



CHCCCS023

# **Support independence and wellbeing**

Release 2

Learner guide

Aspire Version 1.3



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## Version control and modification history

Version	Release date	Modification
Release 2, version 1.1	April 2017	First release
Release 2, version 1.2	December 2018	Minor corrections as part of our continuous improvement program
Release 2, version 1.3	July 2019	Updated to reflect the new Aged Care Quality Standards

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## Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *CHCCCS023 Support independence and wellbeing*, Release 2. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au).

## How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
<b>Learning content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.</li> </ul>
<b>Examples and case studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. You can use these examples as models to help you complete practice tasks, and learning checkpoints.</li> <li>▶ Case studies highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.</li> </ul>
<b>Practice tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.</li> </ul>
<b>Video clips</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Where QR codes appear, learners can use smartphones and other devices to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: <a href="http://www.aspirelr.com.au/help">www.aspirelr.com.au/help</a></li> </ul> 
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning checkpoints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.</li> </ul>

## Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table outlines specific foundation skills noted for your learning in this learner guide.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Understanding your job role, organisational procedures and legal responsibilities</li> <li>▶ Managing your work and seeing how well you are going and making goals for yourself at work</li> <li>▶ Seeking professional development opportunities for continuous improvement</li> </ul>
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Understanding how documents are presented and being able to navigate through documents</li> <li>▶ Understanding industry- and job-specific terminology</li> <li>▶ Interpreting key information in relevant documents</li> <li>▶ Understanding routine workplace checklists and documentation</li> </ul>
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Planning, drafting and writing reports and documents</li> <li>▶ Communicating through written letters, email and online</li> <li>▶ Recording progress; reporting incidents</li> </ul>
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Clarifying instructions</li> <li>▶ Providing information</li> <li>▶ Supporting others through encouragement, negotiation and conflict resolution</li> <li>▶ Using body language to model desired behaviour and responding to others' body language</li> </ul>
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Calculating costs, weights, measurements of height and distance</li> <li>▶ Interpreting measurements</li> </ul>
Teamwor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Working well with other people by cooperating, collaborating, encouraging and building rapport</li> </ul>
Planning and organising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Planning your workload and commitments</li> <li>▶ Implementing tasks</li> <li>▶ Completing work on time</li> <li>▶ Knowing how to deal with hazards and risks</li> </ul>
Making decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Understanding and applying decision-making processes</li> <li>▶ Reviewing the impact of your decisions</li> </ul>
Problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Identifying problems</li> <li>▶ Working out how to fix a problem using problem-solving processes and reviewing the outcome</li> </ul>
Innovation and creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Recognising opportunities to develop and apply new ideas</li> <li>▶ Generating ideas by thinking of new ways to do something</li> <li>▶ Making suggestions to improve work</li> </ul>

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Technology and digital literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Efficiently using digitally based technologies and systems correctly and safely</li> <li>▶ Accessing, organising and presenting information</li> <li>▶ Using equipment correctly and safely</li> </ul>

## What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcomes	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1 Recognise and support individual differences	1A Recognise and respect social, cultural and spiritual differences	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Avoid imposing your own values and attitudes and support the person's identity and preferences	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1C Consider individual needs when engaging in support activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1D Recognise, respect and accommodate expressions of identity and sexuality	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1E Promote and facilitate activity opportunities that reflect the person's individual needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2 Promote independence	2A Support the person to identify and acknowledge their own strengths	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B Assist the person to identify opportunities to utilise their strengths	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2C Provide information and assistance to facilitate access to services and resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2D Provide support for self-management of service delivery	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic	Key outcomes	Rate your confidence in each section
	2E Encourage the person to build, strengthen and maintain independence	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 3 Support physical wellbeing	3A Promote and encourage living habits that contribute to a healthy lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Support and assist the person to maintain a safe and healthy environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3C Identify and report hazards	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3D Identify and report variations in physical condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3E Recognise and report indications that the physical situation is affecting wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3F Identify and report physical health situations beyond the scope of your role	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 4 Support social, emotional and psychological wellbeing	4A Promote self-esteem and confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4B Contribute to a sense of security through use of safe and predictable routines	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4C Encourage and facilitate participation in preferred activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4D Identify aspects of wellbeing outside the scope of knowledge, skills and/or your job role	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4E Identify and report variations of wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic	Key outcomes	Rate your confidence in each section
	4F Identify cultural or financial issues impacting on wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4G Identify risk and protective factors in relation to mental health	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4H Recognise and report possible indicators of abuse or neglect	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4I Identify and report situations beyond the scope of your role	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident





## Topic 1

- 1A** Recognise and respect social, cultural and spiritual differences

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- 1B** Avoid imposing your own values and attitudes and support the person's identity and preferences

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- 1C** Consider individual needs when engaging in support activities

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- 1D** Recognise, respect and accommodate expressions of identity and sexuality

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- 1E** Promote and facilitate activity opportunities that reflect the person's individual needs

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## Recognise and support individual differences

Australia is a diverse and multicultural society. People have a range of social, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds. They may have views, values and beliefs that are markedly different from your own. As a support worker, you do not need detailed knowledge of every culture or religion; however, it may be helpful to understand some of the main aspects of a person's culture and religion or be able to access this information when you need it. This shows respect for the person's beliefs and practices.

# 1A Recognise and respect social, cultural and spiritual differences

Support workers, coordinators and agencies must recognise and respond to individual and cultural differences to meet the needs of people, families and co-workers from various cultural backgrounds. To support a person's cultural, religious or spiritual practices, you need to recognise what the differences are. You need to appreciate and respect the differences of the people you work with based on recognising that every person needs to be treated with dignity respect. You need to ensure that you work to uphold their human rights.

## Recognise and respect differences

Support workers will meet people from various cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Some community services organisations provide services for particular cultures. Yet culturally and ethnically diverse people access all types of community services organisations. Some differences that you may need to address include social, cultural and spiritual differences.

Consider these cultural differences when providing support:

- ▶ A person's culture may affect how they feel about interacting with a worker of another gender.
- ▶ People's willingness to ask for assistance may be influenced by their cultural beliefs.
- ▶ People's dress and dietary requirements may vary.
- ▶ People's need for privacy may differ.
- ▶ Some people may require an appropriate environment to participate in spiritual activities and other ceremonial observances.
- ▶ Some cultures have different ideas about personal space.
- ▶ People also have social differences in relation to their family, gender roles or lifestyle preferences.

## Social differences

Social differences refer to categories such as class, gender, sexuality, age, disability, religion and ethnicity. These differences may be partly about lifestyle decisions, but are usually about fundamental differences and inequalities that people face in terms of income, health and life chances.

As a support worker, you need to address the social differences of people accessing your organisation, where necessary. Here is some more information about social differences.

### Social differences

People have different family structures and different roles, relationships and expectations within their families.

People have different connections to friends; levels of interaction; preferences for face-to-face versus online or phone communication; or support levels from friends.

People differ in terms of connectedness to their communities (such as sporting groups, social or religious groups) and to formal supports (such as community or government services).

People have different opportunities to access health care, education and work.

## Cultural differences

A person's culture is made up of a number of elements like beliefs, values, customs and attitudes. A person's culture is seen through language, rituals (funerals or weddings or religious ceremonies), art and objects, and is passed on from one generation to the next. Cultural differences extend beyond language and ethnicity. For example, some non-ethnic communities identify as communities with specific cultural differences, such as the deaf community and the gay and lesbian community. People who identify with a particular religion, regardless of their ethnic background, may also have specific cultural differences.



## Factors that influence culture

In some cultures, there is great shame involved in admitting vulnerability or asking for assistance. Other cultures allow people to express their emotions more freely. Cultural groups are often distinguishable because of factors such as appearance, dress, diet and religious rituals and traditions. Cultural differences can influence the various factors.

Factors influenced by culture include:

- ▶ lifestyle choices
- ▶ ideas about gender
- ▶ the role of the family
- ▶ attitudes towards people with disabilities
- ▶ ideas about privacy and modesty
- ▶ the role of religion
- ▶ attitudes towards ageing people
- ▶ recreational choices
- ▶ dietary habits
- ▶ communication practices and protocols
- ▶ dress.

## Spiritual differences

'Religion' and 'spirituality' do not have the same meaning. 'Spirituality' refers to a person's sense of wellbeing and contentment. Some people develop their sense of wellbeing and contentment through organised religion and activities such as praying. Others use less formal acts such as walking on the beach, taking time out to listen to calming music or practising yoga and meditation.

Whether it is through religion or spirituality, a sense of peace can support a person's health and wellbeing and help develop the ability to respond to life's challenges. This quality can help a person deal with changes that may occur as a result of disability or impairment or as part of the normal ageing process.

## Spiritual and religious considerations

People should be able to carry out their religious or spiritual beliefs wherever they are living. Privacy can be important for religious or spiritual events. People may want to pray, read religious texts, join in a religious studies class, meditate, receive a blessing or give thanks for a meal. For religious or spiritual events, people may like to be alone or in a quiet place. To help with privacy, understand and agree on a way to recognise when a person needs freedom from interruption.

There may be a special place where people go to meet their spiritual needs – perhaps a church, temple, synagogue or mosque; a quiet, secluded part of a garden; or a multipurpose room. A person may need help with transport to a religious centre, or you may be responsible for arranging a room for a religious event by bringing in special objects or leaving space on the floor for prayer mats.

### Example

#### Respect cultural differences

Mrs Kana has recently moved into a residential organisation. Sarah notices that Mrs Kana does not always eat her prepared meals. Sarah also notices that Mrs Kana asks the time regularly throughout the day and at times appears distressed when hearing the response.

Sarah sits with Mrs Kana in private and explains what she has noticed and asks if everything is okay. Mrs Kana says she does not like living there. Sarah asks if she does not like the food and Mrs Kana tells her sometimes she can't eat it. When Sarah asks about this, Mrs Kana explains that in her religion there are certain foods she cannot eat. Sarah prepares a list of these foods to put on Mrs Kana's file and give to the kitchen staff.

Sarah asks if Mrs Kana can tell her why she asks what the time is. Mrs Kana says that she is required to pray five times a day at certain times, but there is nowhere to go to pray. Sarah listens carefully to what Mrs Kana needs and talks to her manager about setting aside a quiet prayer space for Mrs Kana and any others who may need it. Staff are informed about Mrs Kana's needs and are able to assist her to the quiet room when she asks. Other residents are also told about the quiet space that they can use for prayer, reflection, meditation or privacy.





# 1B Avoid imposing your own values and attitudes and support the person's identity and preferences

A person's values are what they think is important in life and will determine their priorities. Their values also refer to the standards they hold regarding behaviour, and what they consider right or wrong. A person's attitude refers to the tendency they have to respond positively or negatively towards a situation or person or idea. A person's views and values may differ from your own or may be very similar. Regardless, you have a responsibility to respect the rights of all people to hold differing views and values.



## The impact of imposing values and attitudes on others

All community services workers have their own values and attitudes based on their culture, beliefs and experiences. As a support worker, it is important for you to recognise that the values and attitudes of the people you work with may be different from your own, and that these different values and attitudes are valid and important. Imposing your own values or attitudes onto the people you work with can negatively affect the working relationship and outcomes for the individual. The person's wellbeing is likely to be affected if they cannot participate in activities and make decisions that are in line with their values and attitudes.

## Community values

Individuals have values, and so do communities. Community values are important beliefs or behaviour standards shared by the members of a community. They are agreed ideals about what constitutes good or bad, or what a community finds acceptable.

At times community values can be based on myths or stereotypes that are accepted as true. Myths and stereotypes can impinge on how a worker perceives a person with care needs. Some examples include: the person is too old to learn how to use technology; they have an impairment that stops them from learning; they cannot parent adequately due to mental illness etc.

Myths and stereotyping can limit your ability to provide individualised support based on the person's strengths and needs. Here is more information about myths and stereotyping.

### Myths

- ▶ Myths are stories or ideas that are not true.

### Stereotypes

- ▶ A stereotype is a belief or idea about a person or a group of people that may or may not be true, or may be partially true. Stereotypes are created over time.

## Support the person to express their own identity and preferences

A person’s wellbeing is directly related to their ability to express their identity and preferences in a supportive environment. You can support a person to express their cultural, spiritual, ethnic, gender or sexual identity by creating a safe environment for this expression. You can also support a person to express their preferences on a range of issues from food choices to social engagement, treatment options and service access.

### Ways to support expression

As you get to know the person you are supporting, you will be able to identify different ways to support individual expression.

You could support expression by:

- ▶ providing options for a person so they can choose the best option for their needs
- ▶ encouraging activities to support expression (for example, art, music or writing)
- ▶ supporting a person to access services that provide specific activities for individuals based on their age or sexuality or cultural, ethnic, spiritual or gender identity.

#### Example

#### Support the person to express their preferences

Richard has difficulty in expressing himself verbally. Ray, his worker, notices that when they meet, Richard often doodles in a notebook he carries around with him, and that this seems to calm him down when he is anxious.

Richard and Ray meet one day to discuss social options for Richard. During the meeting Ray asks Richard if he would show him his drawings. He sees that Richard’s drawings are very expressive and beautiful and asks if he would be interested in attending a drawing class or art group. Richard is excited about the option and tells Ray he feels peaceful when he is drawing.

Ray finds a local art group and a couple of drawing classes, and together with Richard picks what he will attend.



## Practice task 2

1. How can myths and stereotypes negatively affect a person?

---



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2. How can a worker support a person to express their identity?

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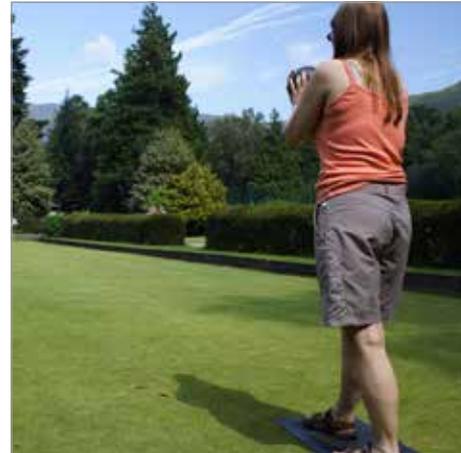


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**Click to complete Practice task 2**

# 1C Consider individual needs when engaging in support activities

As with all interactions, you must ensure you are acting in accordance with the person's needs. The person's thoughts and feelings may differ greatly from your own in this regard. People may feel disempowered or powerless because they need to rely on others to meet many of their needs. It is your role, as a support worker, to help empower them. Empowerment refers to a person's sense of control over their lives or their feelings of autonomy. This can be done, in part, by focusing on the person's strengths. You should consider a person's stage of life and their developmental stage when providing options to meet their individual needs.



## The person's stage of life

Human development follows particular pathways from birth to death. These ages and stages vary from person to person, but are often marked by milestones that enable each stage to be recognised and identified – making it easy for workers to keep track of progress and take action when needed. Here is more information about life stages.

### Consider life stages

As humans progress from infancy through childhood and adolescence into adulthood and finally older age, our knowledge, understanding and needs change. You need to take into consideration the life stage that a person has reached when considering how to support them and their care needs.

### Helpful information

Information helps ensure that the provided care and support is appropriate to the person's needs. It identifies what should be put in place to support healthy ongoing development and wellbeing. For example, we know that an infant requires more sleep than an adult, or that hormonal changes in adolescence can affect mood, behaviour and wellbeing. You can build on this knowledge to track the person's progress over time and compare their development with others of a similar age.

## Stages of development

There are various theories on the stages of development. It is worth you taking the time to research some of these to support your learning.

Psychologist Erik Erikson (1902–1994) identified eight stages of development. This theory is useful to give you a basis for understanding the various life stages.

Here is more information about his theory.

**Erikson’s human development theory**

- 1 Infancy**  
 From birth to 12 or 18 months of age – this stage focuses on developing trust (or mistrust) depending on how well a child is nurtured.
- 2 Early childhood**  
 From 18 months to 3 years of age – a stage Erikson refers to as autonomy versus shame. It is a stage where the child develops self-esteem and autonomy.
- 3 Childhood**  
 The preschooler stage from 3 to 6 years is centred on the theory of initiative versus guilt. During this stage, we tend to mimic adults and start to use imagination or creativity.
- 4 Middle childhood**  
 From 6 to 12 years. Erikson refers to this stage as industry versus inferiority as the child must learn to deal with demands to learn new skills.
- 5 Adolescence**  
 This stage covers ages 12 through to 18. If you remember back to your own adolescence, this stage is around identity versus role confusion. This stage depends on what the person actually does to discover their own identity and their relationship with peers.
- 6 Young adulthood**  
 Ages from 18 to 35 – a stage about intimacy and solidarity versus isolation. This is when most of us seek love and companionship. Generally people tend to settle down, raise a family and develop significant relationships.
- 7 Middle adulthood**  
 The stage from 35 to 55 or 65 is when we are focused on career and work. It is a time in life when we either take on greater responsibilities or develop fears because of inactivity. This is a stage where major life changes occur.
- 8 Late adulthood**  
 Aged 55 or 65 to death. Erikson refers to this stage as integrity versus despair. It is viewed as a stage of wisdom. People will either experience a sense of achievement in their life or view their life as one of missed opportunities.

