

CH NT1 Assess the needs of the client (Nutritional Therapy)

OVERVIEW

This unit describes the role of the practitioner in assessing clients' needs which affect their health, functional status and well-being. This involves evaluating requests for nutritional therapy and the initial information received on the client, whether it is provided by the client him/herself or comes from another source, such as a referral. In doing this the practitioner needs to consider whether it is appropriate to work with the client or not.

The evaluation will include determining the urgency of the client's needs and the overall caseload of the practitioner, together with making the necessary arrangements for the assessment to take place. If the decision is made to see the client, the nature and purpose of the assessment is agreed with them and their needs identified. Some clients may be accompanied by a companion(s). Where this occurs the practitioner is expected to interact with the companion(s) in ways that are appropriate to the needs of the client and the needs of the practitioner. The subsequent assessment aims to determine the nature and extent of the client's needs and to agree a course of action with them. This may be to develop a nutritional therapy programme for the client, refer the client to another healthcare practitioner or to decide that therapy is not appropriate.

Who this unit is aimed at

This unit applies to any practitioner whose work aims to enable clients to improve and maintain their health, functional status and well-being through nutritional therapy wherever they practise. The clients may be seeking to improve and maintain their health, functional status and well-being. Equally, they may have no particular health needs or may have acute or chronic conditions, or be terminally ill. They may be new to nutritional therapy, new to the practitioner, established in that the practitioner has been working with them for some while or returning to the practitioner after a period of absence.

Principles of good practice

This unit is based on the premise that for effective assessment to take place, the practitioner needs to understand the clients' personal, cultural and social situation and the holistic nature of health, functional status and well-being. The practitioner must be able to communicate effectively with clients and any companions and balance the information obtained initially with information gained during the assessment. As the assessment process often acts as a gateway to services, there is also a particular

requirement for practitioners to monitor clients and evaluate the extent to which services are meeting the needs of the broad community. Where particular issues or incidents cause concern, the practitioner is expected to alert their professional body, their employing organisation or other relevant organisation.

Relationship to other units

This unit focuses on the assessment of clients' needs which affect their health, functional status and well-being and the evaluation of how nutritional therapy might meet those needs. It is similar in content to unit 11.1 in the National Occupational Standards for Professional Activity in Health Promotion and Care but has been put into the specific context of nutritional therapy. It links with Unit CH-NT2 in terms of educating the client to provide their own self-help treatment.

Note: where "client" is referred to, read also "patient", "customer", "pupil" and "learner", where "companion" is referred to, read also "representative", "partner", "relative", "friend of the client", "another healthcare practitioner" and "appointed chaperone".

Users of this competence will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

To see the Knowledge and Understanding for this competence please view the PDF

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION