

GEN86 Support individuals with cognition and learning difficulties

OVERVIEW

This standard is about the support provided to individuals with cognition and learning difficulties to enable them to participate in learning activities and to develop effective learning strategies. This standard is for healthcare staff who provide support for individuals who demonstrate features of moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia or dyspraxia, or who present features associated with autistic spectrum disorder. Some individuals may have associated sensory, physical and/or behavioural difficulties which compound their special educational needs. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies. Version No 1

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You will need to know and understand:

- 1.the current European and National legislation, national guidelines, organisational policies and protocols in accordance with Clinical/Corporate Governance which affect your work practice in relation to supporting individuals with cognition and learning difficulties
- 2.your responsibilities and accountability in relation to the current European and National legislation, national guidelines and local policies and protocols and Clinical/Corporate Governance
- 3.the duty to report any acts or omissions in care that could be detrimental to yourself, other individuals or your employer
- 4.the importance of working within your own sphere of competence and seeking advice when faced with situations outside your sphere of competence
- 5.the cognition and learning difficulties of the individuals with whom you work and the implications of these for supporting different types of learning activities
- 6.the significant differences between global learning difficulties which can affect all aspects of a individual's learning, and specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, specific language impairment, which can exist as an anomaly in the overall pattern of a individual's abilities
- 7.any Individual Education Plans and/or Behaviour Support Plans for the individuals with whom you work
- 8.the impact of any medication used by individuals with whom you work on their cognitive and physical abilities, behaviour and emotional state

- 9.the range of cognitive skills necessary for effective learning and the effects of single or multiple disabilities on functions such as perception, memory and information processing
- 10.the curriculum plans and learning programmes developed by the therapist
- 11.the importance of active learning for individuals with cognition and learning difficulties and how to promote this
- 12.how to adapt or modify planned activities for individuals who are making extremely slow progress
- 13.the sorts of problems that might occur when supporting individuals with cognition and learning difficulties and how to deal with these
- 14.the cognition and learning difficulties of the individuals with whom you work and how to adapt and modify teaching and individual materials so that they are given every opportunity to understand concepts and ideas
- 15.how cognitive difficulties impact upon the development of language and communication, and vice versa, and how this affects learning

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

- 1.obtain accurate and up-to-date information about the individual's cognition and learning needs
- 2.obtain detailed information from the therapist about the planned learning activities
- 3.obtain and use equipment and materials as appropriate to the learning objectives and the individual's cognition and learning needs
- 4.provide levels of individual attention, reassurance and help with learning tasks as appropriate to the individual's cognition and learning needs
- 5.provide support as needed to enable individuals to follow instructions
- 6.use praise, commentary and assistance to encourage individuals to stay on task
- 7.monitor the individuals' response to the learning activities and, where necessary, modify or adapt the activities as agreed with the therapist to achieve incremental and lateral progression towards the intended learning outcomes
- 8.promptly report any problems in supporting individuals during learning activities to the therapist
- 9.provide relevant information to the therapist about the learning achievements of individuals with cognition and learning difficulties
- 10.agree with the therapist the strategies to use to help individuals with cognition and learning difficulties to develop effective learning strategies
- 11.sequence and structure learning experiences and the learning environment, as directed by the therapist, so individuals develop organisational, information processing and problem solving skills
- 12.use specific visual, auditory and tactile methods to help individuals understand the functional use of objects and gain information about the environment
- 13.adapt and modify teaching and learning materials, as directed by the therapist, to suit the individual's maturity levels and learning needs
- 14.provide information, advice and opportunities for individuals to choose and make decisions about their own learning

- 15.give positive encouragement, feedback and praise to reinforce and sustain individuals' interest and efforts in learning activities
- 16.provide an appropriate level of assistance to enable individuals to experience a sense of achievement, maintain self-esteem and self-confidence and encourage self help skills
- 17.use appropriate strategies for challenging and motivating individuals to develop effective learning strategies
- 18.encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own learning
- 19.help individuals to review their learning strategies and achievements and plan for future learning

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This workforce competence was developed in 2004 from the Teaching / Classroom Assistants Standards developed by the Local Government NTO where it appeared as Competence 3-14. It has been revised by Skills for Health in 2007 and tailored to meet the needs of the health sector. It is therefore not transferable. This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004): Dimension: G1 Learning and development This standard has replaced AHP24.