## Human development

Besides the theories that tend to segregate human development by specific ages, there are those that focus on the person's physical, cognitive and socio-emotional developmental stages. Here is more information on these types of development.

### Types of development

#### Physical development

How the body grows and changes physically, such as growing in height and weight, changing body shape and changing sexual features

#### Cognitive development

The ability of a person to think, make decisions and judgments, process information and apply learning

#### Social development

The relationships between one person and another, or among a group of people

#### Emotional development

The way feelings and thoughts are able to be processed and used as a tool for behavioural and social decisions and actions

## The person's development

It is useful for workers to understand a person's development in order to assess how best to support their health and wellbeing. Within each of the stages of human development there will be evidence of particular physical, cognitive and psychosocial development characteristics. When workers understand these characteristics, it helps to ensure the care and support people receive is suited their particular age and stage.

Remember that people move through these pathways of development at different rates. Don't assume that just because a person's age corresponds with a certain stage, they would always display the features you would expect of that stage. Factors such as disability, environmental influence, genetic inheritance, accidents and injuries, and variations in maturity rates all make a difference to development. An understanding of physical, cognitive and psychosocial development patterns will help you understand the needs and abilities of the people you support.



## The person's strengths

At times the focus of service delivery can be the person's problems or limitations. It is much more useful to get an understanding of the person's strengths to work together to meet their needs. Here are some examples of strengths:

### Physical strengths

- ▶ Includes physical skills, knowledge and abilities – perhaps playing a sport, understanding good nutrition or being able to cook, or being aware of when their health is not going well

### Intellectual strengths

- ▶ Examples are having a positive attitude, being motivated, having an education, being interested in learning new things, having skills, having experiences or language skills

### Interpersonal strengths

- ▶ Interpersonal strengths could be communication skills, negotiation skills or having friendships/relationships

### Resources

- ▶ Family, friends, neighbours, community groups, co-workers, strong links to culture or material resources can all be strengths in a person's environment

## Example

### Consider individual needs during support

Janie is 24 and has severe physical disabilities after a car accident. As her family cannot provide for all her needs, Janie has moved into a room in an aged care facility as this is the only place that can meet her physical needs. Even though staff care for Janie well, she is showing increasing signs of depression and frustration.

Ricki, a staff member, asks Janie if there is anything she can do to support her. Janie tells Ricki she misses her friends, misses going out and socialising, and misses being around people her own age. Before the accident Janie played sport, had a job and enjoyed a very active social life.

Ricki realises that Janie's social and emotional needs, as a young adult, are not being met. Instead of being able to create strong bonds with others, Janie is isolated. Ricki talks to Janie about what options they have and organises for Janie to use one of the family rooms for her friends to visit once a week. They play music, bring food and socialise with Janie away from the other residents. Ricki also looks at options for outings for Janie with other young people.



## Practice task 3

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Paul, 76, lives in a small unit by himself. A few months ago Paul had a bad fall and broke his hip. Molly, Paul's support worker, notices that Paul is still struggling to get around his small kitchen with his walker to cook and that he appears to have lost weight. Molly sits down with Paul to discuss her concerns.

Despite recent events, Paul is positive about his future and tells Molly it is important for him to live independently. Paul is a good cook and up until his accident prepared nutritious meals not only for himself but often his neighbours too.

Paul is actively engaged with physiotherapy and believes he will no longer need the walker in a few months.

1. What strengths can you identify for Paul?

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2. What would you consider when providing support services for Paul?

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[Click to complete Practice task 3](#)

# 1D Recognise, respect and accommodate expressions of identity and sexuality

A number of things may happen in a person's life that challenge the way they express their identity and sexuality. Ageing, disability or a medical condition may lead a person to experience changes including physical capacity, reduced self-esteem or losing a partner. These life changes can affect a person's sexual interactions.



In addition, wider environmental factors such as societal attitudes also affect the way people view themselves and their ability and willingness to express themselves sexually. You need to support people to overcome these barriers and express their sexuality. To achieve this, you must recognise and overcome your own prejudices and preconceptions about sex and sexuality. You need to acknowledge unmet needs and develop strategies to address them wherever possible.

## Issues relating to sexuality and sexual expression

The words 'sexuality' and 'sex' are often used interchangeably, but they are not synonymous. Sex generally refers to the act of intercourse and related activities or to a person's gender. Sex is both an action and a description. Sexuality is far more complex. Sexuality and sexual expression is a human right.

You can read more about sexuality at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/sexual-health-issues>

## Sexuality

Sexuality is diverse and at the same time very personal. Sexuality is about sexual feelings and attractions to other people and is not always about who a person has sex with. Some people choose to use labels to identify their sexuality; however, workers should understand that a person does not need to choose a label.

Issues for people may include a lack of understanding of their sexual needs due to their age or disability, the impact of medication on sexual function, community views on sexuality, issues around contraception or reproduction, sexual health issues and the ability to express sexuality.

## Common terms

You should make yourself familiar with the common terms used to define a person's sexuality.

Here is more information to support you in your role.

### Common terms

#### Heterosexual

Attracted to people of the opposite sex or gender.

#### Gay or lesbian

Attracted to people of the same sex or gender.

(Avoid using the term 'homosexual' as it may offend some people.)

#### Bisexual

Attracted to both men and women. Some people prefer pan or pansexual to identify as someone who is attracted to different people regardless of gender.

#### Asexual

Not sexually attracted to anyone.

## Personal identity and sexuality

Our sexuality is part of our personal identity – our sense of self. Gender identity is part of personal identity. In most cases, there is a match between biology and gender identity. However, there are people whose idea about their gender does not match their physical gender. Transsexuals see themselves as a person of one gender trapped in the body of the opposite gender. Transsexuals should not be confused with transvestites, who like dressing in the clothes of the opposite gender.

Heterosexuality is the main form of sexuality in our society. This means that in some parts of society, same-sex-attracted people are stigmatised. As a result, some same-sex-attracted people feel pressured to conceal their true sexual identity and may experience shame, which can be damaging to their mental health. There are many ways to express ourselves sexually, but society 'normalises' some expressions of sexuality and sees other expressions of sexuality as being 'abnormal'.



## Expressions of sexuality

Able-bodied young people holding hands, kissing, hugging and expressing themselves sexually are seen as natural. By contrast, people with disabilities and older people face a number of barriers to expressing their sexuality. These barriers can include social attitudes, lack of a partner or low self-esteem. People need to have time and space to express themselves sexually. Workers must always be mindful of this when approaching bedrooms. You should never judge a person, nor should you punish them. Remember, sexual expression is a human right that you are meant to uphold as part of your role and responsibilities. Nevertheless, inappropriate behaviour must be dealt with for the dignity and wellbeing of all. You can play a significant role in assisting people to overcome barriers.

Strategies to support people include:

- ▶ seeking out role models with disabilities
- ▶ helping a person participate in a range of social activities
- ▶ building a person's self-esteem by valuing them.

## Various expressions of sexuality

People express their sexuality in various ways. When people are restricted from being able to do so, there can be a range of outcomes, such as their health and wellbeing being negatively affected. Here are some ways people express sexuality.

### Love and affection

The need for belonging and acceptance, loving and being loved are fairly universal. We show our love and affection through our actions and our words. Sex can also be a way to express love and affection. People can have sex without any feelings of love or affection. In some cases, people may have sex because they see it as the only way to be loved. Likewise people with care needs may feel that someone loves them because they have had sex with them.

People with cognitive impairments or intellectual disabilities are particularly vulnerable and can be emotionally and physically hurt or abused. This creates an ethical dilemma for workers. People with disabilities have a right to sexual autonomy, to decide who they will and will not have sex with. Yet they may not have the capacity to make informed decisions. A worker can help by ensuring the person has access to information and understands sexual health. A worker may also be able to help people gain insight into why people choose to have sex.

### Touch

Touch can be a way of bonding. Touch can be pleasurable and can be another way of expressing love and affection. In some cases, a person's only experience of touch may be interactions during personal care routines such as showering, dressing and grooming.

People with cognitive impairments may interpret this touch as being sexual. Workers must discourage and report inappropriate behaviour. In some cases, distraction should be used to redirect the person. Workers must always focus on the behaviour, not the person.

## Sexual tolerance

Our ideas about 'normal' sexuality are shaped by our upbringing, our family, the people we associate with, wider society, and our religious or spiritual beliefs. The first step in providing care without bias is to recognise your own views and values. It is not your role to give advice or tell people what is 'normal'. Rather, you should acknowledge there are many different views about sex and sexuality.

Here is some information depicting different views about sexuality. Each statement is a reminder that decisions about sex and sexuality are personal.

### Examples of different beliefs about sexuality

- ▶ 'Only married people should have sex.'
- ▶ 'Only people in monogamous relationships should have sex.'
- ▶ 'Sex is only for the purposes of producing children.'

▶ 'Sex is for fun.'

▶ 'Sex should only occur between a man and woman.'

▶ 'Anyone can have sex with anyone else providing all parties are consenting.'

**Example**

**Respect and accommodate sexual expressions**

Jessica is helping Samuel, who has a physical disability but no cognitive impairment, into the hydrotherapy pool. Samuel slips his arm around her and says, 'This is like going swimming with a girlfriend'. Jessica replies calmly, 'But not really. I'm just helping you into the pool'. Samuel acknowledges Jessica's comment: 'I know, but I miss having someone to put my arms around'. Jessica says, 'We can look at the possibility of more recreational activities to give you the opportunity to meet someone if you would like'.

In this situation Jessica acknowledges and takes steps to meet Samuel's needs without stepping outside of the boundaries of her job role.



## Practice task 4

1. How can a worker support someone with an intellectual disability to express their sexuality safely?

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2. What barriers might people with care needs face in expressing their sexuality?

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**Click to complete Practice task 4**

# 1E Promote and facilitate activity opportunities that reflect the person's individual needs

A person's wellbeing requires that you find appropriate activities to meet their identified needs and that you encourage them to explore these activities. You may also need to facilitate opportunities for participation, such as helping with access to the activity, providing support at the activity or obtaining the required equipment, clothing or materials.

The activities you offer a person should reflect the needs that have been identified as part of developing their individualised plan. These needs may be physical, psychological, social, cultural or spiritual and some activities could meet one or more of these areas of need.



## Physical needs

A person's health and wellbeing is directly linked to physical activity. Meeting physical needs can improve not just physical health, but also psychological health. You need to explore the person's physical needs while ensuring you understand their interests and abilities. Opportunities for activities should be based on these interests, abilities and the person's overall health. Here are some options for meeting physical needs.

### Exercise or sporting activities

- ▶ Gym membership
- ▶ Playing tennis, golf or bowls
- ▶ Bike riding
- ▶ Walking

### Nutrition

- ▶ Cooking classes or courses
- ▶ Having an appointment with a dietitian or nutritionist
- ▶ Accessing the library for information or cookbooks
- ▶ Supporting the planning of weekly menus

### Sleep

- ▶ Discussing sleep problems with a GP
- ▶ Using meditation apps or CDs before bed

### Using technology

- ▶ Install a phone app to remind the person to drink water
- ▶ Use a pedometer or smartphone step counter
- ▶ Create an online or smartphone food diary

## Psychological needs

Positive mental health is important to overall wellbeing. While in some cases you may need to support a person to access mental health assistance through their GP or psychologist, often mental health needs can be supported in other ways. Being mentally healthy means a person is able to cope with life's stressors. A mentally healthy person will demonstrate resilience and be able to bounce back from hard times. Mentally healthy people are often physically, socially and mentally active, with good social networks and a purpose for their lives.

You can read more about a Western Australian campaign that has excellent resources to promote positive mental health at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/act-belong-commit>

## Meet psychological needs

Good mental health is linked to good physical health, to connectedness within the community, and to feeling valued and needed. You can facilitate this by ensuring the person's physical needs are met and by promoting opportunities for them to engage with the community and other activities that improve wellbeing.

Options to meet psychological needs include:

- ▶ learning and practising mindfulness (in private or with a group)
- ▶ volunteering to help others
- ▶ attending individual or group counselling
- ▶ taking medication when required
- ▶ participating in social opportunities to reduce isolation.

## Spiritual needs

A person's spiritual needs are different for each individual. Some people have their spiritual needs met through attendance or participation in formal religious ceremonies or services. For others, spirituality is linked to their culture or to nature or mindfulness. You can provide a person with opportunities to meet their spiritual needs by first identifying what those needs are.

Here are some options that you could explore with a person to meet their spiritual needs.

### Options to meet spiritual needs

Attending a church service, prayer service or religious group

Joining a bushwalking group

Joining a surfing group

Attending a meditation class or using online/CD meditation resources

Gardening or being in a park or at the beach

Participating in cultural ceremonies

## Cultural needs

Cultural connections can be very important to some people. It may be a connection to the country of their birth or their spirituality, family or identity. You can ensure that a person's cultural needs are met by finding opportunities for them to participate in cultural events, groups or language classes (as examples). It is important for workers not to make assumptions regarding cultural needs and to discuss what the person needs and wants with them.

### Options to meet cultural needs

Participating in cultural ceremonies

Participating in a cultural group or attending a multicultural centre

Learning a language or practising a language with other native speakers

Participating in an art class or art appreciation group

## Sexual needs

Almost all people have sexual needs and this is an important aspect of wellbeing. Yet this is an area that can leave workers feeling uncomfortable. Sometimes this is due to workers' own values and attitudes around sexuality. Sometimes wider societal myths and stereotypes about ageing, disability, mental health or gender can influence how you facilitate discussion of a person's sexual needs. Do not assume that people with care needs do not have sexual needs. Here are some ways you can support people to meet their sexual needs.

### Meeting sexual needs

Support the person to access a GP to discuss their needs.

Facilitate an appointment with a worker from family planning.

Assist people to make an appointment to speak with a counsellor.

Provide access to information or services that explain and promote sexual health.

Provide a safe environment to discuss sexual needs.

## Social needs

Social isolation is detrimental to wellbeing and you need to encourage people to meet their social needs. It is important to understand that each person's social needs are different and that some people will require more or less engagement. Family can be an important social support for some people, but may not be present in the lives of others due to distance, loss or the breakdown of relationships.

Opportunities to support social needs could include:

- ▶ meeting new people at a social club or group
- ▶ having coffee or a meal with family or friends
- ▶ attending a class or course
- ▶ learning to Skype (or similar) with family or friends interstate or overseas
- ▶ attending regular social events (bingo, dancing, book club).

## Self-actualisation

American psychologist Abraham Maslow’s (1908–1970) hierarchy of needs outlines the basic needs that all people have. Maslow suggested that if the most basic of needs (food, water, safety etc.) are not met, then higher needs (self-esteem and self-actualisation) are not attainable. Self-actualisation refers to a person exploring and realising their own potential, seeking to grow and experience, and feeling fulfilled.

In the context of community services, this means providing a person with opportunities to grow, to experience new things, and to be a valued member of the community. You may facilitate opportunities for the person to contribute to the community by volunteering or finding meaningful work; to experience new things by taking a meditation class or a cooking class; or to grow by enrolling in an educational class or by tutoring children or adults struggling to read, for example.

### Example

#### Promote and facilitate activities to meet needs

Maureen has experienced a number of losses since moving into residential care. Her husband and friends have died, family members have moved away and she no longer has her home. Maureen appears lonely and shows signs of depression. Maureen’s worker talks to her about her needs and what she would like. Maureen talks about how she used to love to dance and how hard it is to deal with everything she has lost.

Maureen’s worker finds some dance groups at a senior citizens’ centre that Maureen may like to attend. She also finds information on grief counsellors who may be able to assist Maureen. Maureen’s worker then talks to Maureen about the options and encourages her to participate.

## Practice task 5

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Tracey is 19 and has just started working at a sheltered workshop producing furniture. Tracey loves her new job and is really excited about getting paid and meeting new people. Tracey’s mother tells Leah, Tracey’s support worker, that she is really concerned about Tracey saying she has a boyfriend at work. Tracey’s mother does not think Tracey understands sexual health issues and could be putting herself at risk of being taken advantage of.

