

Introduction to Working with Customers with a Mental Health Condition

Topic 01 – Welcome & Domestics

May 2014

Time

Approximately 30 minutes

Objectives

At the end of this topic learners will have:

- received the domestic arrangements for the venue
- introduced themselves and met the facilitators
- agreed roles and responsibilities with other learners in the form of a contract; and
- received an overview of the learning.

Learning Points

This topic will cover the following learning points:

- Domestic arrangements for the venue.
- Event outline.
- Contract of Behaviour.

Event Preparation

- Domestic Arrangements for the venue.
- Generic Facilitator Support Pack.

Support Material

- Handout 01.01 – Action Plan.
- Visual Aid 01.01 – Aims and Objectives of this Learning.

Validation

No validation is required.

Method of Delivery

This topic is facilitator led. It also uses discussion.

Welcome and Domestics



Refer to the Generic Facilitator Support Pack to facilitate the following:

- Welcome.
- Domestics.

Introductions



Ask the learners to introduce themselves giving details of the following:

- Name.
- Location.
- Job role they are currently or due to be undertaking.

The learners can either introduce themselves individually or you can split them into pairs, and they can introduce their partners.

Introduction to this Event

This event is an Introduction to Working with Customers with a Mental Health Condition. It is aimed at all Jobcentre Plus staff who work directly with customers.

Today is an introduction only – you will not emerge as experts on mental health or mental health conditions.

However, you will emerge with:

- a sound preliminary understanding that is enough for most purposes in DWP/Jobcentre Plus working
- some practical ideas on how to apply what you have learned; and
- ideas on how to take your learning forward in the future.

As Jobcentre Plus employees, our aim is to help those people who can work to find employment and for those who cannot work, to ensure that they receive the benefit to which they are entitled.

In order to do this, we must ensure that every customer is treated as an individual and receives the best possible service which is effective for their needs.

Aim and Objectives of this Learning



Show Visual Aid 01.01 - Aim and Objectives of this Learning.

You may prefer to have this prepared on flip.

Allow learners time to read through.



Ask if there are any questions about the aim and objectives and discuss before continuing.

Clarifying Language and Meanings

Let us start by clarifying the language we will be using.

You may have heard all of the following terms:

- Mental health.
- Mental health problem.
- Mental health condition.
- Mental illness.
- Mental ill health.

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These are all generally accepted terms, although some are more popular than others. There seems to be no consensus over which term is preferred by those working in the field of mental health or by people with mental health conditions themselves.

For our purposes, though, we will be using the phrase mental health conditions for consistency.



You may find it useful to have these terms visible on flip throughout the day.

We will be going into more detail about acceptable terminology later in the day.

It is important to state as early as possible that, for the purpose of this event when use the term mental health condition, we do not include the following:

- autism
- brain damage/injury
- stress; or
- learning disability.

However, some people with these (and other conditions) can also have a co-existing mental health condition, such as anxiety or depression.

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Some organisations such as the World Health Organisation do include autism along with other mental health conditions. This just shows how vague this area can be.



It is possible that some learners will challenge this – but we are not going to cover these conditions in this introductory event.

Central Messages of this Learning

For convenience, we are going to presume you have no knowledge of mental health conditions – although there's a good chance some of you will have direct experience of this yourself, or through a friend, relative or colleague.

The main points we want to get across are:



Have the following list prepared on flip.

- Mental health conditions are very common.
- There are degrees of severity of the impact of mental health conditions.
- The majority of mental health conditions can be managed.

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- Many people with mental health conditions want to work, and are able to work.
- Working is beneficial for many people with a mental health condition.
- Many people are mistakenly afraid of those with a mental health condition.



Keep these points displayed on flip throughout the day.

As we have said, this event will not make you an expert on mental health issues. When working with customers with a mental health condition you may be able to get support from the **Work Psychologist or Disability Employment Adviser (DEA)**.

[Are these job roles available to assist job roles outside of the jobcentre?](#)

Learning Contract



Refer to the Generic Facilitator Pack to Support Skills Learning to facilitate the Contract of Behaviour.

Learners may wish to discuss personal experiences or details and discussions may become very sensitive. It is important to emphasise total confidentiality when contracting. Additionally, time keeping will be important in order to cover the learning points so diversionary discussions are to be avoided.

It is also important to be very clear that this event does not require anyone to divulge personal information. The facilitator should be alert to learners 'opening up' inappropriately and may tactfully prevent this by moving the discussion along.

Action Plan



Issue Handout 01.01 – Action Plan.

This Action Plan is for you to note any further action you need to take to support you in your learning. You need to make a note of what you need to do, who can help and when you need to do it by.

Summary

In this topic we have:

- introduced ourselves
- discussed the content of this event; and
- agreed a learning contract.



Ask the learners if they have any questions before moving on to the next topic.

End of Topic