

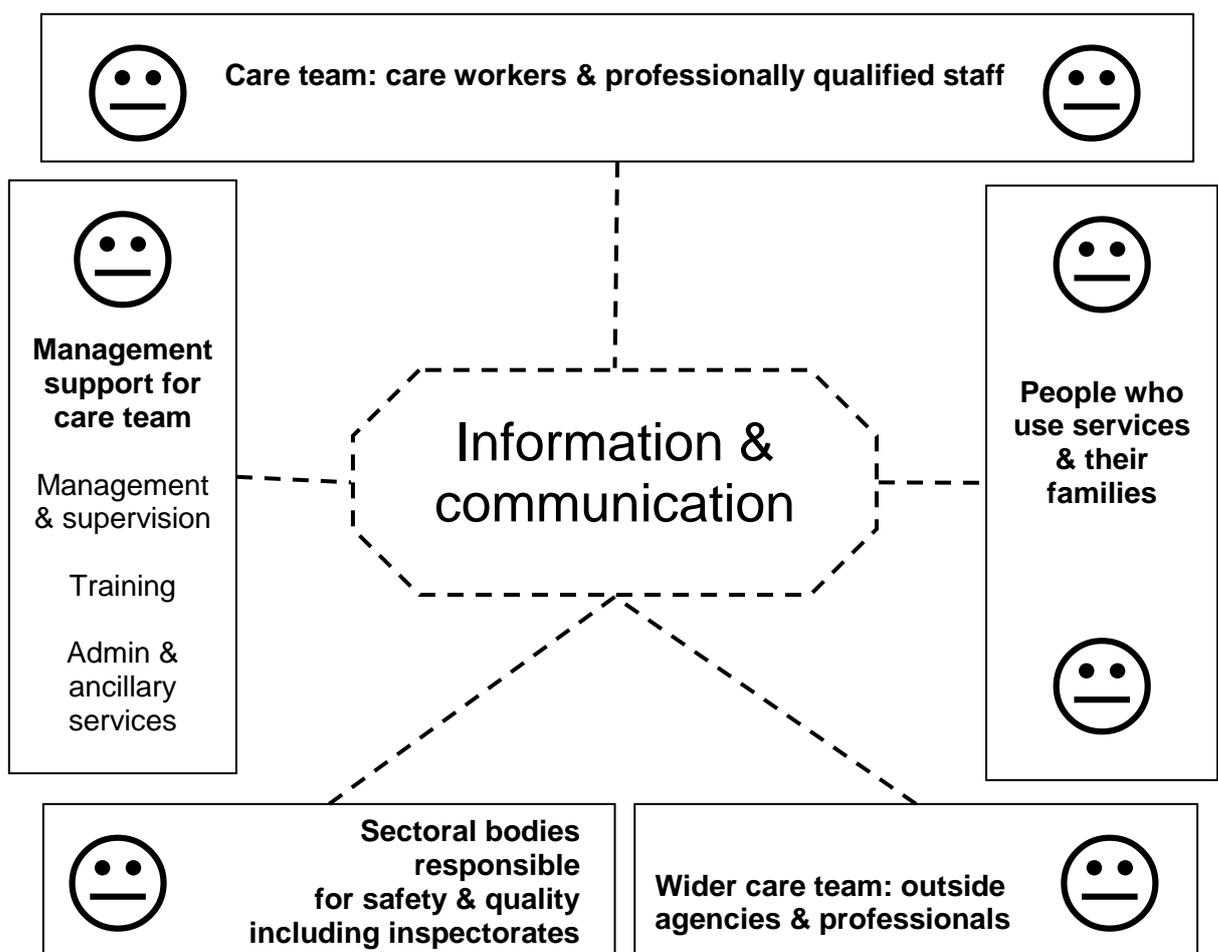
Care Skillsbase: Manage Skills

Analyse your organisation's needs

Use this simple needs analysis to identify where your organisation can improve how it communicates and deals with information.

Tip Do this activity with one or more colleagues.

1. Care organisations operate in partnership. A network of information and communication holds the partnership together. The diagram below maps this network.



To identify your organisation's needs, assess how well the network functions.

Consider:

- recent self-assessment and/or inspection findings for the organisation
- your own and colleagues' current experience of the organisation
- problems symptomatic of difficulty with information and communication, including
 - > complaints from people who use services
 - > complaints from outside agencies and professionals
 - > poor teamwork (including misunderstandings and conflict)
 - > poor supervision
 - > failure to follow procedures correctly
 - > poor record-keeping and reporting
 - > accidents, injuries, errors, waste
 - > misuse of equipment
 - > reluctance to train, limited gains from training
 - > recruitment and retention issues.

Note where information and communication are most likely to break down.

These are areas of organisational need.

2. To begin the process of addressing these needs, review the problem areas using the questions below.

- How do we know information and communication are a problem in this area?
- Why does the problem occur? Is it because of
 - > skills: do staff have the communication and number skills they need? (How do we know?)
 - > management support: do staff get the support (e.g. training and supervision) they need to work effectively? (How do we know?)
 - > resources: do staff have enough time to communicate and deal with information effectively in this area? (How do we know?)

For each problem area, decide whether the problem arises because of skills, management support or resources. Note your conclusions.

3. Prioritise **three** areas where improving the way that information and communication are handled would most benefit quality of care.

These are areas of organisational need.

It may be difficult to address shortfalls in resources, but normally it is possible to improve skills and management support.

In relation to your three priority areas, identify what improvements to skills and management support would be most useful.

These are areas of organisational need.

Skills

For information and communication to work well, staff need the ability to:

- understand policies, procedures, standards and regulations
- interact effectively with
 - > people who use services and their families
 - > colleagues, supervisors, managers and other staff
 - > the wider care team of outside agencies etc.
- keep accurate records and make timely reports
- participate actively in training, supervision, appraisal, team meetings etc.

Organisation

To support staff to apply these skills effectively, it is important to:

- make sure that staff know how they are expected to deal with information and communication
- monitor and feed back to staff
- offer learning and development where necessary.

Identify the areas where you would most like to see staff communicate and deal with information better. For each area you identify, note the benefit of an improvement.

Look at the organisational audit (see the Care Skillsbase website > Manage Skills at www.scie.org.uk/careskillsbase). It lists ways in which organisations try to support staff to communicate and deal with information.

Could your organisation use any of those ways to better support staff in your three priority areas? Other resources in the Manage Skills section discuss these issues in more depth.