When Leah talks to Tracey about it, Tracey tells her she loves having a boyfriend and that they kiss and ‘do stuff’ at work during lunch time and that she enjoys this very much. Tracey also tells Leah she doesn’t really have any friends outside work.

1. What can Leah do to support Tracey to meet her own sexual needs?

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2. What other needs might Tracey require assistance with?

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**Click to complete Practice task 5**

## Summary

1. Support workers need to understand some of the main aspects of a person's life, culture and religion, and be able to access this information when they need it. This shows respect for the person's beliefs and practices.
2. Differences may be categorised into social, such as class, gender, sexuality, age, disability, religion and ethnicity; cultural, such as beliefs, values, customs and attitudes; or spiritual, such as a person's sense of wellbeing and contentment, or their religion.
3. You have a responsibility to respect the rights of all people to hold differing views, values and attitudes. A person's values are what they think is important in life and will determine their priorities. A person's attitude refers to the tendency they have to respond positively or negatively towards a situation or person or idea.
4. Imposing your own values or attitudes onto the people you work with can negatively affect the working relationship and outcomes for the individual.
5. You should consider a person's stage of life and their developmental stage when providing options to meet their individual needs.
6. You can support people to overcome any barriers to expressing their sexuality. To achieve this, you must recognise and overcome your own prejudices and preconceptions about sex and sexuality. Acknowledge any of the person's unmet needs and develop strategies to address them wherever possible.
7. The activities you offer a person should reflect the needs that have been identified as part of developing their individualised plan. These needs may be physical, psychological, social, cultural or spiritual and some activities could meet one or more of these areas of need.

# Learning checkpoint 1

## Recognise and support individual differences

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in how to recognise individual differences in people and how to support them.

### Part A

1. Why is it important for workers to be respectful of people who express different sexual preferences?

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2. Explain what self-actualisation means and how a worker can support a person to move towards this.

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### Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

#### Case study

Jeff is 18 years old and was injured in an accident a year ago. The accident left Jeff with a brain injury that affects his short-term memory and ability to make decisions, but he is physically healthy. Before the accident Jeff played football, surfed and had a very active social life with many friends and a girlfriend. Jeff expresses a wish to get back to the activities he used to participate in and his friends have indicated support for this.

1. Why should a worker consider Jeff’s developmental stage when supporting him to engage in activities?

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2. What strengths might a worker consider when engaging in support activities for Jeff?

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3. Why is it important for a worker to recognise, respect and accommodate Jeff’s need to express his sexuality?

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## Part C

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Ahmad lives in an aged care organisation in a small self-catering unit. Despite the fact there are many opportunities for residents to be social, including activities at the organisation and regular outings, Ahmad rarely participates.

Luke, a worker, talks to Ahmad about the options available to him. Ahmad tells him it is difficult for him to participate as his religion requires certain things that may not be available, including vegetarian food; he also doesn’t drink.

Ahmad also tells Luke that since his wife died he is not comfortable talking to women, pointing out that there are a lot of female residents and staff at the organisation. Ahmad tells Luke he feels that other residents stare at him and that they are not very friendly because he wears a turban. Ahmad tells Luke he feels lonely and sad and isn’t even able to go to temple given he has no transport.

Ahmad tells Luke he used to run marathons when he was younger, and that his wife was a brilliant cook. Now he says he doesn’t exercise at all and he eats mainly frozen meals.

1. How can Luke demonstrate respect for Ahmad's social, cultural and spiritual differences?

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2. Luke is a 22-year-old from an atheist family. Why should Luke avoid imposing his own values and attitudes on Ahmad and support his identity and preferences?

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3. What possible myths and stereotypes might be impacting on Ahmad?

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4. How can Luke support Ahmad to meet his physical, psychological, cultural and spiritual needs?

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5. How can Luke promote and facilitate activities that meet Ahmad's needs?

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## Topic 2

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 2A** Support the person to identify and acknowledge their own strengths

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- 2B** Assist the person to identify opportunities to utilise their strengths

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- 2C** Provide information and assistance to facilitate access to services and resources

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- 2D** Provide support for self-management of service delivery

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- 2E** Encourage the person to build, strengthen and maintain independence

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## Promote independence

In community services often the focus is on the person's condition or their challenges. It is important for workers to recognise that each person has a range of strengths and abilities they can draw on to improve wellbeing and maintain independence. Being independent helps people feel in control of their lives and gives them choices about how and when they will do certain activities. Independence gives people self-esteem and confidence. Self-management and independence for each person should be a goal of all workers.

## 2A Support the person to identify and acknowledge their own strengths

Your role as a support worker is to help the person identify their own strengths. It can be very easy for the person to focus on their limitations or challenges, which can make it difficult to explore the future, the person's potential or capacity. If you recognise that the person is resilient and has capacity, you can support them to identify their individual strengths and abilities to develop potential and to create positive outcomes.



### Identify strengths and self-care capacity

You can begin the process of identifying strengths and the person's capacity to self-care by listening to the person's stories and supporting them to create a picture of the future. Once both you and the person have a clear understanding of their goals for the future, you can begin to identify the strengths they have.

You can also use a variety of tools to facilitate this process. Here is a guide you can use.

#### Miracle questions

- ▶ Let's imagine while you're asleep tonight a miracle happens. When you wake up tomorrow this issue will have less impact on your life. How will things have changed? What will be different? What will others say is different?

#### Scaling questions

- ▶ Think of a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 is how you felt when things were at their worst and 10 is the best. Where are you on that scale right now? What number would you like to be at? How long will it take to get there? How will you know if you're one point further up the scale? What will be different one point further up the scale? Who will notice?

#### Vision and goal setting

- ▶ Set goals with the person that are realistic and achievable and that match their 'vision' for their lives. What will it be like when the problem is solved? What will you be doing instead? What will be different? Who will notice things are different? What else?

#### Other tools

- ▶ Other tools include photo-language cards or strengths cards or objects, previous success stories, letter writing, relationship questions (What would your best friend/mother/sister say?)

## Support the person to acknowledge strengths and capacities

For a variety of reasons, including stigma and stereotyping or past experiences, it can be difficult for a person to acknowledge their strengths and capacities. This may be because the focus of a previous service was on limitations or challenges, or because of societal views relating to what a young person, a person with a disability, an elderly person, or a person with a mental health issues can achieve.

You need to follow the service delivery model that meets the person's needs and follows best practice standards.

## Service models

Service models are sets of worker practices based on a conceptual framework that promotes the best outcomes for people involved with the service. Good practice service models are based on a framework that supports the strengths of the individual and acknowledges their capacity to make decisions in their own lives. Here are some examples of approaches.

### Person-centred

Support workers can promote empowerment by adopting a person-centred approach when they support individuals. This means ensuring the service meets the person's needs. People in receipt of support services have the authority to make decisions about their own lives.

### CDC

Consumer directed care (CDC) enables people with care needs (and their primary carer) to make decisions about their own care. In the past, service providers often made these decisions. CDC allows for flexibility in the timing and scheduling of services.

### Flexible service model

The flexible approach refers to how and where services are delivered. Services can be provided in a range of settings (transitional care, multipurpose services and innovative care) as well as provide support at a time that suits the person.

## Aged care wellness framework

Aged care is focused on a wellness framework. The framework is made up of three approaches to providing support to older people in receipt of support/care:

- ▶ Wellness approach
- ▶ Reablement approach
- ▶ Restorative care approach

These approaches are provided through the home support program, which aims to prevent people from moving to more intensive care options.

### Wellness approach

The wellness approach focuses on minimising the impact of functional loss or not setting up further dependencies. The worker gets the person to do as much as they possibly can for themselves. Where the person requires support, the worker does the task 'with' the person, rather than 'for' them.

The worker uses encouragement to get the person to do the task they have difficulty with. This is to increase their confidence and skill level in doing the task themselves (or as much of the task as possible).

It builds capacity and self-management to support the person to retain as much autonomy as possible.

It identifies whether there is an ongoing need for services and how to assist the person to reconnect with the community.

### Reablement approach

The reablement approach works towards positive change in developing the person's ability to care for themselves. It builds on the person's strengths (what they can do) by providing short-term intervention to support them to regain their skills and abilities. This may include ensuring the person has access to, and can use, assistive technologies and aids.

Reablement is aimed at reducing or minimising the need for ongoing support.

### Restorative care

Restorative care is provided by a multi-disciplinary team to support the person to make functional gains after a setback/illness. Services may include podiatry, speech therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, nursing services, social work, speech therapy, diversional therapy and specialist services such as continence support.

## Service standards

Service standards are a set of guidelines for workers to ensure they provide the best possible services for the people they work with. Here is information about service standards in the aged care sector.

### Aged Care Quality Standards

**Standard 1 – Consumer dignity and choice:** Reflects concepts that recognise the importance of a consumer's sense of self. It highlights the importance of the consumer being able to act independently, make their own choices and take part in their community. These are all important in fostering social inclusion, health and wellbeing.

**Standard 2 – Ongoing assessment and planning with consumers:** Describes what organisations need to do to plan care and services with consumers. The planned care and services should meet each consumer's needs, goals and preferences, and optimise their health and wellbeing.

**Standard 3 – Personal care and clinical care:** Describes that consumers and the community expect the safe, effective and quality delivery of personal and clinical care. The Standard applies to all services delivering personal and clinical care specified in the Quality of Care Principles 2014.

**Standard 4 – Services and supports for daily living:** Explains that a consumer might have some challenges in their health and abilities, but they still have goals they want to achieve. They also have roles that have meaning, and they want to manage their day-to-day life and live as well as they can. Services and supports cover a wide range of options that aim to support consumers to live as independently as possible and enjoy life.

**Standard 5 – Organisation's service environment:** This applies to the physical service environment that the organisation provides for residential care, respite care and day therapy centres. It aims to make sure that the service environment, furniture and equipment support a consumer's quality of life, as well as their independence, ability and enjoyment. This means that the service environment suits the consumer's needs, and is clean, comfortable, welcoming and well maintained. It includes how the safety and security, design, accessibility and layout of the service environment encourage a sense of belonging for consumers.

**Standard 6 – Feedback and complaints:** The organisation must have a system to resolve complaints. The system must be accessible, confidential, prompt and fair. It should also support all consumers to make a complaint or give feedback. Resolving complaints within the organisation can help to build the relationship between the consumer and the organisation. It can also lead to better outcomes.

**Standard 7 – Human resources:** Requires an organisation to have and use a skilled and qualified workforce, sufficient to deliver and manage safe, respectful and quality care and services.

**Standard 8 – Organisational governance:** The intention is to hold the governing body of the organisation responsible for the organisation and the delivery of safe and quality care and services.

## Other service standards

All community services operate according to service standards.

Here is an overview of the standards for disability and mental health services.

### Service standards



#### National Standards for Disability Services

**Standard 1:** Rights that focus on freedom of expression, dignity and respect, self-determination, choice and control, confidentiality and privacy

**Standard 2:** Participation and inclusion emphasise promoting a valued role for people with disabilities as well as including people with disabilities in activities of their choice

**Standard 3:** Individual outcomes are about people directing their own supports, service planning, collaboration and consultation

**Standard 4:** Feedback and complaints provide mechanisms for people to make complaints and to have their concerns addressed

**Standard 5:** Service access allows for accessible information to make informed decisions, transparency in service delivery and regular reviews to identify and respond to changing needs

**Standard 6:** Service management includes governance, communication processes, continuous improvement and compliance with relevant legislative requirements



#### National Standards for Mental Health Services

**Standard 1:** Rights and responsibilities

**Standard 2:** Safety

**Standard 3:** Consumer and carer participation

**Standard 4:** Diversity responsiveness

**Standard 5:** Promotion and prevention

**Standard 6:** Consumers

**Standard 7:** Carers

**Standard 8:** Governance, leadership and management

**Standard 9:** Integration

**Standard 10:** Delivery of care

**Example**

**Support the person to acknowledge their own strengths**

Mark has had a mental illness for several years. During this time he has not been able to work or go to university. Mark feels his family is embarrassed by him and he doesn't have any friends because they were all 'put off by his strange behaviour'.



Maria, Mark's support worker, talks to Mark about how he would like his life to be and what goals he has. Maria supports him to identify that he would like a part-time job and a driver's licence, but he tells her he doesn't think he can do either. Maria talks to Mark about when he had a job previously and he remembers that his boss told him he was an excellent worker. Maria and Mark discuss the safeguards they can put in place to reduce his stress in the workplace and a plan to start his job search. Mark leaves telling Maria he feels confident that he can successfully keep a part-time job.



## Practice task 6

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Michael is a 73-year-old man who lives in a unit in a retirement village. He has lunch and plays cards with some friends every month. He organises a volunteer transport service to pick him up for the outing. Michael has arthritis and uses a walking frame to get around. He uses specialised kitchen equipment to continue to cook for himself. Recently Michael has said he feels like he can't do anything for himself.

1. What are Michael's strengths?

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2. How could a worker support Michael to identify and acknowledge his strengths?

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**Click to complete Practice task 6**

## 2B Assist the person to identify opportunities to utilise their strengths

Once you and the person have identified the person's strengths, you can work together to find opportunities for them to utilise these strengths to meet their own needs as much as possible.

You should know what care people need so you can provide the most appropriate level of support. You need to be aware of the support needs identified by other professionals the person has contact with. You also need to know how much help the person needs. There are various ways to find out this information, such as reading the person's care plan or by talking to the supervisor about the person's needs.



All plans need to be updated regularly to ensure they continue to meet the person's needs. Plans need to be changed when the needs of the person change. For example, a person's mobility may have decreased since the original plan was made, affecting their ability to shop on their own.

### Encourage people to get support with activities of daily living

The tasks people do every day are called activities of daily living. These are the things people do to keep themselves and the place where they live clean, safe and organised. Many people are able to do most or all of their activities of daily living themselves. Others need help to do these tasks. Here is some information about the types of daily activities people do.



#### Home maintenance

Home maintenance includes tasks to keep their home and garden in good condition. Examples include cleaning the windows; changing blown light bulbs; fixing a broken lock; weeding and watering.



#### Domestic cleaning

Household tasks may include cleaning floors; washing the dishes; sweeping; putting the rubbish bins out for collection; hanging clothes out to dry; folding the washing and preparing meals.



### Personal care

Personal care includes tasks such as showering, bathing, cleaning teeth and taking medication.



### Pet care

Caring for pets include tasks such as feeding, exercising and cleaning up after pets. Tasks may also include visiting the vet.



### Getting around

Getting around in the community includes driving a vehicle or using public transport. Being able to get around is vital to enabling connectedness with family, friends and the wider community.



### Shopping

Shopping for household and personal items includes buying groceries, personal items, clothing and shoes.



### Paying bills and managing correspondence

Tasks include paying bills and writing and posting letters. Some people may prefer to do these tasks via online processes, while others may prefer to do tasks manually and in person.

## Provide support

Once you and the person have identified their strengths and capacity for self-care, you also need to identify what support to put in place to help them meet their goals and needs.

People may need support with a variety of daily tasks or needs such as cooking, cleaning, gardening, transportation, access to financial supports, budgeting or personal issues.

However, it is essential that you keep check on your own values when providing support. For example, while you may be supporting the person to clean their home, you should keep in mind it needs to be cleaned to their standards – not yours.

## Home and garden maintenance

People who live in their own home may need help to look after their home and garden. They may not be able to do minor repair jobs such as changing a light bulb or a tap washer. They may not be able to weed their garden or mow their lawn. People may need help to do part or all of these tasks. It is important for you to watch people during home visits to identify their needs, see whether their needs have changed or if they need extra help.

Having an understanding of why they can no longer do a task is important as well. For example, is it due to declining strength or a memory lapse on how to do the task?

## Household tasks

People may struggle to complete some household tasks such as cleaning, laundry and preparing meals. This may be because they do not have the physical capacity or because they have not been supported to learn the required skills. They may be able to do some tasks but need help with others. For example, a person may need the worker to chop up vegetables and meat and get a saucepan out of the cupboard, but they can then complete the rest of the cooking task. They may be able to do parts of some tasks but not be able to complete them. For example, they may be able to collect their dirty clothes, put them in the washing machine, add washing detergent and turn the machine on, but not carry the clothes out to the washing line.

## Enlist support

Some people may be able to secure support from others to help them meet their needs around the home. Here are some sources of assistance.

### Family and friends

- ▶ Family and friends may be able to help if the person lives at home or the person may be eligible for supported accommodation services.

### Private agencies

- ▶ Some people may purchase private, paid services. These services may include providing staff to cook, clean and do laundry.

### Private contractor

- ▶ A person may employ someone to come in each day to do household tasks or to 'live-in' and provide support for longer periods of time during the day and night.

