional factors | Openness |  |
| Social factors |  | Lack of understanding of cultural differences |
| Communication skills | Active listening |  |
| Individual needs | Using sign language |  |

**Self-esteem** is how you value or feel about yourself. Think of ways in which you can increase another person’s self-esteem and make a list below. Try presenting your ideas as a spider diagram.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

### Stretch

Research a number of cultural variations in non-verbal behaviour. Make a poster or a presentation to show your findings to the rest of the class

**Barriers to communication**

**AS8**

There are different types of barriers that can block effective communication.

* Information may not be received.
* Information may be received but not ‘decoded’ correctly.
* Information gets through but what you understand is distorted by perception.
1. Fill in the brick wall below with your own ideas about how these barriers might occur.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | E.g. Using slang or jargon |  |
|  |  |  |  |

1. For each of the following, give a definition and state how it may overcome barriers to communication.

#### Open questions:

**Probes:**

**Prompts:**

**Stretch**

Research the work of Martin Seligman (1967) into ‘learned helplessness’. Produce a poster to explain the concepts to your classmates.

# Overcoming communication barriers

**AS9**

For each of the barriers listed, consider possible strategies for overcoming it.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of barrier** | **Possible strategies** |
| Communication that involves difficult, complex or sensitive issues |  |
| Unmet language needs or preferences |  |
| Sensory impairment |  |
| Disability |  |
| Personality or self-esteem needs |  |
| Anxiety or depression |  |
| Aggression/submissiveness |  |
| Assumptions, values or beliefs |  |
| Jargon |  |
| Cultural variations |  |
| Abuse of power |  |
| Alcohol or drugs |  |

### Stretch

Use the internet to carry out further research into the use of sign language. Make a poster to display either in your classroom or workplace.

# Assertiveness

**AS10**

1. Write a short summary of each of the following behaviours.

Aggressive:

Assertive:

Submissive:

1. Read the following scenarios and decide on responses that would be aggressive, assertive and submissive.

### Scenario 1

A colleague rings you up while you are talking to a new client. Your colleague wants to talk about a meeting set up for next week about another client and is quite insistent.

Aggressive response:

Assertive response:

Submissive response:

### Scenario 2

Your boss has criticised your communication skills, stating that a number of clients have complained that you have been rude to them. You disagree with this and believe your boss is being unfair.

Aggressive response:

Assertive response:

Submissive response:

# Assertive behaviour

**AS11**

For each scenario below place the correct letter next to the response. A = Aggressive, S = Submissive, V = Assertive

1. A colleague promises to call you with some important information concerning a client. He doesn’t call.
	1. You feel hurt but don’t say anything about it, thinking he’s probably really busy.

* 1. Ring him up and say, ‘I don’t like it when you tell me you’ll do something and you don’t. I wish you would call me when you say you will.’
	2. Ring him and say, ‘You are so unprofessional! You never do what you say you’ll do.’ Hang up before he can give any explanation.

1. You want permission from your boss to change your work day so that you can attend your sister’s wedding.
	1. Just swap with a friend and say that you didn’t think he would mind.

* 1. Tell yourself ‘There’s no point even asking. I never get what I want.’
	2. Say, ‘There’s a family wedding coming up that I would really like to attend. Can I change my working day next week?’
1. Your client has just been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection (STI) and asks you to find some information for her. You visit the library looking for books on STIs, and you cannot find any.
	1. Say loudly, ‘This place is ridiculous! You can’t find anything here!’

* 1. Ask the librarian, ‘Could you show me where to find a book about STIs?’
	2. Wander around, not wanting to ask because you are afraid you will look stupid.
1. You are just leaving the office after an eight-hour shift when your boss enters and asks you to stay on for an extra hour or two as he needs to attend an emergency meeting. You are due to catch the last train home.
	1. Say, ‘No way! I’ve done my shift. You’ve got no right to ask me to do more.’

* 1. Say, ‘I am due to catch the last train home so I’m afraid I can’t help out. I’ll give you the number of my colleague who has agreed to be on call today.’
	2. Say, ‘Well, I have been here all day and I do have a train to catch but if you really want me to I suppose I can.’

Practice your assertive behaviour.

In pairs, role-play the scenarios below. Respond in an assertive manner. Be aware of your non-verbal behaviour as well as your verbal response.

1. Your boss has given you a task to complete, but you are still busy on a task she set you earlier that day.
2. You are out shopping with a client who uses a wheelchair. A small group of youths say some rude things as you pass them.
3. You are at your first team meeting in a new job and a number of your colleagues are continually using jargon that you do not understand.
4. You have been working in a residential home for six months but feel you are still not being given enough responsibility. You decide to discuss it with your team leader.

# Key terms

**AS12**

Rearrange the jumbled letters to find the key terms associated with developing effective communication.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Anagram** | **Key term** | **Anagram** | **Key term** |
| gulganae citymumon |  | sorseny timinaremp |  |
| grojan |  | mumcatinoonic sibidaity |  |
| letacid |  | sumatisnop |  |
| angls |  | saluve |  |
| stirf gulganae |  | wormtenpeme |  |
| rutalluc travionia |  | wrope |  |
| mumcatinoonic clecy |  | elfibe stemssy |  |
| pugor slauve |  | tenasrios |  |
| mumcatinoonic rirerab |  | sensellsheps |  |
| gracin esencepr |  | fles-smeete |  |
| maphety |  | catodave |  |

Give a definition of the following:

Group values: Reflective listening: Assertiveness: Self-esteem: Caring presence: Stereotyping: