



Workshop Sessions

1. Building Your Toolkit – Rachael Honeyman
2. Having the Conversation – Laura Hill
3. Reaching Carers at Work – Rosemary McLoughlin



Practitioner Standards

A Framework for Carer Support



vocal

working *with* carers

**Person
competencies**

**Practitioner
competencies**

**Service
competencies**

Background

VOCAL provides support to unpaid carers across Edinburgh and Midlothian in all caring situations. VOCAL supports carers to identify the issues affecting them and strives to achieve the best possible outcomes for all carers it supports. In order to do this, VOCAL recognises that it requires a workforce that is proficient, informed and recognised in their roles as skilled Practitioners of Carer Support. Furthermore, carers accessing support from VOCAL should be confident that the support they are receiving is of the highest standard.

As a commitment to both employees and carers, VOCAL has developed the Practitioner Standards: A Framework for Carer Support as an ongoing investment in the continuous development of its workforce and to ensure the best possible support is available for all carers, now and into the future.

The Framework encompasses the integral aspects of Carer Support by linking the competencies of the employee as a person, as a practitioner and also VOCAL as a service. This approach supports the principle that the Standards require the commitment of both the employee and the organisation and should be regularly monitored to ensure positive application and continued relevance for practice. These Standards will also form the basis of a package of continuous development for VOCAL employees which will include Practitioner Guides and Policies.

Person competencies overview

- 1.1** Be able to respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of carers
- 1.2** Be able to build relationships with carers based on mutual respect and trust and be able to maintain high standards even in situations of personal incompatibility
- 1.3** Be able to adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups and individuals, and ensure equity of access to the service
- 1.4** Be truthful, open, honest and trustworthy
- 1.5** Be reliable and dependable

Practitioner competencies overview

- 2.1** Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice
- 2.2** Be able to practice as an autonomous professional, exercising professional judgement
- 2.3** Be able to practice in a lawful, safe and competent manner
- 2.4** Be able to demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and ensure quality of practice
- 2.5** Be able to reflect on and review practice
- 2.6** Be able to communicate effectively and maintain confidentiality

Service competencies overview

- 3.1** Be able to maintain records appropriately
- 3.2** Be able to engage effectively in the evaluation and review of services
- 3.3** Be able to meaningfully contribute to the planning and development of services
- 3.4** Be able to effectively engage with digital technology

Person competencies in full

1.1 Be able to respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of carers

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Treat each carer as an individual and ensure they are at the heart of all practice
- Understand what matters to each individual carer and support the right to make informed choices
- Understand the specific local context of practice, including the socio-cultural and economic diversity of the community
- Work in a way that promotes diversity and respects different cultures and values

1.2 Be able to build relationships based on mutual respect and trust and be able to maintain high standards even in situations of personal incompatibility

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Work effectively and positively in collaboration with carers, colleagues and other professionals
- Build and maintain positive partnerships
- Engage with volunteers and support them in the delivery of the carer support

1.3 Be able to adapt practice to meet different groups and individuals needs, ensuring equity of access to the service

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Understand the value of enabling and empowering carers with the aim of enhancing access to services and opportunities
- Support the meaningful participation of carers in planning and evaluating support to meet their personal outcomes
- Deliver high standards of support regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation.
- Engage with the locality focus of service delivery and expand accessibility for carers
- Understand group dynamics and roles, and be able to facilitate group work, in order to maximise carer support

1.4 Be truthful, open and honest

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Declare issues that might create conflicts of interest and ensure that these do not influence judgement or practice
- Practice truthfully, honestly and maintain trust in all professional relationships

1.5 Be reliable and dependable

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct
- Honour work commitments, agreements and arrangements
- Understand the importance of maintaining own health and wellbeing

Practitioner competencies in full

2.1 Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Support carers to identify outcomes and plan what they want from their life
- Support carers to build confidence and look ahead to achieving their outcomes
- Access a range and breadth of interventions to meet carer outcomes
- Confidently utilise solution-focussed/asset-based approaches to practice
- Competently capture and review outcomes within an Adult Carer Support Plan
- Competently engage with the Brokerage model of support

2.2 Be able to practice as an autonomous professional, exercising professional judgement

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Be able to assess a professional situation, determine the nature and severity of the presenting issue and call upon the required knowledge and experience to take forward support
- Be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease carer support and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately
- Be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative
- Recognise that they are responsible for, and must be able to justify their decision making processes

2.3 Be able to practice in a lawful, safe and competent manner

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or support
- Recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources effectively
- Understand the need to maintain safety of carers and other colleagues in the workplace

2.4 Be able to demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and ensure quality of practice

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate and ability to:

- Take ownership of continuous professional development
- Engage fully in appraisal, support and supervision approaches

(continued over)

Practitioner competencies in full (continued)

2.5 Be able to reflect on and review practice

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate and ability to:

- Understand the value of reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection
- Recognise the value of supervision and other methods of reflecting on and reviewing practice

2.6 Be able to communicate effectively and maintain confidentiality

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate and ability to:

- Demonstrate effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to carers, colleagues and other professionals
- Understand how communication skills affect engagement of individuals and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take count of factors such as age, learning ability and physical disability
- Be aware of the limits of the concept of confidentiality and adhere to relevant policies
- Recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard carers, or the wider public

Service competencies in full

3.1 Be able to maintain records appropriately

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Keep secure, accurate and comprehensive carer records
- Comply with requirements as specified within GDPR and data protection guidelines
- Maintain electronic records within the “real time” approach

3.2 Be able to engage effectively in the evaluation and review of services

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Engage carers in the planning of carer services and evaluating of support
- Recognise the need to monitor and evaluate practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for reporting and quality assurance and requirements
- Be aware of, and be able to participate in, quality assurance programmes

3.3 Be able to meaningfully contribute to the planning and development of services

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Engage in the development of, and adhere to internal policies
- Stay abreast of relevant legislation and external policies relevant to practice
- Support and positively promote fundraising efforts

3.4 Be able to effectively engage with digital technology

Carer Support Staff should demonstrate an ability to:

- Competently engage with any case recording or relationship management systems
- Use information and communication technologies appropriate to practice
- Take the lead for own ITC needs and troubleshoot accordingly
- Fully utilise ITC equipment to support the delivery of service within an outreach model



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