### Home support program

- ▶ People who are deemed eligible for this type of support can get assistance from government-funded services. They need to pay a fee for the services they receive but the cost is much lower than purchasing services from private businesses.

## Community access

People should be able to go out when they need or want to. They may want to catch up with friends. They may want to play sport or access the gym. People also need to keep appointments with doctors, financial and legal advisers and other professionals. Workers may facilitate people getting to and from social activities, health and business appointments and other support services.

## Transport

It is important that a person is able to participate in the community and in activities that meet their needs and if they cannot access transport, they may need to have services, family or friends pick them up at their home to take them out. You can support people to access transport services or you may have the capacity to transport the person themselves.

Transport options available for some people include:

- ▶ a council service that provides transport to and from a shopping centre
- ▶ a courtesy (free) bus to and from an activity/community centre
- ▶ private services like taxis
- ▶ volunteer transport services.

## Transport subsidies

Some people may be eligible for cheaper transport via government subsidies. The benefits and conditions of these subsidies differ from state to state and they have different names. For example, in Queensland there is a taxi subsidy scheme that aims to improve the mobility of those with severe disabilities. Become familiar with the services that are available to transport people to activities and appointments. Research the transport services available in your local area by using the internet, contacting the local library or council, or consulting a community service directory.

## Personal and financial matters

A person may have trouble managing financial matters for physical reasons such as deterioration in eyesight or memory or hand movement. Alternatively it could be due to an intellectual disability or mental health issues. You can support a person to manage their financial affairs by creating a budget, supporting them to pay bills/rent, setting up direct deposits or reminders for due bills, or reading and responding to mail.

It is never your role to make financial decisions. The person may be able to get help from family or friends, or a volunteer service specialising in financial advice. A person with memory support needs may have a guardian or power of attorney to help them make financial decisions. Ask your supervisor if you are unsure of who should do this.



## Care for pets

Some people may find they are unable to care for their pets properly any more. They may be unable to wash their dog or take it for a walk. They may be unable to feed or brush their cat or take it to a vet, or they may have financial issues that make paying for pet care difficult. There are pet care services that can help if family or friends are unavailable.

## Provide encouragement to seek help

Some people do not ask for assistance for personal, cultural or experiential reasons. Some people may like to think they can still do the tasks they used to do and don't want to lose their independence or make extra work for their families or friends. If you notice they are not willing to ask for support, provide encouragement. Here are some ways to support a person to seek help.

### Assistance options

Ask them how they feel about asking for assistance. Listen carefully to their response.

Encourage them to look at the different ways they can get help and to identify who can provide this assistance.

Explain that getting the support they need means they will remain independent.

Talk to them about the services they may use. Give them time to think about it.

Make sure they know you are not trying to push them into anything. It is a decision they need to make when they are ready.

## Know when a person needs support

It is important to know why a person may need assistance with an activity or reaching a goal. They may have a physical problem that affects mobility, such as arthritis; or have progressive memory loss that affects their ability to participate in an activity. They may be experiencing mental health issues that affect their ability to complete tasks temporarily or long-term.

There are several ways a person can obtain support to complete their activities of daily living, and it is your role to support them to identify who and what can help. They may have family or friends who are able to assist. They may be eligible for support from a community services organisation. The services and help available depend on where the person lives and what issues they are facing.

## Match needs to services

Once you and the person understand the level of support required, you can match the person's needs with the most appropriate service. You need to be aware of the range of services available to people with various needs, who can access these services, the costs of the service, and how the person will access transport to the service. It may be useful to keep a database or list of local services and contact details so the appropriate service options can be discussed with the person.

## Procedures for supporting people

Your organisation will have procedures that relate to the way in which you support people to complete their activities of daily living. Here are some examples of procedures you should follow when providing support to a person.

### Provide transport

- ▶ When providing transport for people to get to appointments and social and recreational activities, there may be rules about:
  - using your own car to transport a person
  - what kind of driver's licence you require
  - the worker's driving record
  - what insurance is required
  - the procedures to follow if you have an accident while driving a person.

### Help with cleaning and laundry

- ▶ When helping people with cleaning and laundry, there may be rules about:
  - how to safely handle cleaning chemicals
  - what types of cleaning you can and cannot do
  - how to use equipment safely.

### Prepare meals

- ▶ When preparing meals, there may be rules about:
  - handling food safely
  - using cooking equipment safely
  - what to do if you are hurt.

### Support for home maintenance

- ▶ When providing support for home and maintenance tasks, there may be rules about:
  - how and when to use special equipment
  - using equipment in the person's home
  - safety when doing maintenance tasks
  - the tasks you can and cannot do.

## Help a person in the community

In many situations a person can complete their activities of daily living more successfully if they have someone with them. They may be able to drive their car, walk or catch public transport but need someone with them to help either temporarily or long-term. They may need assistance with directions because of their poor memory or vision problems.

Some people may need help with physical tasks such as carrying heavy bags or pushing a trolley. They may need help to get on and off public transport or may need access to appropriate equipment. You may support a person to learn a new task or use new equipment, or support them long-term to complete certain tasks.

## Find support

It is important to encourage people to get support when they need it. Some people may need help with parts of an activity, while others may need help with several activities (which may require you to assess their needs). Some services, especially government services, require a formal assessment of needs before the services are provided.

It is important to discuss how much assistance the person needs with them and, where appropriate, their family members. You need to discuss what outcomes they want and make a decision about how much support to provide – without discouraging the person from living as independently as possible.

There are various ways you can find out what level of support the person requires. Here are three examples.

### Identify strengths

Identify the level of support required. Pay attention to the activities the person does well, their strengths and skill levels. This will assist you to identify how much assistance they require. Your aim is to build on the person's strengths.

### Consultation

Ask the person what help they would like. Remember the person is the best expert on themselves; that is, what they need assistance with.

Without breaching confidentiality or privacy laws, you may also be able to consult family members about the level of support the person requires.

### Observation

Watch the person doing the activity so you can see where they need help. Suggest to the person that it may be useful to have another professional undertake an assessment depending on the presenting issues; for example, a healthcare professional, a mobility expert or a personal trainer.

## Encourage the person to direct their own support

Once you and the person have identified the support needed, you should provide options and information so the person can make decisions on how, when and who provides that support. Being in control of decisions about daily routines and what support is accepted helps the person to feel in control and to maintain their skills and independence.

You should ensure that the person is given appropriate information to make informed choices and that they have decided on their own priorities for services and are clear on the final decisions.

Here is an example of the steps to follow.

### Directing their own support

1

#### Identify the support required

The person needs support with:

- ▶ feeding their cat
- ▶ putting on their pyjamas
- ▶ making a cup of tea
- ▶ getting into bed.

2

#### Identify tasks the person can control

Ask the person which task they would like to do first. Some tasks may need to be done first, while others may be done at any time or in any order.

3

#### Encourage the person to plan support

Talk to the person about the support you will provide. You can get them to help you plan how and when it will be done. For example:

‘Hello Mr Truman. I am here this evening to help you feed the cat, make your tea, get your pyjamas on and get into bed. Would you like your cup of tea before you go to bed? Should I feed the cat before you start getting ready for bed, or will I do that last?’

4

#### Provide the required support

Provide the support required for each task in the order chosen by the person.

## Utilise strengths

When discussing daily living needs and what supports are required, it is important that you focus on what the person is able to do, rather than what they cannot do. This means focusing on strengths – not limitations – and using those strengths to build a picture of what the person needs and what support services are necessary.

An example may be when a person is still able to prune plants in the garden and keep it tidy, but can no longer mow the lawn. Or a person who has a shoulder condition may be able to clean their house except for any items or shelves above shoulder height.



## Use support

Individual differences such as age, culture, language, past experience, physical ability and health, mental health or personality may influence what support is provided and used. For example, someone who speaks English as a second language, or has limited English skills, may not accept a service with English-speaking staff as they may feel intimidated. Or a woman from a particular culture may not accept a cleaning service if the worker is male.

**Example**

**Assist a person to identify and use their skills**

Sally is unable to drive due to the medication she takes. Sally tells her worker that this has restricted her ability to shop, go to the library, socialise and get to the gym. Sally is very independent and does not want to use a transport service.

Sally and her worker assess that one of her strengths is her ability to be very organised. They discuss whether her ability to plan ahead will help her use public transport. Sally’s worker supports her to find the relevant public transport timetables. Sally then puts together a regular week of activities using the timetables to plan her transport and the time required to travel. Sally and her worker realise she may need to go to the grocery store more often so she doesn’t have to carry heavy bags on the bus, so she adds this to her weekly plan. Sally is back to participating in all her regular activities without requiring additional assistance.

## Practice task 7

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Valma is a 76-year-old woman who lives in a unit in a retirement village. Julie is the aged care worker who comes to help her. Valma is having trouble hanging her wet laundry on the line as it is too heavy for her, but she is very independent and does not want Julie to do it for her.

1. What aspect of the laundry can Valma continue to do?

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2. How can Julie support Valma with her laundry?

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**Click to complete Practice task 7**

## 2C Provide information and assistance to facilitate access to services and resources

You must provide people with all the information they need to make informed decisions about the care they receive. This should include details of the services needed as well as details about the services available. Information can be conveyed to people verbally. Brochures and other information can be used to help the person understand the features and benefits of various service options.



Community services organisations may have a policy and procedure to follow when providing information to a person about other services. Often this will involve you following a process of identifying the person's needs, finding appropriate services and making recommendations and referrals. In order to be actively involved, people must be informed about the:

- ▶ types of services available
- ▶ levels of service available
- ▶ commitment expected and possible outcomes
- ▶ financial costs
- ▶ potential drawbacks and benefits.

### Information and assistance

It is not enough to provide the person with information or resources; you and your organisation must ensure the person and, where appropriate, their family or advocate understand the information. If language is a barrier, provide some pamphlets in the person's language or use the services of an interpreter. Also consider the person's literacy abilities; perhaps a verbal or visual explanation may be more appropriate.

It can be difficult to process and manage a great deal of information. You can help a person identify the strengths and weaknesses of various service providers. One helpful approach is to draw up a table evaluating each service.

#### Points to consider when gathering information for the person

- ▶ Cost and distance from home
- ▶ Travel options
- ▶ Perceived benefits
- ▶ Who will be involved
- ▶ Frequency of contact
- ▶ Eligibility and the person's responsibilities

## Explain the services

When the person's needs are known, you can plan the support required with the person. This information is usually recorded in the person's file and is sometimes called a service plan, support plan or service delivery plan. You and the person should have a care/case plan to guide the support needed and information given. Providing the person or their family or advocate with a copy of the care plan reminds them of what support was agreed to. It describes the level of support and where it will be provided. It is important to ensure the person knows what to expect from the support service. Here is further information that a person needs to know.

### What level of support will be provided

**Example:**

- ▶ The person will be taken to the shops to buy household and personal items.

### What will and will not be done for the person

**Example:**

- ▶ The worker will prepare a shopping list for the person.
- ▶ The person goes to the shops and buys the items on the list on their own.

### When the service will happen

**Example:**

- ▶ The transport service will pick them up from home each Thursday morning at 10 am. The service will collect the person from the shopping centre to return home at midday.

### Where the service will happen

**Example 1:**

- ▶ The transport service will pick them up at their home and take them to the shopping centre.

or

**Example 2:**

- ▶ The transport driver will help them on and off the bus.

## Strategies to access services and resources

You should draw on a number of strategies to facilitate a person's access to services and resources. Ensure that all barriers to accessing services, such as lack of transport, language, cost, stigma or ability to understand are removed. If a person is nervous about accessing a new service, you can support them by attending the first appointment or being at their home to make the introductions. A supportive strategy is to include the person in decisions about services they access.

Be aware of the services and resources available to people with specific needs. Your organisation may have a directory of services or you may access an online directory. You may keep copies of written resources to share with the person, and may have a list of other resources and how to access them. You may use local or professional networks to facilitate access to services.

You and your organisation will have both formal and informal networks to help you provide the person with information on services and referral options, as well as contacts within other services.

## Resources

Many types of resources are available to help people to live more independently. These resources may be human, such as a support worker visiting daily to support the person to cook or to garden.

Perhaps the person needs specific equipment to perform everyday tasks that would be difficult or impossible otherwise. The type of equipment a person may need depends on what tasks they find challenging, and why. Some equipment must be purchased from a specialist aids and equipment supplier. Other equipment is available through general retail stores.

Here are some examples of aids and equipment that are useful resources for some people.

### Resources to aid independence

Long-handled dustpan and broom

Non-slip bench mats for mixing bowls

Jar grips to help open jars

Foam handle covers for knives, scissors and other utensils to assist with gripping

Large-print measuring jugs

Labels; for example, for washing machines and oven knobs

A washing basket trolley to take washing to the line and prevent the need to bend

### Example

#### Identify service options and improve access

Louis, 28, has schizophrenia and has been living at home with his parents. His support worker, Gavin, provides him with information on some supported accommodation options and they go to visit one together so Louis understands what is available. Louis then decides to move into a supported accommodation unit and is able to live more independently.

Lila, 75, is unable to cook due to a fractured wrist. Nadia, her support worker, tells Lila about delivered meals. They look into the service together and find the meals are within Lila's budget. As an added bonus, Lila enjoys the interaction with the meal deliverer volunteer.

Franco, 22, has an acquired brain injury. His support worker, Rex, helps him access Centrelink disability payments, rental assistance and Department of Human Services housing.



# Practice task 8

1. How can a worker help a person identify the best service provider for them from all the services available?

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2. Sue has begun to use a wheelchair to aid her mobility. She does not feel confident using public transport yet. The worker and Sue have agreed to a transport service to get her to the shops to do grocery shopping. What information does the worker need to give Sue to ensure she understands the service that will be provided?

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**Click to complete Practice task 8**

## 2D Provide support for self-management of service delivery

Many people can self-manage the delivery of services once they have sufficient information and resources. You need to provide support for self-management so the person can take control of the service delivery they receive. Self-management support works as a partnership between you, the worker and the person, with the person taking on the role of managing daily tasks, activities and care. Some people may need more support than others to manage their own services, and some people may have been doing so for some time. Depending on the situation, support can be provided over the phone, in groups or to individuals.



### Self-management strategies

A core strategy for successful self-management is for you to ensure the person has adequate knowledge of their needs and the resources/services to support their needs. In other words, you need a clear understanding of their care/case plan. In addition, you need to ensure the person has the skills necessary to self-manage. These skills may be communication or negotiation skills, or they may be budgeting skills, or learning what triggers an episode of ill health.

Government funding models support self-management for individuals with disabilities, including mental health issues, and for older people requiring services. Here is more information about self-management.

#### Disability self-managed services

A person accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) can nominate to self-manage. This means they decide how to use the funds they are eligible for, what services to use, and when to use them. This can be done with family, an advocate or a support worker.

#### Aged care self-managed services

In aged care, consumer-directed (or self-directed) care allows people to have greater control over their own lives by allowing them, to the extent that they are capable and wish so to do, to make choices about the types of care services they access and the delivery of those services, including who will deliver the services and when.

#### Example

#### Provide support for self-management

Mr Truman needs support with some activities of daily living like bathing, dressing and cooking. Shirley supports Mr Truman to understand the range of service options he can choose from, and how he can utilise services. Mr Truman decides, with Shirley's support, what services he needs, who he wants to provide these services, and when the services will be scheduled.

## Practice task 9

1. What is self-management support?

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2. What two strategies are important for a worker to use for ensuring a person is able to successfully self-manage their care?

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[Click to complete Practice task 9](#)

# 2E Encourage the person to build, strengthen and maintain independence

Being independent helps people to feel in control of their lives and gives them choices about how and when they will do certain activities. Independence gives people self-esteem and confidence. Some people may have difficulty doing everyday tasks. They may need support to do the shopping, take care of the garden, cook meals and look after their finances. Once support is put in place, however, many people can continue or begin to live independently.

## Strengths-based approach

By adopting strengths based approach, the support worker and the person they are supporting will have agreed on plans and goals that are tailored to the person's strengths and interests. Because the measures that have been put in place are mutually agreed, the person should have a sense of agency in the improvement of their life, and a sense that life can continue to be satisfying and possibly further improved. Their role in self-managing their plan is empowering and builds on their sense of independence.



By stressing that the person has strengths, and that resources available in the community are also 'strengths', the person is encouraged to build and maintain their independence.

When you establish a positive partnership with the person you are supporting, their positive experiences with good communication and the respectfulness of the relationship become a further source of confidence and encouragement.

## The role of self-confidence

Self-confidence comes from within, so in many respects it is the individual who has control over and is responsible for maintaining it. However, support workers can help. Here are some strategies for promoting self-esteem and confidence in the person you are supporting.

