

## Care Skillsbase: Manage Skills

### Specify skills by job role

#### Why specify communication and number skills?

Everyone likes to know what is expected of them in their job. Specifying communication and number skills will help you to identify the skills staff need to deal with information and communicate effectively.

#### Before you begin

You may find it helpful to have a range of documents, including:

- the job description and any existing person specification for the role
- quality standards and risk assessments related to key tasks within the role
- any record-keeping and report forms that the post-holder must deal with
- quality records associated with the work (e.g. records of previous complaints and/or incidents that indicate the sort of problems post-holders typically have to deal with).

It may also be helpful to consult people with current experience of the job, including:

- current post-holders (experienced and inexperienced)
- supervisors and managers
- trainers and assessors.

Discuss with them where serious problems (i.e. risks to safety and quality) are most likely to occur when a post-holder lacks the ability to communicate and deal with information effectively.

Finally, consider the list of core employability skills on the next page.

## Core employability skills for health and social care workers

(Skills and attitudes essential to work in adult social care, from Level 1 Award in Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care, QCF unit ref: PWCS 08)

- Write and speak so that others listen and understand
- Read and understand information shown in a variety of ways, including written and spoken English
- Listen and ask questions to understand other people's points of view
- Understand the need to be reliable and dependable
- Give examples of a care worker acting responsibly and being accountable in a care work setting
- Understand the purpose of policies and procedures in a social care workplace
- Demonstrate an ability to assess situations and identify problems and suggest solutions in a social care workplace scenario
- Know how to help 'customers' and deal with their questions and problems
- Demonstrate willingness to work in a team
- Demonstrate an ability to work well with others
- Be open and respond well to simple changes
- Show interest, initiative and effort
- Understand the need to gain skills and knowledge to support and develop your work
- Be willing to learn from mistakes and accept feedback and offer feedback to others in a positive way
- Be willing to reflect on practice and improve
- Be willing to share skills and to provide feedback to others in a positive way
- Be able to use everyday technology such as mobile phones, email applications and basic word processing
- Be able to make estimates and check calculations for accuracy
- Understand how to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers and give examples of when each should be used in day-to-day social care work
- Observe and record data accurately and legibly

## **Step 1 Review the job role**

Review the job's overall purpose and key objectives, including:

- principal tasks involved
- other significant requirements (e.g. participation in training, team meetings, appraisal)
- vocational skills level (e.g. Health & Social Care Diploma Level 2).

## **Step 2 Identify the critical elements**

Identify the tasks and activities that are critical to achieving the job's overall purpose.

Consider:

- impact on service users
- impact on colleagues
- record-keeping and reporting
- risk management
- quality assurance
- mandatory and other training.

## **Step 3 Identify where staff must deal with information**

Concentrate on the tasks and activities that are critical to fulfilling the job's purpose. For each element, note where the post-holder has to deal with important information.

Consider:

- record-keeping and reporting
- risk management
- quality assurance.

List the information-processing tasks involved (e.g. 'monitor and record fluid intake').

#### **Step 4 Identify where staff must communicate**

Again, concentrating only on the critical elements of the job, note where success depends on effective communication. Bear in mind the needs of

- people who use services
- colleagues
- outside agencies.

List the communication tasks involved (e.g. 'take part in shift handovers').

#### **Step 5 Create the communication and number skills specification**

From the list of information-processing and communication tasks, select tasks that illustrate the minimum level of communication (spoken and written) and number skills that the post-holder needs.

Complete the sentence: 'To be effective in this role, a person **must** be able to...' (e.g. '...make appropriate written entries in care plans' or '...accurately monitor and record fluid intake.').

## Notes for specifying communication and number skills

Job title

Job purpose

Key objectives

Communication / information processing tasks/activities critical to job purpose

## Job role specification of communication and number skills

Job title | \_\_\_\_\_

Spoken communication skills: In this role, a person **must** be able to...

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Written communication skills (reading): In this role, a person **must** be able to...

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Written communication skills (writing): In this role, a person **must** be able to...

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Number skills: To be effective in this role, a person **must** be able to...

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