

Top Ten Tips for care plans: A best practice guide.

1. Consider how you can involve the person, and people who are important to them, in the development of the care plan. Try to make the care plan as person-centred as you can - include the person's likes and dislikes, including how and when they receive support.
2. Think about encouraging all staff to get involved in the development of care plans (care staff, kitchen staff, activity co-ordinators etc.) They will all have a wealth of knowledge about the person and by contributing to the plans they are more likely to keep up to date with the information contained within them.
3. Have a go at getting creative! Care plans may be more appealing to read if they are colourful and include pictures etc. This can also help to explain the support a person needs; for example, photos or diagrams of equipment they need.
4. It's important to clearly record dates of when the care plan is created, reviewed and updated, who has been involved at these times and what their contribution has been.
5. A care plan should clearly detail the support the person needs and when and how this should be provided. Think about people's strengths and promote their independence by including what the person is able to do as well as any support they need.
6. Ensure every care plan is easy to read (for anyone who may need or want to read it) and adheres to the principles of the Accessible Information Standard – see link below. Include information about the person's mental capacity and communication needs, for example, do they need support to make choices about their care and how do they communicate their wishes?
7. Clearly identify any risks and document how these are managed. Develop separate risk assessments if needed.
8. If professionals provide advice about a person's care, consider how this information is incorporated into the care plan and make it clear where any guidance has come from.

9. Care plans should be reviewed on a regular basis (and in line with company policy) to ensure that they are up to date. If a person has a change in need then a care plan should be updated as soon as possible to reflect this change. Consider having specific members of staff who are responsible for ensuring that care plans are kept up to date.
10. Provide staff with enough time to read a person's care plan before providing support (including all agency staff). Keep a record of when staff have read care plans. Ensure that they have time to revisit care plans on a regular basis to keep up to date.

USEFUL LINKS and FURTHER INFORMATION

- Accessible Information Standard
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/accessible-info-standard-overview-2017-18.pdf>
- Communication Chart
<http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/person-centred-thinking-tools/communication-chart/>
- Decision Making Profile
<http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/person-centred-thinking-tools/decision-making-profile>
- Next of Kin: Understanding decision-making authorities
<http://www.ncpqsw.com/financial-scamming-publications/nok/>
- Person Centred Plan and Support Plan Guidance
<http://www.southernhealth.nhs.uk/resources/assets/inline/full/0/81916.pdf>
- Person Centred Thinking Tools
<http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/person-centred-thinking-tools/>