### Promote choice

Sometimes it is tempting to make decisions on behalf of the people you support to help save time, but this takes away their sense of control, undermines their confidence in their ability to make their own decisions and reduces self-esteem. People should have choices in every aspect of their lives, from what to wear through to relationship choices. Support workers can promote choice by:

- ▶ allowing sufficient time to explain
- ▶ providing information about options
- ▶ encouraging the person to consider the benefits and drawbacks of a range of options
- ▶ encouraging the person to develop skills and knowledge that will increase their options
- ▶ helping to overcome barriers such as transport and finances that can limit their choices.

### Promote independence

Sometimes people don't extend themselves or forget how to challenge themselves. Over time, they may become increasingly dependent on support workers in many areas. Where possible, encourage the people you support, to extend themselves. Assume they are competent in all aspects of living unless assessment indicates otherwise.

Aids and devices can help people with a physical disability or older people to maintain their independence.

### Value the person

Our thoughts, feelings and actions are intertwined. People you provide support to, must be valued and treated with respect and dignity. Self-image is often shaped by the people they associate with. People who feel valued by workers and others are more likely to value themselves.

### Treat the person with dignity

People with support needs should be treated with dignity when they are talked with, when they are talked about and when they are provided with services.

When you talk with a person, make sure the conversation is age appropriate. It is also important to talk respectfully about people. The way we talk about people affects the way we think about them. If we talk about the people we support as if they are a burden, we may also treat them disrespectfully. Conversely, if we talk about them in a positive way, we are more likely to meet their needs.

When providing personal care assistance, it is very important to protect the person's dignity and privacy.

### Focus on strengths and positives

One way to help people maintain their self-esteem and confidence is to focus on the things they can do. You may notice that an older person has lost confidence or is suffering from low self-esteem. They may not join in with activities, may prefer to watch rather than try tasks, may decline invitations to social activities or seem quieter than in the past. Here are some examples of positive statements you can use to encourage your clients:

- ▶ 'You can do it.'
- ▶ 'That was well done.'
- ▶ 'Look at how well you're doing that!'
- ▶ 'We can try again later.'
- ▶ 'You've made a good start.'

You should, however, take care that you are not speaking in a patronising way.

## Support the person to maintain their physical appearance

A person's physical appearance may affect self-esteem and confidence. They may have a negative self-perception because they:

- ▶ need equipment for mobility; for example, a walking frame or wheelchair
- ▶ have problems getting dressed; for example, they cannot do their buttons up
- ▶ are no longer able to put on make-up or do their hair
- ▶ are no longer able to shave properly
- ▶ need continence aids.

You can help by offering to help with hair, make-up and shaving. Suggest they talk to an occupational therapist about equipment to help with buttons, ties and make-up. Talk to them about the equipment (walking frame, wheelchair and continence aids) that may improve their mobility. Help them feel good about the way they look, and encourage them to do the things they can do.

## The role of practical support

Not all sources of encouragement are internal, attitudinal or relational. All practical measures that are put in place to support a person with activities of daily living mean that a person has more time and energy available to them and are living independently successfully. Support measures that enhance a person's ability to access transport and to complete tasks that were previously difficult, such as maintaining their home and garden, allow them to build on and maintain independence.

### Example

#### Encourage the person to build independence

Mr Yeomans is an older man who lives in his own home. He likes to do most of his own housekeeping but lately he has had difficulty with his gardening. The worker visits to discuss the problem with Mr Yeoman. The worker discovers that while he can do many gardening tasks, he is having difficulty getting to the backyard and pruning big shrubs. There are three steps down to the garden and Mr Yeomans is worried he may fall. He also has trouble lifting his arms above his head to prune higher branches. To support Mr Yeoman's independence, the worker helps him install a handrail at the steps. They then discuss a gardening support service and Mr Yeoman agrees to having them come in once a month to assist him with bigger jobs. Mr Yeoman will continue to complete all the other gardening tasks.

## Practice task 10

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

George and Chris have lived in their home for 45 years. George has always enjoyed gardening and is proud of the beautiful lawn and garden beds. George has also grown fruit and vegetables that they share with family.

Six months ago George had a stroke and although he is making good progress, he cannot maintain the garden even with Chris's assistance. George is feeling both sad and frustrated about this.

George and Chris tell their worker they do not want to move as this is their home. The worker discusses possible supports to maintain the garden while George recovers.

1. Explain why feeling independent is important for George?

.....  
 .....

2. Why is it important for the worker to give George choices in service provision?

.....  
 .....

3. What support could you suggest if George and Chris lived in your local area?

.....

**Click to complete Practice task 10**

## Summary

1. Your role is to support the person to identify and acknowledge their own strengths and self-care capacity.
2. People should be encouraged and given the opportunity to maintain their environment in a way that reflects their personality and preferences.
3. Help people to identify opportunities to utilise their strengths and to seek support when required.
4. Aids can be used to improve a person's comfort and to help a person navigate and enjoy their environment.
5. Provide support for self-management of service delivery.
6. Encourage the person to build, strengthen and maintain independence by using a strengths-based approach.
7. To promote a person's self-esteem, you can promote choice, promote independence, value the person, treat the person with dignity and support the person to maintain their physical appearance.
8. There are a range of services available to help create and maintain a suitable environment for individuals. Support workers need to have the skills and knowledge to identify, locate and suggest appropriate additional support resources.

# Learning checkpoint 2

## Promote independence

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in how to promote independence while providing assistance for a person.

### Part A

1. How can a worker support self-management of service delivery?

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2. What types of activities of daily living could you use to support the person to recognise their strengths and capacity in undertaking all, or part of the task?

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3. Provide two examples of self-management funding models.

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## Part B

Read the case study, then answer the question that follows.

### Case study

Phil has a degenerative illness that affects his mobility. He currently uses a cane to aid his mobility but is becoming increasingly unstable. Phil lives in a ground floor apartment with standard bathroom facilities, kitchen counter heights and door-frame widths.

Why might making choices regarding his support and continuing to live independently be important for Phil?

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## Part C

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

After her husband died, Rosa moved into a small unit in a retirement village. Her children have asked a worker to meet with Rosa to discuss her needs as they are worried about her. Rosa and her husband were very sociable, always having people around to the house or going out with friends. Rosa is an excellent cook and was always the life of any party.

Rosa’s husband had a serious disability after a car accident and Rosa cared for him up until his death. Since she moved to the retirement village Rosa has stopped accepting invitations to go out with friends and never invites even her children and grandchildren around to her unit. While her home was always immaculate, her children have noticed that her unit shows signs of neglect.

1. How can the worker support Rosa to identify her strengths and ability to self-care?

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2. How can the worker help Rosa to identify opportunities to utilise her strengths?

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3. Rosa tells the worker she is struggling to bend her knees, which make using a vacuum cleaner difficult. What information or assistance can the worker provide Rosa to facilitate access to services?

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4. What service delivery model might the worker use to support Rosa to self-manage her own service delivery?

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## Topic 3

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 3A** Promote and encourage living habits that contribute to a healthy lifestyle

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- 3B** Support and assist the person to maintain a safe and healthy environment

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- 3C** Identify and report hazards

---

- 3D** Identify and report variations in physical condition

---

- 3E** Recognise and report indications that the physical situation is affecting wellbeing

---

- 3F** Identify and report physical health situations beyond the scope of your role

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## Support physical wellbeing

Some people believe health is merely the absence of disease, illness or impairment. A more appropriate view is to see health, particularly optimal health, as being a person's best possible physical and mental functioning. Whether you are working in aged care, home support, mental health or disability services, you have a duty of care to ensure that more than their basic needs are met. While everyone has a need for food and shelter, most people also share a need for love and a sense of belonging. Many people also want fulfilment and to feel valued. You should always seek ways to help a person maximise their participation in all aspects of life.

# 3A Promote and encourage living habits that contribute to a healthy lifestyle

Providing the right guidance and support to achieve good health in a person involves having an awareness of what good health and wellbeing means and understanding how to help a person maintain their health.

In many instances, what you do to support a person in maintaining good health is determined by the organisation's policies and procedures as well as the person's plan. A well-developed plan should encourage the person to identify positive things they can do for their wellbeing and actively involve them in achieving these goals.



A healthy lifestyle contributes to the person's overall wellbeing. A state of wellbeing is when a person feels good about themselves and the way their life is going. Wellbeing means being physically and mentally well; being spiritually, socially and culturally connected; and feeling like life has a purpose. Optimal wellbeing is different for each person, but in general having a sense of control over one's life and having positive relationships with others is important to wellbeing.

Wellbeing is important because it helps a person to function well in society and to experience positive emotions like happiness or enjoyment or contentment. Wellbeing contributes to good mental health so that a person can work towards their goals.

## Contributors to a healthy lifestyle

Good health is not just a matter of finding a cure or a treatment for an illness or disorder. Good health is achieved when a person experiences optimal physical and mental functioning. A well-developed care/case plan provides the support worker with a framework for monitoring and observing the person's health status and allows for referral to health professionals or others if required.

You need to understand the importance of the three key ways to help maintain good health – prevention, education and screening – and the various processes involved so you can explain the information to the person in plain language. When discussing health strategies with a person, you should make sure the person understands what is being proposed.

## Physical health

Physical health and wellbeing refers to the optimal functioning of the physical body, or to the body functioning the way it is supposed to. Illness, disease and disability can interfere with the functioning of the body and can negatively affect a person's wellbeing.

Physical health and wellbeing has a number of components:

- ▶ Physical activity – includes flexibility, strengths and endurance
- ▶ Nutrition and diet – includes fluid intake
- ▶ Alcohol and drugs – limits the use of these
- ▶ Medical care – addresses ailments or injuries, seeking care when required and/or taking prescribed medications
- ▶ Rest and sleep – adequate, good quality sleep and opportunities to relax

## Psychological health

Psychological health refers to a person’s emotional and behavioural functioning. It is not the absence of mental illness, but rather emotional wellbeing. Poor physical health may affect a person’s emotional and psychological health; likewise, poor emotional and psychological health may affect a person’s physical health. All people have needs that must be met to ensure their physical and psychological wellbeing. Fundamental to a support worker’s role is recognising what these needs are and identifying those that are not being met.

According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, people have a range of needs that extend from the most basic needs to deeper psychological or intellectual needs. Personal circumstances may place several or all of these needs at risk.

A person’s circumstances can prevent them from realising their needs, which are described below.



### Basic needs

The need for food and water, shelter and sleep. People with support needs may be on a fixed income, limiting their ability to pay rent.

A low income may limit a person’s ability to buy healthy foods.

Cognitive impairments may prevent people from meeting their nutritional needs.

Pain and poor physical and emotional health may affect a person’s ability to get to sleep and stay asleep.



### Safety and security

Safety and security relates to the need to be free from harm or the threat of harm.

People with care needs may have limited mobility, which may place them in unsafe situations.



### Belonging

Belonging refers to the need to love and be loved or to feel like a valuable part of a group.

Older people may find that their social networks get smaller as they age. People with disabilities may find they face barriers to making and maintaining friendships caused by bias and prejudice.



### Self-esteem

Negative stereotypes about ageing or disabilities may alter a person's perception of their value.

Negative self-talk such as 'I'm useless' or 'I'm just a burden' can also damage a person's self-esteem.



### Self-actualisation

Self-actualisation relates to growing and developing intellectually, emotionally and socially. People may miss out on opportunities for personal growth and skills development for a variety of reasons.

## Mental health

You may hear one organisation referring to people's psychological health while another will refer to it as mental health. There is a great deal of overlap between a person's physical and mental health. Studies show a positive outlook may improve health, and physical health may influence a person's state of mind.

If people are unwell or are experiencing poor health, they may become depressed. Consider the strategies listed below.

Your role includes:

- ▶ encouraging people to focus on positives
- ▶ helping people make and maintain links with a support network
- ▶ helping people overcome barriers that are preventing them from participating in activities
- ▶ providing referrals to healthcare professionals.

## Nutrition and hydration

The human body needs water, carbohydrates and lipids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. These nutrients have a role in providing energy; processing waste; maintaining nerve function and skin, metabolic activity and immune system function; as well as supporting the growth, maintenance and repair of cells.

### Your role

Refer the person to a nutritionist or dietitian where needed.

Assist with shopping.

Help with meal preparation or discuss food plans.

Encourage the person to eat.

Support the person to use technology that can help them, such as recipe apps or apps that provide reminders to drink water.

## Nutrition

Good nutrition and adequate hydration are essential to good health. If a person is struggling to drink enough water, you can use a variety of strategies like a checklist or phone app as reminders. You can use a variety of resources to support nutrition, but it is important to understand why a person may not be eating well to provide appropriate support. Consider financial issues, ability to cook, access to appropriate recipes, culture and food preferences when discussing nutrition with a person.



You can read more about nutrition at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/nhmrc-nutrition>

## Exercise

Exercise improves strength, balance, mental health and assists in managing weight. It can also reduce the risk of developing illnesses like diabetes or cardiovascular disease. You need to work alongside the person to discuss establishing an exercise plan or you can support them to access a professional to help set up an exercise plan to meet their needs. Regardless of age or capacity, almost all people can participate in some level of exercise to maintain or improve health.

You can read more about the benefits of exercise at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/better-health>

## Hygiene

Good personal hygiene is essential for preventing illness. Good hygiene also helps prevent body odour and bad breath, both of which can impact on a person's social life. Bathing, toileting and other personal hygiene activities can be difficult for some people due to a decrease in mobility or balance. Others may experience loss of motivation. Here are some tips on how you can support good personal hygiene.

### Personal hygiene support

Ensure the person has appropriate equipment to support good hygiene, such as shower stools and hand rails; raised or lowered sinks.

Provide support services where required to bathe or shower or toilet.

Discuss the benefits of good hygiene.

## Oral health

Good oral health is vital to overall wellbeing. Healthy strong teeth support good nutrition, reduce oral diseases and other physical illnesses, and support social wellbeing by limiting bad breath. You can support oral health by facilitating regular visits to a dentist, by suggesting the person asks the dentist for brushing and flossing tips, and discussing equipment that may make oral health easier like electric toothbrushes.

There is good information available on dental health at this site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/ada-dental-health>

You can also access the Aspire Learning Resources app 'Oral health skills for community service workers' for more-detailed information.

### Example

#### Promote and encourage healthy lifestyle

Graham was diagnosed with a serious mental illness 18 months ago. He was prescribed several types of medication and is now in recovery. Graham tells his worker, Sam, that while he is now doing really well, the hardest thing for him is how much weight he has put on since he was diagnosed and started taking medication. Sam suggests that Graham may want to discuss his options with his GP and a personal trainer. Graham agrees and his doctor refers him to a dietitian to develop a healthy eating plan. Graham works with the personal trainer Sam found for him twice a week. Graham and Sam also go for a bike ride once a week. Graham tells Sam that he has also started to take his dog for a short walk every day.

While progress is slow, Graham starts to see some steady weight loss, but more importantly tells Sam his energy has increased and he is feeling better about himself.

## Practice task 11

### Case study

Colm, a 40-year-old man with a mental health condition, has just been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

1. Gather and submit information about diabetes and services available in your area for people with diabetes.

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2. What key components of physical health should a worker focus on with Colm, or any person they are working with?

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**Click to complete Practice task 11**

# 3B Support and assist the person to maintain a safe and healthy environment

Helping a person maintain their environment fulfils a number of basic needs. Environments that reflect the person's personality, preferences and interests help that person maintain their sense of self and identity. In addition, taking an active interest in their living conditions provides people with a sense of control. A tidy, well-maintained environment can help a person gain or maintain a positive outlook. It can also help with organisation, safety and cleanliness.



A key part of helping people maintain their independence is to help them keep their environment safe, secure and comfortable. They will be able to go about their activities of daily living independently and happily if they feel confident that their environment is free from anything that could cause them to have an accident or put them in danger.

A safe and healthy environment depends on the following factors:

- ▶ Safety
- ▶ Social contributors
- ▶ Spiritual contributors
- ▶ Cultural contributors
- ▶ Financial contributors
- ▶ Career or occupation

## Encourage the person to manage their environment

You can encourage people to think through their activities and plan how they manage their home, room, equipment and other features of their environment so tasks can be done safely and with as little effort as possible. It is a good idea to encourage the person to look around their own environment and spot things they can do to improve it or make it safer. This helps them think about their daily tasks and identify strategies to make their activities of daily living easier, thus helping them to maintain their independence.

If you and the person identify any safety issues, you can plan together how you can remove or mitigate the safety issue or what services can be engaged to assist with this.



