

Communication in Health and Social Care

Glanrafon Day centre is a centre for adults, between the ages of 21 and 75, with learning disabilities. It is a combination of the Health care and Social care services. It's a work opportunity service. The service started in 1989. At the beginning, this service was developed from within the two centres, Glanrafon and Greenfield. These day centres provided occupation for people with severe learning disabilities, between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm; Monday to Friday. These day centres were separate buildings, which usually catered for on hundred plus people. As purpose built centres, they were for people to go during the day to socialise etc, despite their needs.

Glanrafon is a centre provided as part of the statutory provision, which, in 1996, provided only limited service for people with learning disability and/or sensory impairment. It is now responsible for employment initiatives for people with mental health problems.

The aim of the service is to provide employment opportunities for individuals based upon individuals need for employment, their aptitudes and their talents.

The aim of my work experience was to gain an understanding of health and social care settings and to learn how to care for people with disabilities. There was a wide range of communication used at the centre, a lot of which I expected to be used. I did however, gain new communication skills and was able to communicate with other people because of this. Many people had different disabilities and so I was able to use these skills with lots of people. My communication was not solely towards the service users. I had to communicate with the key workers in order to meet my aim. The communication with the key workers was a lot different to that of the service users. A lot of the service users couldn't talk, so in order to communicate with them I had to use different forms of non-verbal communication. This was quite difficult at times because it was hard to recognise which type of non-verbal communication to use in each situation.

Communication such as body language and facial expression is very important when communicating with the service users and the key workers. When interacting and communicating with the service users, I was attentive and always tried to make their day a lot more fun. This can be effective when using pictures to communicate with them. They enjoyed looking at the drawings and also enjoyed learning. Anybody can cheer something up by just showing them some attention.

The use of language is important in communication. This use is to express and understand information, opinions and instructions. These elements of communication are all inter-related. Everyone uses these types of information at some point. They are used depending on the situation. For example, in Glanrafon, the key workers must give information and instructions to the service

users. They must also understand information that is given to them and understand other people's opinions.

There were many different types of communication used in my setting. Some of them are listed below:

- 🔗 Diary/record sheet
- 🔗 Telephone
- 🔗 Staff meetings
- 🔗 Incident book
- 🔗 Signing (in & out) book
- 🔗 Eye contact

On my first day I was briefed on my time at Glanrafon and on my roles and responsibilities as a student. I was given a booklet with health and safety rules. This briefing was to ensure that I knew what I would need to do every day or in case of an emergency (or something similar). This was communication by talking. This was probably the main type of communication used at the centre in my opinion. The service would not be possible or successful if nobody talked to one another.

Each member of staff had a different role to play and therefore had to use different forms of communication. The receptionist is a member of staff who has a unique role. Some of the types of communication she uses are:

- 🔗 Fax machines
- 🔗 Letters
- 🔗 Email
- 🔗 Telephone
- 🔗 Internet

These are mainly based electrically and are therefore forms of communication that could not be used in everyday life.

The key workers need to communicate with each other in emergency situations. They all need to be briefed so they know where the fire routes are and how to deal with this situation. They also need to be able to look after the service users in case of fire or something similar. They need to talk to the service users and keep them calm etc. There was a register taken in the morning so that the key workers knew who was there. This was a safety act, however was also a form of communication.

Many different people came into the centre such as OT's (occupational therapists), physios, social workers etc. They each use additional communication skills to those of the key workers. Their roles are very different. Social

workers' role is to listen and provide help. Both of these are kinds of communication and are important to their job.

I have only mentioned just some of the different types of communication, as there are many. These are some of the main forms used in *Glanrafon*.