

Service User and Carer Feedback: guidelines for students and mentors

Introduction

The expectation that student nurses make sincere attempts to make use of and reflect upon feedback from Service Users and Carers has never been more earnest. It is part of your Practice competencies and learning outcomes, throughout the 3 years of the programme and should be given significant consideration in all your placements. Indeed, in years 2 and 3 you are required to obtain service user and carer feedback in order for it to contribute to your practice assessment and final grading. The following electronic article provides ample evidence for such a claim across all professional groups within Health and Social Care:

- [Health Professions Council Service User Feedback Tools](#)

However, the wide and diverse needs and skills of people with learning disabilities mean that to produce a generic feedback form (as has been done for the adult nursing programme) is, to all intents and purposes, impossible. The many and varied ways in which service users in our field of nursing communicate mean that you need to think innovatively and creatively as to how you gain access to the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the people for whom you are providing care. You may use the generic form (which can be obtained from the University) or any adaptation of that form, if it is suitable, but it may be that you need to create something more person-centred.

The Process

Therefore, as part of every placement you should consider ways in which you might gain access to feedback on the care you have provided. This could be from gaining written feedback from a service user if he or she is able to provide it. It could be using pictures or symbols (PEC's etc.). It might involve having a clear understanding of the ways in which service users communicate their basic emotional state (Pleasure/Pain or Happiness/ Anger) through a range of behaviours or attitudinal states.

If the views of the Service user are difficult to access, then family members and carers will be more than willing to share thoughts about the care provided and should use the generic feedback form mentioned above.

The placement you are in might already have forums, which are familiar and skilled at providing feedback on a wide variety of matters (e.g. Service User forums/ Service User house groups). Indeed, some such forums have "students" as a standing item on their agenda to allow such feedback to be considered. Some placement areas also have feedback forms that service users and carers are familiar with and these might be used with the agreement of the mentor. Your mentor should be able to provide some leadership on this, given that they will be working in a placement in which they have already grappled with the complexities of seeking service user and carer feedback on the services provided.

The important thing is that you collect evidence of your consideration of and reflections on both the process of gathering service user feedback and the value and use you make of it when it is provided to you. This could be in the form of actual paper copies of service user/carer feedback. It might involve reflective accounts or it might involve other more innovative approaches that you have employed.

SoLD days will also have a forum for you to reflect and share good practice across a range of service providers and placement areas on this matter and for you to demonstrate the consideration you have given to this significant component of nursing care and service provision. Whatever it is, you are required, within your portfolio, to be able to demonstrate that you have feedback from at least two service users to support the assessment of your practice and to inform the final grading of your practice in Year 2 (formative) and Year 3 (summative).