## A safe and healthy environment

A person's environment must reflect their own interests and be safe and functional. People also need to feel safe and secure. A safe environment is free from hazards (for example, something that could make a person trip or a slippery shower that could lead to a fall). The person's mobility, eyesight and memory should be considered when discussing the safety of their environment with them. For example, consider what impact steps or the lack of a smoke detector may have on the person's safety. A healthy environment may be a home that reflects the person's interests or passions. It would also reduce the risk of illness by being clean and hygienic.

## Safety and security

It is important that you support the person to consider how secure their environment is. You may need to reflect on who has access to the person's environment and whether these people are a risk to their safety. On a practical level you may need to consider the security of the building they live in, looking at locks, screens and other security measures.

Having stable accommodation is also essential to a feeling of security and may be challenging for people who are not employed or fully employed, do not have a good rental history, or do not own a home.



### Safety

Being safe means being free from harm, injury, danger or risk. The person should also be aware of their environment and how to keep it safe. For example, you should encourage the person to think about where they keep things in their room so they are accessible, and to ensure walkways are clear.

Part of a worker's role may include conducting safety audits in the person's home or room. The organisation's workplace health and safety procedures will indicate how and when these audits should occur and guidance on how any risks should be rectified.

### Security

Security has two aspects: safety and stability. A sense of safety and security is particularly important to the wellbeing of people with support needs, who often require the reassurance that they are free from the threat of danger or harm. Likewise, a sense of permanency or constancy contributes to satisfying feelings that life is stable and predictable. Here are some strategies for providing people with a sense of safety and stability.

#### Safety

Use locks, although always leave keys in deadlocks to prevent anyone being trapped in a building if a fire or other emergency occurs.

Keep bushes and trees trimmed and maintained to prevent potential intruders from being able to break into the building unobserved.

Install and maintain motion sensor lights, which reduce the likelihood of a potential intruder breaking into the building unobserved.

Provide emergency contact numbers for the person to call (including family contacts) – programmed into a phone if possible.

Keep a list of key contacts by the phone.

## Stability

A person's home should give them a permanent place to rest, relax and enjoy life. People who have to move constantly, or face the threat of moving, may feel insecure and unsettled. Where possible, a person should be placed in a setting where their long-term needs can be met.

Security can also be described in financial terms: financial instability can threaten a person's sense of security. For example, people on low incomes or who have difficulty managing their finances may be threatened with eviction or evicted from their premises.

In some cases, workers will be required to monitor the person's financial situation to ensure they have sufficient income for everyday expenses and to manage their income. People with poor financial skills may need educating in regard to managing a budget and may benefit from having a community-based financial adviser advocate on their behalf.

## Promote security and safety

As a support worker, you will need to work with the person to assess the safety and security of their environment and then plan a strategy to maintain or improve safety.

### Promoting security and safety may involve ensuring:

- ▶ the person is fully informed about the nature of the support they will receive and when they will receive it
- ▶ the person has control over their activities of daily living
- ▶ floors, steps and pathways are clear to prevent trips and falls
- ▶ you encourage the person to check their doors and windows open and close easily
- ▶ you remind the person to check that the locks and outdoor security/sensor lights work.

## Social contributors

Feeling safe in the community is important to most people. Connectedness to the community can improve a person's sense of security and safety. When a person is connected to the community, they have people who will check on their welfare regularly and support them to feel safe within their environment. It also means they can participate in activities without feeling their security is compromised. As a support worker you will need to discuss what social supports the person has or needs. Here are some further points about social support.

### Social support options

Friendly relationships with neighbours

Contact with family or friends living nearby

A catch-up in a local café

Local community services/groups like the library, sporting groups or senior's centre

Meeting other people walking their dogs in the park

Daily check-in phone calls from a community services volunteer

## Spiritual contributors

For many people spirituality provides a sense of peace and security. A person's spirituality can provide psychological supports and add to a sense of security for them. Opportunities to participate in daily meditation practices in a group setting can provide another form of social connectedness.

In addition, if the person's spirituality is linked to a religious belief, they may experience a sense of belonging if they visit a church, temple or mosque. This can provide not just spiritual security but also a social connection with that community.



## Cultural contributors

A person's cultural background may contribute to how they sense security within their environment. You will need to talk to the person to understand how their culture and perhaps their immigration experience impacts on their feelings of security and safety. Here are some other points to consider.

### Security

A person who has escaped violence may feel more secure in a home with a large fence. Someone who lost most of their possessions as a refugee may have difficulty de-cluttering their home.

### Family support

Alternatively, a person may have a large supportive family who check in regularly to make sure they are okay because in their culture, children take care of their parents. They may even have children who will move in with them to help to care for them.

## Financial contributors

Financial difficulties can cause a person to feel insecure and they may be at risk of eviction from their homes. Accessing services to keep a safe and secure environment can be expensive. You may need to assess the person's financial situation and help them access any benefits they may be eligible for where required. They may need support from a financial counsellor to provide budgeting information and education or perhaps to advocate for them. They may be eligible for a service through home support to assist with clearing their garden of hazards or cleaning or adding security features to their home.

## Career or occupation

Many people link having a career or occupation to their identity and how they feel about themselves. Having meaningful work whether it is part-time, full-time or volunteering (unpaid work) can provide the person with a connection to the community and their broader environment. Having a part-time or full-time job also provides the person with financial security.

**Example**

**Ways a person can maintain their environment**

Jack has poor vision and is at risk of injuring himself because of several hazards in his environment. George, Jack’s support worker, has noticed:

- ▶ a number of electrical cords on the floor where Jack walks
- ▶ low-hanging branches across Jack’s front path
- ▶ a magnifying sheet for helping him find phone numbers in his address book is tucked inside a pile of mail.

George talks to Jack about the things he has noticed. He gives Jack the opportunity to make some decisions on how they can work together to keep his home safe. At the end of the discussion, they agree to make the following changes:

- ▶ The electrical cords on the floor where Jack walks are unsafe and may cause Jack to trip. George removes the electrical cords from walkways and arranges for a maintenance person to secure the cords around the walls.
- ▶ George arranges for the maintenance person to trim the branches back.
- ▶ Jack needs to have the magnifying sheet handy, particularly if he needs to make an emergency phone call. George attaches the magnifying sheet to the address book.

## Practice task 12

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Beth’s home is an old house. She receives home support services. She is quite worried about potential intruders as the door locks are quite old and the keys for these locks are generic. She feels vulnerable and unsafe having her doors and windows open in warmer weather.

In addition, the lighting on her front porch is poor. There are bushes blocking the front door from view and a number of large shrubs around the house. She says she is often frightened when people ring her doorbell.

1. Why should the worker support Beth to take action?

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2. What could Beth’s worker do to improve Beth’s feelings of security?

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**Click to complete Practice task 12**

# 3C Identify and report hazards

As a support worker you have legal and organisational work health and safety (WHS) responsibilities. These responsibilities are described in legislation, which typically requires you to take all reasonable steps to provide and maintain a safe workplace. You must also participate in maintaining a safe workplace.

You also need to be clear about the duty of care requirements of your role even when you are working in a person's home. You are obliged to act in a way in which a reasonable person would envisage could not cause harm. In fulfilling roles, tasks and responsibilities, you must ensure you work safely and that your actions or inactions do not put you or anyone else at risk. You are also required to report risks and hazards as per your organisation's policies.

The key legal responsibilities of every employee include:

- ▶ following lawful instructions
- ▶ working safely
- ▶ reporting risks to the health and safety of anyone who may enter the workplace.

## Recognise and fix hazards

A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. Harm can be mental or physical and may result from a one-off incident or develop over time. You should identify possible hazards within your workplace, whether at the organisation's premises, in a person's home or in regard to a transportation vehicle.

## Hazard identification

An important part of helping people to have a safe and secure environment is to recognise things that are likely to be dangerous or cause injury or harm. These things are called hazards. Hazards in a person's environment mean anything that may cause harm or injury and affect the person's independence. Magazines or newspapers piled up in the hallway are an example of a hazard. Part of your role is to recognise hazards and make them as safe as possible until they can be reported and managed. There are many different types of hazards in a person's environment that can affect their safety. Here are some examples.

### Poor or inappropriate lighting

- ▶ The person may trip, fall or bump into furniture if they cannot see properly – either because there is not enough or too much light. The person may injure themselves.
- ▶ Make sure lighting in the person's environment is bright enough for them to see clearly but not so bright that it temporarily blinds them.

### Slippery or uneven floor surfaces

- ▶ Uneven carpet, loose tiles and wet floors may cause the person to fall and injure themselves.
- ▶ Make sure the person is aware of the hazard. Report as required by your organisation for it to be fixed.

### Physical obstructions

- ▶ Furniture or equipment placed in inappropriate areas may cause the person to fall, hurt themselves trying to squeeze past it or hurt themselves trying to move it.
- ▶ Make sure items are not left in walkways or doorways.

### Poor appliance maintenance

- ▶ The person may be hurt if they use an appliance that is faulty or has exposed wires.
- ▶ Check appliances regularly, especially motorised or electric ones, to ensure they are in good condition and safe to use.

### Inadequate heating and cooling devices

- ▶ The person may have difficulty maintaining their body temperature.
- ▶ Ensure the person has suitable clothing and bedding. Install devices that are adequate for the person's needs.

### Inappropriate footwear and clothing

- ▶ Poor clothing and footwear can cause the person to fall, or be too hot or too cold. Encourage the person to dress appropriately for the weather. Help them to dress to suit their abilities. For example, if they cannot bend down, encourage them to wear slip-on shoes.

## Perform safety checks

Most workplaces have procedures for doing regular safety checks of the person's environment. This means checking things like appliances, equipment, flooring, surfaces and furniture to make sure they are safe. You will receive information about how you should do this from your organisation. For example, when walking around a person's home and garden, check for uneven or slippery surfaces. For electrical items, you may need to arrange for a qualified electrician to check equipment. It is important that you report the hazard straightaway to the appropriate person if there is a risk of the hazard causing immediate injury or harm.



## Safety checklist

Workplaces will have policies and procedures that explain how hazards can be identified and how they should be reported. Most organisations use an audit form or checklist to identify hazards. You may be required to complete the checklist as part of your job role, or others within your workplace may have this responsibility. Other methods of identifying hazards include observation and feedback from others.

Here is a sample hazard identification checklist.

<b>Hazard identification checklist</b>		
<b>Type of hazard</b> (please tick the hazard box and comment briefly or record the action taken)		<b>Comment/action taken</b>
Inadequate lighting		
Inappropriate household cleaning equipment		
Manual handling (for example, lifting loads)		
Limited ventilation		
Infectious diseases		
Open wounds/cuts		
Chemicals or medications		
Faulty electrical equipment		
Overloaded power points		
Pets		
Bathroom equipment and supplies		
Loose floor coverings		
Client behaviour (for example, aggressive behaviour)		

## Hazards

Once a hazard has been identified, you are required to respond. In some situations you may be able to take action that removes the hazard. In a previous example the hazard identified was a pile of magazines by the door. You could discuss this with the person and then move the magazines to a safer location – thus removing the hazard.

Some hazards will need further action. In this case you should make the hazard as safe as possible, such as unplugging and putting away a dangerous appliance, and then reporting the hazard so it can be dealt with.

## Report hazards

In reporting hazards, you may need to complete an incident or hazard form that describes the situation and lists the actions that need to be taken to fix it. There are many different types of hazard report forms. You need to know what should be reported and how to report it.

If you observe any of the dangers listed in the hazard identification checklist, or feel worried about security or safety, the concern must be reported to your supervisor using the relevant workplace forms. If the hazard relates to a person’s house, you should make notes in the person’s file and discuss the hazard with them. You may have other opportunities to report hazards too. Here are some examples of how you can report hazards.

### Report hazards

- ▶ When speaking with a health and safety representative or health and safety officer
- ▶ By participating in health and safety committee meetings
- ▶ By raising a matter during team meetings when WHS issues and other risks are addressed
- ▶ By discussing safety issues relevant to a person living at home at a case conference

### Example

#### Identify and report hazards

Hazard Report	
<b>Name/s of people involved:</b>	Mrs Cargill
<b>Name of identifying person:</b>	Sue Lin, support worker
<b>Description of hazard (include area and task involved, any equipment, tools or people involved):</b>	The iron handrail on the steps leading to Mrs Cargill’s front veranda is loose. It looks like it may collapse if much weight is put on it. Mrs Cargill uses it every day to help her get up the steps.
<b>Immediate or suggested actions (list any suggestion you have to reducing or eliminating the problem; for example, redesign, use of mechanical devices, training):</b>	Notified Marcia Hammond (shift supervisor) of the issue. Told Mrs Cargill to be careful when using the handrail. Told Mrs Cargill that I had reported the situation and that the handrail will be fixed soon.
<b>How was the incident followed up?</b>	Supervisor contacted maintenance staff to fix the handrail. Task given an urgent classification.
<b>Reported to:</b>	Marcia Hammond, shift supervisor
<b>Date:</b>	3 August 2016
<b>Give this report to the Health and Safety Officer</b>	

# Practice task 13

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

## Case study

Bryan has a disability as a result of his mental health condition. His house is untidy with a lot of debris in each room. There is evidence of rodent infestation, dishes are often unwashed for long periods and there is stale food in the cupboards and refrigerator.

1. What hazards can you identify in this scenario?

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2. What opportunities may be available in the workplace for you to report identified hazards?

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**Click to complete Practice task 13**

# 3D Identify and report variations in physical condition

You must be able to recognise signs and symptoms that suggest a person's condition is worsening or that they have developed a new condition that requires medical attention or other intervention. As their support worker, you are in a good position to notice changes to their physical condition. Often you see far more of a person than other significant people in their lives or health professionals. You should be alert to the signs and symptoms of illness or disease that may indicate a person is unwell and follow up by reporting or following the procedures of your organisation.



## Signs and symptoms of illness or disease

As a support worker, you are not required to be medical expert; however, it is important to be aware of signs that a person's health may be changing.

Here is further information about the signs and symptoms of illness or disease and ways to identify changes to a person's physical condition.

### Signs and symptoms

- Weight loss, which may signify gastrointestinal or endocrine disorders
- Weight gain, which may signify endocrine or metabolic disorders
- Changes to skin tone and colour, which may signify cardiac and/or respiratory system problems
- Poor nail status, which may be due to nutritional deficits
- Poor oral health, such as bad breath, tooth decay or gum disease

### Identifying changes

- Access medical history in the person's file.
- Take and record observations.
- Access notes in the person's file.
- Talk with the person about changes to find out if there are other reasons for the changes.
- Seek feedback from others involved in the care and support of the person, ensuring privacy is not breached.

### Example

#### Identify and report variations in physical condition

Caleb supports Ben in his home. He notices that Ben, who has diabetes, has a large bruise on one of his feet. He records this in Ben's care notes. Caleb also speaks with his supervisor who tells him that people with diabetes sometimes experience damage to their nerves. His supervisor tells Caleb to monitor the bruise, and ensure he notes any changes in Ben's care notes, and to report immediately if it worsens.

# Practice task 14

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

## Case study

Ollie works as a disability support worker. Ollie thinks that Heather, a person he supports, has lost a great deal of weight. In addition he notices that her eyes have started to bulge.

1. How could Ollie check that there has been a change in Heather's physical condition?

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2. What should Ollie do once he has confirmed any change to Heather's physical condition?

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[Click to complete Practice task 14](#)

# 3E Recognise and report indications that the physical situation is affecting wellbeing

You need to be aware of how poor physical health or impaired health can affect the person's overall wellbeing. Poor physical health can affect energy levels and concentration, the person's mood, increase stress, and impact on quality of life. The person's ability to complete activities of daily living or to actively engage with social, cultural or spiritual activities is compromised by ill health. You should discuss the person's wellbeing with them and report concerns according to your organisation's procedures.



## Recognise indicators of physical situations affecting wellbeing

You should be aware of several indicators that may show the person's physical situation is affecting their wellbeing. Keep in mind that these indicators may be linked to other issues and any serious concerns should be raised with a doctor.

Here is more information about indicators of physical situations that affect wellbeing.

### Behaviour

- ▶ Becoming withdrawn or isolated – not going out as much as previously, not in contact with family
- ▶ Not getting things done – cleaning, work
- ▶ Using non-prescribed drugs or alcohol
- ▶ Not being able to concentrate on activities or tasks

### Mood

- |                           |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| ▶ Feeling overwhelmed     | ▶ Indecisive   |
| ▶ Sadness                 | ▶ Disappointed |
| ▶ Feeling guilty          | ▶ Anxious      |
| ▶ Irritable or frustrated |                |

### Expressed thoughts

Saying things like:

- ▶ 'I can't do anything right'
- ▶ 'Nothing good ever happens to me'
- ▶ 'People would be better off without me'

### Physical symptoms not linked to existing issues

- |                                     |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ▶ Always tired                      | ▶ Significant change in weight |
| ▶ Lots of headaches or sore muscles | ▶ Stomach problems             |
| ▶ Trouble sleeping                  | ▶ Short of breath or dizzy     |
| ▶ Change in appetite                |                                |

## Legal and ethical requirements

Community services workers and organisations have legal and ethical requirements when working with people.

