

Additional Training for Social Workers in report-writing and court skills

Natalie Shaw

natalie.shaw@stockton.gov.uk

Project method

Report-writing and court skills training delivered by Bond Solon has been offered to staff since 2014. Initially, due to the cost of the training, places were limited to managers and senior social workers. However, as more staff members have been involved in Court of Protection cases, it has been recognised that there would be key benefits to widening access to this training. The training is now mandatory for social workers in Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding teams, and is available to all social workers as part of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's rolling training programme.

The training is provided in addition to mandatory Mental Capacity Act Best Interests in Practice and Human Rights Act training.

To support staff further, where there are cases in Court, staff members are offered the opportunity to attend in a shadowing role in order for them to gain a better understanding of the process, and to alleviate some of the fears around attending and presenting evidence in Court.

Project results/evaluation

The uptake for the report-writing and court skills course increased by 175% between 2014 (12 attendees) and 2015 (33 attendees).

Feedback from staff has been extremely positive. A number of reports submitted by staff to the Court in relation to Mental Capacity and Section 21A Challenges were praised by the Court for their clarity and the level of detail presented. One member of staff has been commended on several occasions for her reports.

Project area classification

Hospital care		Dementia	
GP care		Learning disability	
Social care	X	Other mental health	
Voluntary sector		Palliative care	
Financial services		Advance planning, LPAs	
Police		Commissioning	
Legal		Training	X
Community health care		For professionals?	X
Nursing and care home		For public and service users?	
Acute care			