

the purpose and value of a carer's assessment facilitator guide

learning outcome

Your staff will be able to promote actively the benefits of a carer's assessment to a carer, cared for person and their colleagues.

learning method

Group exercise.

time required

Approximately 30 minutes.

facilitator notes

1. Using activity seven handout ask each group to consider the purpose and value of a carers assessment from the three following perspectives:
 - the carer
 - the cared for person
 - the practitioner and organisation.
2. Take feedback from each group and put onto flipchart whilst emphasising how some of the benefits are common to all three e.g. partnership working, crisis avoidance.
3. Draw out key learning points. These might include:
 - Even if you do not have the legal responsibility to carry out a carer's assessment, you need to be able to positively promote the purpose and value of the carer's assessment – in order to do this we must appreciate the purpose and value ourselves!

activity seven - level 2

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- The way in which we introduce a carer's assessment to a carer is very important. Many carers will feel threatened by the process (are they assessing how effective a carer I am or are they checking my finances?) or they will see as simply another form to fill out. If described as an opportunity for a dialogue to find out how the caring role is impacting on the carer and to consider what information or support might help, this will result in a better uptake. Many local authorities prefer to use the term "carer's needs assessment" on the basis that this is a clearer description
- There are close links exist between carer and cared for. It is difficult to get a whole picture without assessing both the needs of the cared for person as well as the carer. In other words it is important to think about the whole family and how the carer and cared for are inextricably linked!

What other approaches might I consider?

- Has a local survey been undertaken, either by the local authority or the local carer centre, with carers who have gone through the carer's assessment process? Is there useful local information on the pros and cons of the assessment from the carer's perspective which would help inform the learning and development programme?
- Could I invite local carers to talk about their own experiences of carers assessment – both 'good' and 'not so good' – which would help to emphasise the benefits of the assessment if undertaken in a way which meaningfully involves the carer?
- Would it be useful to develop a checklist of benefits under each of the headings of carer, cared for, and staff for participants to take away from the session? Might this be helpful to participants when thinking about how to introduce the idea of an assessment to carers? Could I develop this with carers, cared for people and staff prior to the session?
- How could I explore with participants the local constraints which get in the way of a quality carer's assessment and identify ways in which to overcome those constraints e.g. pressure on staff time, funding difficulties, and fear of raising expectations? Has any local research been undertaken on this already?

Common core principles covered by this activity: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.