Legal requirements are set out in legislation and organisations will have policies that inform workers about how the legislation must be enacted.

Ethical requirements are often not legislated but may be part of a code of practice, service standards or organisational policy. Working ethically requires you to protect the rights of the people you work with, to treat people with respect and dignity and to work within the standards of the sector.

You can view an example of a code of ethics at this site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/acwa-code-of-ethics>

## Duty of care

Community service organisations and workers have a responsibility to provide a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of people in receipt of their services. Legislative and regulatory obligations underpin an organisation's policies, which determine the procedures to guide service delivery that promotes and enhances the safety and wellbeing of people. Here is more information about duty of care.

### Duty of care

- ▶ Duty of care is the obligation a person has to act in a way that would not cause harm.

### Negligence

- ▶ Negligence occurs when duty of care has been breached and harm to either person or property ensues. It is the legal and ethical obligation of any community worker, supervisor or organisation to ensure that people using services are not exposed to unnecessary or unreasonable risk.

### Dignity of risk

- ▶ The rights of people to dignity and choice, upheld in legislation and service standards, also require that duty of care or safety is not used as a reason to limit a person's freedom or personal choice. A support worker's adherence to duty of care and safety must be coupled with the concept of dignity of risk, which means a person has the right to make their own choices and to take risks.

## Your duty-of-care requirements

A duty of care exists when someone's actions could reasonably be expected to affect another person. The law has established a duty of care to the person. This principle is based on the worker taking reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions that may cause foreseeable harm to any person. You must think ahead about possible risks or dangers to the person using your service, co-workers or others while making sure you follow the organisation's policies and procedures.

## Dignity of risk

Community services work recognises the right of a person to try new things, to take risks and to fail. Dignity of risk respects the person's autonomy and right to make decisions affecting their health. These decisions may be about what treatment to accept, dietary choices, what exercise activity to participate in, or what environment the person wants to live in.

Your role is to put in place, as much as possible, risk management strategies so the person can make decisions independently.



## Human rights

According to the United Nations: 'Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible'.

Basic human rights include the right to life, equality before the law and freedom of expression. There are also economic, social and cultural rights, including rights to work, social security and education. You have a responsibility to ensure the human rights of the person you are supporting are upheld.

You can access resources to assist you to support human rights at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/human-rights-commission>

## Discrimination

Discrimination means treating different categories of people in an unjust or prejudicial manner, especially on the grounds of race, age or sex. In Australia there are Commonwealth and state laws that make it illegal to discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender or race. You are required to work within this legislation.

### **Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)**

- ▶ This legislation aims to:
  - stop discrimination based on age
  - protect everyone's legal rights regardless of their age
  - help others understand that everyone has the same rights
  - remove barriers that stop older people from joining in work activities and being part of society
  - remove stereotypes and false beliefs about older people.

### **Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)**

- ▶ This legislation aims to:
  - promote equality before the law for everyone, regardless of their race, colour or ethnic origin
  - make discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin unlawful.

### **Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)**

- ▶ This legislation aims to:
  - prevent discrimination based on gender or marital status
  - prevent sexual harassment.

### **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)**

- ▶ This legislation aims to:
  - prevent discrimination on the basis of disability
  - promote fairness to individuals who have a disability, and their families.

## **Mandatory reporting**

In some circumstances workers are required, by law, to report abuse, neglect or violence. Each state and territory has their own mandatory reporting legislation. The main differences concern who must make a report and what types of abuse or neglect must be reported. It is your responsibility to be aware of your mandatory reporting obligations. You must follow the relevant legislation and the policies of your organisation. Be alert to and aware of your reporting obligations in relation to:

- ▶ elder abuse
- ▶ abuse of people with disabilities
- ▶ domestic violence
- ▶ child abuse or neglect
- ▶ suspected abuse or neglect of any person.

## **Privacy, confidentiality and disclosure**

When discussing a person's situation, always be aware of maintaining their privacy. Workers are obliged to protect confidential details. Workers always need the person's consent to talk about their situation with other workers or other service providers.

Maintaining confidentiality is part of respecting a person's privacy and individual rights. In practice, confidentiality means not discussing an individual's personal information unless they have given their consent for this to happen. Some exceptional circumstances enable you to disclose private information, but this is generally only when you become aware that the person is at risk of harming themselves or someone else, or that they are being harmed.

You can read more about privacy, confidentiality and disclosure at the following sites:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/aacqa-privacy-policy>
- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/law-handbook-privacy-confidentiality>

## Work role boundaries

All community services workers have clearly defined work roles. It is important for your wellbeing, and that of the people you are supporting, that you work within these roles.

Work roles clarify what the worker is responsible for in supporting a person. For example, a person may need support with their nutrition. In one work role, the worker may help the person plan and cook healthy meals; in another, a worker may cook meals for the person; and in still another, a worker may find a service that can support the person with their nutrition, such as a service that delivers ready-cooked meals.



It is important that you understand your work role and the limitations of your role. For example, your role may require you to support a person with a mental health issue to attend a coffee club, but not extend to you providing direct counselling to the person.

**Example**

**Recognise and report situations affecting wellbeing**

Jaime has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. She is fearful about her condition. Her family has reported that since the diagnosis Jaime has suffered from mood swings and is anxious about losing her independence. Jaime’s worker recognises that this situation is impacting significantly on her wellbeing. The worker reports the situation to her supervisor and makes a note of the situation in Jaime’s case notes.

## Practice task 15

1. Explain what a person’s ‘dignity of risk’ means?

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2. What is a worker’s duty of care regarding a person’s physical health?

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**Click to complete Practice task 15**

## 3F Identify and report physical health situations beyond the scope of your role

Situations may arise when a person develops physical health issues that are beyond the scope of your role and additional support is required. In these situations, you need to report the health concerns to the relevant person in your organisation.

### The scope of your role

Your role and responsibilities will be clearly defined in your position description. There are limits to the support you can give a person. You may not have sufficient time, the skills and knowledge or the specific training to provide all the support a person requires. Workers who provide support outside of their work role could subject themselves to disciplinary action. Working outside of a work role may breach duty-of-care obligations or cause injury or harm to the person or worker. You must be able to identify when a person requires assistance beyond your capacity, what type of service is required and how to access that service.

### Identify physical health situations beyond the scope of your role

You should be clear on the scope of your role and clarify any concerns with your supervisor. Keep in mind that you are not a medical practitioner. You should assess each physical health situation that arises and ask yourself if it fits into your role; if it does not, you need to decide what action to take to report and refer the situation. For example, a person may have fallen in the bathroom and the worker has not completed manual-handling training. Lifting the person could cause additional harm to the person or the worker could hurt themselves. In this situation the worker should call an ambulance so the person can be lifted safely and have any injuries treated.



### Report physical health situations beyond the scope of your role

If you are faced with a physical health situation beyond the scope of your work role, you should report it according to your organisation's procedures. In an emergency this is likely to begin with contacting emergency services. In other circumstances it may be taking concerns to a case conference, reporting to your supervisor or noting the situation in file notes. In many organisations there will be relevant documentation to complete.

**Example**

**Report health situations beyond the scope of your role**

Jessica is working with Larry, a war veteran, and his wife Lynda. Lynda approaches Jessica and explains that Larry has been having disrupted sleep, night terrors and mood swings since returning from service. She asks Jessica for advice on how she should deal with the situation as it is affecting Larry's health – he is losing weight and he is tired all the time.

Jessica is aware that providing advice is outside of both the scope of her job and her expertise. She acknowledges Lynda's feelings by saying, 'It sounds like this is causing you a lot of concern. Would you mind if I speak to my supervisor for more suggestions?' Lynda accepts this offer and Jessica discusses the situation with her supervisor.



## Practice task 16

1. What might be the consequences of a worker providing support that is outside their work role?

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2. What should a worker do when faced with a physical health situation beyond the scope of their work role?

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**Click to complete Practice task 16**

# Summary

1. Providing the right guidance and support to achieve good health in a person involves having an awareness of what good health and wellbeing means and understanding how to help a person maintain their health.
2. Wellbeing is important because it helps a person to function well in society and to experience positive emotions like happiness or enjoyment or contentment. Wellbeing contributes to good mental health so that a person can work towards their goals.
3. Contributors to a healthy lifestyle include physical health, psychological health, mental health, nutrition and hydration, exercise, hygiene and oral health.
4. Helping a person maintain their environment fulfils a number of basic needs. Environments that reflect the person's personality, preferences and interests help that person maintain their sense of self and identity.
5. A key part of helping people maintain their independence is to help them keep their environment safe, secure and comfortable.
6. A safe and healthy environment depends on the following factors: safety, social contributors, spiritual contributors, cultural contributors, financial contributors and career or occupation.
7. As a support worker you have legal and organisational work health and safety (WHS) responsibilities. These responsibilities are described in legislation, which typically requires you to take all reasonable steps to provide and maintain a safe workplace.
8. A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. You should identify possible hazards within your workplace, whether at the organisation's premises, in a person's home or in regard to a transportation vehicle.
9. You must be able to recognise signs and symptoms that suggest a person's condition is worsening or that they have developed a new condition that requires medical attention or other intervention.
10. You need to be aware of how poor physical health or impaired health can affect the person's overall wellbeing.
11. Poor physical health can affect energy levels and concentration, the person's mood, increase stress, and impact on quality of life.
12. Duty of care is the obligation a person has to act in a way that would not cause harm.

# Learning checkpoint 3

## Support physical wellbeing

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in how to support a person to maintain physical wellbeing.

### Part A

1. Why is supporting a person to maintain a safe and healthy environment important?

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2. Name four examples of types of hazards that a worker may identify in a person's home.

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3. What should a worker do if they identify a hazard?

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4. How does having a career or occupation contribute to a person's wellbeing?

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## Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

John lives in a supported accommodation house with three other residents. The other residents tell Simon, their worker, that John has been smoking meth in the house and that his dealer comes by the house to drop off the drugs. The residents tell Simon that John can be aggressive when he is high and that they are scared of him.

1. What is Simon's duty of care to John and the other residents?

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2. Simon wants to refer John to an alcohol and other drugs organisation for specialist support. How should Simon consider John's right to privacy and confidentiality?

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3. Simon asks to speak to John and notices that he has lost weight and his personal hygiene has deteriorated. How should Simon report the variations in physical condition he has observed?

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4. John tells Simon that he doesn't like living with other people and wants to get an apartment by himself. Simon is concerned that John may not be ready to live completely independently. Explain how the concept of dignity of risk may apply here.

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5. John has a serious mental illness, what human rights does he have?

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## Part C

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

After migrating from Italy, Regina and her husband spent almost 40 years on a farm near a small country town. After Regina's husband died, her children helped her move to the city to be closer to them and other facilities. Regina has just been assigned a worker, Jenny, to support her to continue living independently.

Regina's English is limited and she tells Jenny she doesn't have any friends in the city because she only feels comfortable speaking Italian. Regina doesn't drive and says that sometimes her son takes her to mass on special occasions, but that she misses going to mass every Sunday.

Regina tells Jenny that she used to enjoy walking every day with her neighbour, but that recently she fell in her backyard and it scared her and now she doesn't go for walks anymore. She tells Jenny she sometimes has lunch with her son's family, but doesn't really go out any other time. Her daughter brings her groceries, but she doesn't cook much as she says it's too much bother for one person.

1. How can Jenny encourage and promote healthy living habits and improve physical wellbeing for Regina? Answer this question in terms of Regina's mental and physical health (nutrition, exercise, hygiene or oral health).

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2. Jenny notices that Regina seems to be drinking a lot of water and has bruises on her shins. When she talks to Regina about this, Regina complains that she is always tired and thirsty. Jenny's work role does not include medical diagnosis or treatment, what should she do?

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3. Regina says that being tired all the time and not feeling steady on her feet means that she rarely leaves the house. She says she feels very lonely. Jenny is concerned that Regina's physical situation is affecting her wellbeing. What should Jenny do?

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4. Explain what legislation regarding discrimination may apply to Regina and why.

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5. How can Jenny support Regina's psychological, social, spiritual and cultural wellbeing?

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6. Regina tells Jenny that she can't go out to mass or the Italian club because she doesn't have the money to pay for taxis. How can Jenny support her with her financial concerns?

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## Topic 4

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 4A** Promote self-esteem and confidence
- 4B** Contribute to a sense of security through safe and predictable routines
- 4C** Encourage and facilitate participation in preferred activities
- 4D** Identify aspects of wellbeing outside the scope of knowledge, skills and/or your job role
- 4E** Identify and report variations of wellbeing
- 4F** Identify cultural or financial issues impacting on wellbeing
- 4G** Identify risk and protective factors in relation to mental health
- 4H** Recognise and report possible indicators of abuse or neglect
- 4I** Identify and report situations beyond the scope of your role

## Support social, emotional and psychological wellbeing

There is a strong connection between physical and emotional good health. Poor physical health may affect a person's emotional and psychological health; likewise, poor emotional and psychological health may affect a person's physical health.

# 4A Promote self-esteem and confidence

Being in need of support from service providers can affect a person's self-esteem and confidence. For some people the nature of their issues may lead to them feeling stigmatised in the community. For others not being able to do what they used to be able to, or what their friends can do, can impact on how they feel about themselves. You can promote the person's self-esteem and confidence by communicating with them in a supportive and positive manner.



## Positive and supportive communication

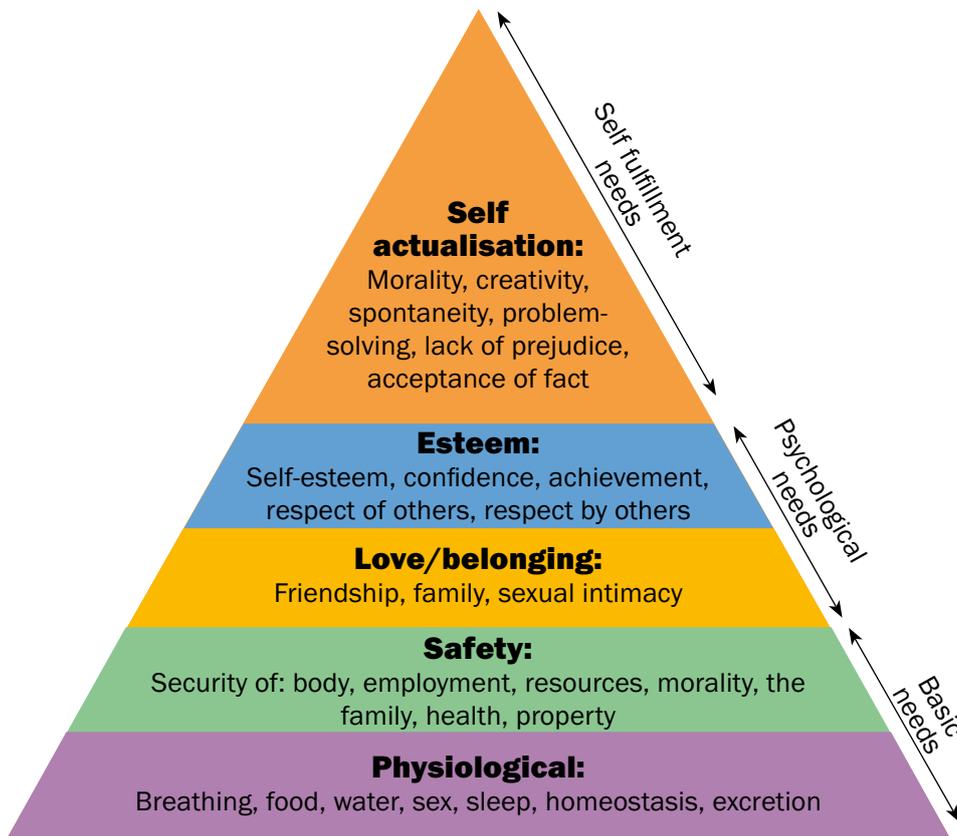
Positive, supportive communication helps to develop a trusting, productive working relationship between you and the person. It also helps the person to feel positive about themselves, their abilities and perhaps how they contribute to their own life and/or that of the community.

