

2. Seeing how Skills Checks work

People and situation

Deputy Matron, Yvonne Sparks, from Springfield Nursing home (referred to as Deputy Matron) tries out a Skills Check before using them with her staff. She is supported by independent training consultant, Sue Burgess (Training Consultant).

Transcript

Training consultant: I know you've got concerns about how you're actually going to deliver them [the Skills Checks] so I thought we would have a run through of one. I've picked one after your own heart, which is organising staff rotas. All of the Skills Checks run to the same format which, once you've got used to it, makes them quite easy to deliver. There's a short explanation at the beginning to the person you are delivering the Skills Check to. Then about 15 minutes – and you should time it – you should keep an eye on them without making it a test situation and then there's time for the feedback at the end.

Deputy Matron: If they were really struggling, I wouldn't leave them for the 15 minutes. I would have to go in and go through it.

Training consultant: If somebody is obviously completely at sea you might well stop and go through things and make notes about that; recognising that there's going to be a problem. I think the best way of learning how to administer anything, to act as the interviewer, is to have the experience of being the person doing the Skills Check.

Deputy Matron: OK

Training consultant: So you'll know whether you find it intimidating, whether the explanation suggested makes sense to you. So are you happy to do a Skills Check?

Deputy Matron: I'll try.

Training consultant: So organising staff rotas is, I'm sure, something every senior who comes for the job would like to do.

Deputy Matron: Absolutely. The dreaded bane of everybody's life.

Training consultant: It [the Skills Check] requires quite a lot of different numeracy skills. The front sheet will tell you all of this.

Deputy Matron: So it will be quite useful for common induction... if I can't get enough evidence from their writing...

Training consultant: Yes. You'll be able to put one of these in [their folder].

Deputy Matron: That would be quite good. Yes.

Training consultant: When you actually deliver them yourself there is a guidance sheet. And the guidance sheet offers support to the interviewer to flag up certain things about delivering the Skills Check. So you will have the three sheets here.

[Working with Skills Check 26 Organising Staff Rotas, suitable for Senior Care Workers.]

Training consultant: Could you fill in your basic details at the top?

[Ticking clock indicates that time has passed while the Deputy Matron does the Skills Check.]

Training consultant: OK?

Deputy Matron: I think so.

Training consultant: Right, so how did you feel about that?

Deputy Matron: It does make you think and it makes you realise how much maths you actually do use.

Training consultant: Yes. It really is so rooted in the realities of the job. I think it can come in as part of supervision.

Deputy Matron: Right.

Training consultant: What you don't want to do is rush out and try to deliver every single Skills Check to every single member of staff; it's a selective process; it's about thinking of certain skills in some people that you might want to develop. You might think they have a strength and you want to prove to yourself that they've got a strength in that area.

Deputy Matron: Or even prove to them...

Training consultant: Or even prove to them, yes.

Deputy Matron: That they've got that strength.

END OF TRANSCRIPT