### Aspects of positive and supportive communication

- ▶ Acknowledge the person's feelings – even when they are angry or frustrated or sad
- ▶ Demonstrate empathy – understand the person's point of view and their experience
- ▶ Focus on the person's strengths and abilities – leave the person feeling more confident and capable
- ▶ Be respectful, genuine and non-judgmental
- ▶ Practise active listening
- ▶ Be practical – what can and cannot be done in the situation, what supports can be put in place

## Self-actualisation

Self-actualisation is about living a life that has meaning and will be different for every person. When a person is not feeling positive about themselves and their lives, self-actualisation is unlikely. You need to communicate positively with the person about their strengths and goals. You can support the person to reach their identified goals and to learn and grow into a fulfilled person through supporting self-determination and creating opportunities for self-expression.



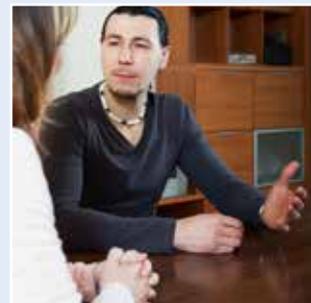
**Example**

**Supportive and positive communication**

Rob, 22, was in a car accident a year ago that left him with head injuries. Rob has worked hard in rehabilitation and has made great progress. He has moved home with his parents and tells Sue, his worker, that the worst thing about being home is being bored and spending long hours just watching television. Rob said before the accident he was at university studying economics. Sue hears the frustration in Rob’s voice.

Sue acknowledges Rob’s frustration at the difference between his life now and before the accident. She also acknowledges the grief he is experiencing for the life he has lost. She talks to Rob about the amazing progress he has made since the accident, and Rob agrees that he has surprised his doctors and therapists.

Sue and Rob then discuss what Rob would like to be doing and what he enjoys. They then set some goals for Rob and begin to develop a plan to achieve these goals.



# Practice task 17

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

## Case study

Melanie has an intellectual disability. Her parents are protective and try to control everything she does. As a result, Melanie perceives herself to be incapable and helpless; this has damaged her self-esteem.

1. How can Melanie's worker help to promote her self-esteem?

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2. Explain how Melanie's worker can support her to move towards self-actualisation.

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**Click to complete Practice task 17**

# 4B Contribute to a sense of security through safe and predictable routines

For many people knowing what to expect and when to expect it creates a sense of security. Routines provide structure, which in turn provides a feeling of control over some aspects of life. It also creates stability, which is comforting. You can support this sense of security by developing routines with the person that meet their needs.

Predictable routines involve the following.

## Service involvement

- ▶ What days and times services come into the person's home to provide support
- ▶ When regular appointments are scheduled

## Meals

- ▶ When meals are prepared, eaten or delivered and what support is required for these

## Social activities

- ▶ When regular social outings or activities are scheduled (for example, playing golf, attending a seniors' centre or having coffee with a social club)

## Work/volunteering or school or training

- ▶ Attending a class or course
- ▶ Doing volunteer work
- ▶ Working part time or full time

## Indicators of emotional concerns and issues

There are emotional concerns and issues that you should consider in your work. People may be experiencing symptoms of stress, depression, anxiety or other mental health issues, or their emotional wellbeing may be compromised in some other way.

### Indicators of emotional concerns

Feelings of worry or anxiety that are constant or last for a long time

Feelings of unhappiness or depression causing the person to lose interest and motivation, to stop enjoying activities, or feel sad all the time

Sudden mood changes like angry outbursts or bursting into tears

Sleeping problems like insomnia or changes in sleeping patterns

Changes to appetite or significant changes in weight

Becoming quiet or withdrawn from family and friends

Using drugs or drinking alcohol excessively

Feeling worthless, useless or hopeless

Significant changes in behaviour, feelings or thoughts

**Example**

**Routines contributing to a sense of security**

Rachel has Down syndrome and lives in a supported accommodation unit. She works at a nursery in another suburb. Rachel, together with her support worker, Jo, has a weekly routine.

Jo wrote the routine on a big piece of cardboard that Rachel has stuck up on her wall in her room. The poster shows her what she does every day including what time to catch the bus to work on weekdays, what time her parents pick her up for lunch on Saturdays, what days Jo comes to support her at home, what day she goes shopping for groceries, and when the weekly house-meetings are. The poster also has important phone numbers and other information Rachel needs.

Once a month Jo and Rachel look at the poster and make any necessary changes. They also plan Rachel’s menu for the month and then create lists for Rachel’s shopping trips. Rachel feels confident enough to live fairly independently because she has a routine and knows what to expect every day.



## Practice task 18

1. What types of routines may support a person to feel more secure?

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2. What indicators of emotional concerns or issues should a worker look for?

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**Click to complete Practice task 18**

# 4C Encourage and facilitate participation in preferred activities

When a person is losing mobility or experiencing deteriorating eyesight, has limited access to transportation, has been unwell or is experiencing the effects of a disability it can sometimes be difficult for them to participate in certain aspects of life that contribute to wellbeing.

The worker can encourage the person to consider what social, cultural and spiritual activities are important to them, as well as to think about what they enjoy and what will help them reach their goals. The worker can then assist the person to participate in these activities to improve their emotional wellbeing.

## Issues that affect health and wellbeing

Good relationships, good physical health, a satisfying career, links to culture and spirituality, healthy self-esteem, participating in social activities, having goals and a sense of purpose, and feeling a sense of belonging are positive influences on a person's wellbeing. Participating in social, cultural and spiritual activities improves a person's mental health and wellbeing by connecting them to their community and identity.

Alternatively there are issues that can impact negatively on wellbeing, including disability, poor mental or physical health, financial concerns and security concerns.

Here is some information on other issues that can affect health and wellbeing.

### Loss of culture

- ▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people affected by the stolen generation may have experienced a loss of culture due to being removed from country, loss of language and not being able to participate in ceremonies or spiritual practices. The intergenerational trauma of the stolen generation has had a significant impact on many people's health and wellbeing.

### Trauma

- ▶ The trauma experienced by some immigrants and refugees in their home countries and later their separation from extended family, language and cultural practices can negatively affect health and wellbeing.

### Reduced participation in social and spiritual activities

- ▶ Reduced participation could occur due to a range of issues such as mobility, transport or financial issues. Not being able to participate in a range of social and spiritual activities can affect the person's physical health (if they cannot attend the gym or play sport) and reduce their contact with family, friends and the community.

### Grief and loss

- ▶ Grief and loss can result from losing a person, like a parent or partner. It can also refer to other losses like mobility, identity, sight or hearing, ability to complete tasks, a house or a job.

## Encourage participation

Participation in social, cultural or spiritual activities can contribute to the person's overall wellbeing. Benefits can include feeling better about themselves and more confident, while being less likely to experience symptoms of depression. There are added benefits when the social activities have a physical component (such as playing golf or walking). Spiritual, cultural and social engagement can give the person a sense of meaning and support them to feel part of the community.



Changes in health, ability or life roles (for example, working full-time or parenting) can influence whether a person engages in these activities; they may need encouragement from the worker to continue with activities they have enjoyed previously or to find new social, cultural and spiritual networks and activities.

## Acknowledge the person's preferences

Encouraging a person to participate in activities should begin with a discussion. You may ask what the person currently participates in, and/or what they have done in the past that was enjoyable or important to them.

You can then ascertain what activities the person would like to be involved with and whether they have any preferences for place, group or time. For example, if the person expresses an interest in attending a Sunday church service weekly, you would need to ask about preferences in regard to denomination, location, service times and transport.

You may also ask about the social, spiritual and cultural networks the person already has, or you may need to support the person to develop new networks.

## Social activities

Enjoying social activities, having good relationships with others and participating in social networks in the community are important for people's wellbeing. Social networks can support resilience in people who are experiencing changes or stresses in their lives. When a person experiences significant changes to health, ability or wellness, it can be difficult to continue to engage in social activities. This may be because of physical limitations, experiences of stigma, financial reasons or loss of motivation.

You will need to address any barriers to the person engaging in social activities and work with them to identify current networks and develop new ones, depending on the person's preferences including their interests and lifestyle.

Social networks could include:

- ▶ book clubs
- ▶ sporting clubs or groups
- ▶ community centres
- ▶ volunteering
- ▶ friends – existing friends or making new ones
- ▶ family
- ▶ a class or course at the local community centre, library, adult learning centre, university or training organisation.

## Cultural activities

Being involved in cultural activities (which include shared values, beliefs, customs, behaviours and identity) can support a person to feel included and that their lives are meaningful and valued. Cultural identity shapes how people feel about themselves and their community. You can discuss with the person what cultural activities are important to them (for example, speaking with people who share a language, or eating traditional food) and what networks they have or need to develop. Here is some further information about cultural activities.

<b>Cultural networks</b>
Music or art group
Cultural centre
Multicultural centre
Story-telling group
Spending time in a culturally significant place with others

## Spiritual activities

Spiritual activities will mean different things to different people and you should discuss what activities are meaningful for the person. Together you and the person should look at what networks exist (for example, a local mosque they attended until recently) or need to be developed (for example, an activity via public transport like going to the beach).

Spiritual networks can include a:

- ▶ church, temple or mosque
- ▶ prayer group
- ▶ meditation centre or group
- ▶ yoga centre
- ▶ bushwalking group or surfing club.

### Example

#### **Encourage participation in activities**

Liam tells his worker, Jethro, that he used to enjoy swimming and belonged to a local swimming club before he became unwell. Liam says he stopped swimming when he went to hospital and hasn't been in a pool since he came home. Jethro encourages Liam to start swimming again. Jethro organises a time to go swimming with Liam and while they are at the pool, encourages Liam to look into joining the swimming club again.

# Practice task 19

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

## Case study

Goetlieb is a Lutheran. While he has not attended church for many years, he feels he needs to re-establish his connections with the church. His support worker is Anna.

1. How can Anna support Goetlieb to reconnect to the Lutheran church?

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2. After talking to Goetlieb about the options she has found, Goetlieb tells Anna he doesn't think he wants to follow up on anything. How can Anna encourage Goetlieb to participate?

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[Click to complete Practice task 19](#)

# 4D Identify aspects of wellbeing support outside the scope of knowledge, skills and/or your job role

There may be circumstances when the person is experiencing issues or requires support for social, emotional or psychological wellbeing that are outside a worker's knowledge, skills and/or job role. You must be clear on your work role and the limitations to your own abilities so you can seek support when required.

## Identify aspects of support

It is important that you identify what your work role is. This should be made clear in your job description or you may need to clarify your role with a supervisor. This will help you understand what support work is part of your responsibilities. It also means that when a situation or issue arises that is outside your role or expertise, you can identify this and find appropriate support.

## Seek support

If you identify that a situation or issue with a person is not within your work role or that you do not have the knowledge, skills or experience to support the person, it is important to seek support.

You can gain support from a supervisor or more-experienced colleagues depending on your organisation's procedures. You can also find information and support from other organisations that specialise in the issue the person is experiencing. It may also be appropriate to refer the person to an alternative service like a mental health service or an emergency service.

You can read more about mental health services at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/nmhc-get-help>



### Example

#### Identify aspects of wellbeing support outside your job role

Sean has been supporting Steve with his recovery after he came home from hospital. They have been working on Steve returning to university and getting fit for the past three months. Sean notices that on his last visit Steve was very quiet and withdrawn. Two days ago Steve cancelled a meeting with Sean. Today when they catch up, Sean is concerned to notice signs of cutting on Steve's arms. Sean acknowledges that this situation is outside of his job role and immediately contacts his supervisor to discuss Steve's physical and mental health and safety.



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# Practice task 20

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

## Case study

William lives at home. He receives assistance to remain living at home through the home support program. He had always been optimistic until he was robbed at an ATM near his home recently. Now he feels anxious and vulnerable. He jumps at every sound and is fearful. His sleep patterns have been disrupted and he is showing signs of depression. William's worker is concerned, but is unsure what to do or if it is her job to assist.

1. How can William's worker ascertain what is within her job role?

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2. Identify three possible support services in your local area for William's mental health concerns.

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**Click to complete Practice task 20**

# 4E Identify and report variations of wellbeing

All people have good days and days when their wellbeing is compromised. You need to be aware of when the person's wellbeing changes or deteriorates for a longer period of time, or of situations where the changes are significant. If you identify that the person's wellbeing has changed, you need to report it to your supervisor according to your organisation's procedures.

## Identify variations in wellbeing

If you notice changes in the person's wellbeing, which could be changes in mood or behaviour, you should discuss your concerns with the person.

Changes in mood could mean feeling sad or low; anxious or nervous; angry, frustrated or agitated; and/or feeling lonely or unmotivated. It may also include feeling unusually happy or elated.

Changes in behaviour may be reduced social, spiritual or cultural interaction, such as not attending a regular art class, or not seeing family for some time. The person may report not having enough energy to engage with activities that they previously said increased their sense of wellbeing. You should respond to any changes in wellbeing that you perceive.



## Report variations in wellbeing

How you report any identified changes depends on the situation and your workplace's procedures. Make sure you know how your workplace expects you to report changes to a person's abilities and support needs. Ask your supervisor for help with reporting if you need to.

Organisations will have different procedures for reporting concerns; in most instances this will involve (at the very least) noting the concerns in the person's file and reporting to a supervisor. In some situations mandatory reporting may apply; for example, if the worker suspects the person's wellbeing is being affected by abuse or neglect.

### Example

#### Identify and report variations of wellbeing

Joan has been unhappy for some time. Her worker, Kate, visits her and notices that her flat is empty. Joan's mood is uncharacteristically upbeat. On Kate's arrival, Joan says, 'It will be all over soon'. Kate notices a bottle of pills on the counter. She asks how many Joan has swallowed. She replies, 'All of them'. Kate immediately calls emergency services requesting an ambulance. She then calls her supervisor. When Kate returns to her office, after the emergency services have attended, she documents the situation in Joan's file and completes the incident report as required by her organisation.

# Practice task 21

1. What might a worker observe in a person whose wellbeing has changed?

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2. Andrea is concerned that Mrs Green seems depressed and withdrawn. Mrs Green has made excuses several times in the past month not to participate in activities like attending the community centre for crafts or going to church. How should Andrea report her concerns?

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**Click to complete Practice task 21**

# 4F Identify cultural or financial issues impacting on wellbeing

A worker needs to identify whether any financial issues may be affecting the person's wellbeing. Financial hardship can have an enormous impact on the person's relationships, ability to socialise, access to health care and stress levels.

Cultural issues may also impact on a person's wellbeing. This may relate to being separated from their country of origin, not being able to participate in a cultural ceremony, or experiences of trauma relating to culture.

## Identify cultural and financial issues

If you notice a variation in a person's wellbeing, you need to try to identify what the issues are. You should be aware that sometimes the cultural or financial cause of such a variation is not obvious and it is important to discuss what is noticed and any concerns with the person.

Cultural issues include difficulties relating to resettlement; discrimination based on race, language or religion; grief and loss; language difficulties; effects of trauma; separation from country or culture; or difficulties practising cultural rituals or ceremonies.

### Signs a person is experiencing financial issues

- ▶ Arguments about money with family or partners
- ▶ Bills not being paid or being left unopened
- ▶ Mood changes, signs of depression
- ▶ Social withdrawal – not participating in social, spiritual or cultural activities
- ▶ Increase in negative physical symptoms

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may have unique cultural wellbeing risk factors based on their history and shared trauma.

You can read more about cultural wellbeing risk factors for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/mental-health-risk-factors-indigenous-australians>

## Impact of cultural issues

A person's culture and language skills can affect how they experience changes in their health, ageing, mental health issues or disability. It may also impact on their ability to ask for help when needed. Continuing grief and anxiety over family and friends left behind can also influence wellbeing. Not being able to fully participate in culture may be having a similar effect. It may leave them feeling isolated, and may reduce their sense of meaning in their lives.

You can read more about mental health issues for migrants and refugees at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/mental-health-migrants-refugees>

Here is an explanation of how cultural issues may affect a person.

### How cultural issues may affect a person

- ▶ Feelings of sadness or depression, anger or not belonging
- ▶ Physical symptoms like headaches or muscle aches
- ▶ Reduced ability to concentrate
- ▶ Reduced self-esteem, confidence and sense of identity

## Impact of financial issues

Financial issues impact on a person's mental health and wellbeing by increasing their stress levels and decreasing feelings of self-efficacy and independence.

Financial issues can affect the person's ability to feel confident and engage in social activities and/or obtain health care or pay for treatments and medication.

You can read more about financial issues and mental health at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/mental-health-and-financial-difficulties>

### Example

#### Identify cultural or financial issues

Jeff has an acquired brain injury. Due to memory impairment and mood swings, he has been unable to return to work since his injury. A worker visits him on a regular basis. She notes Jeff's cupboard is fairly empty and contains two-minute noodles and other pre-packaged foods. When she asks Jeff about this, he says, 'It's all I can afford; they took away my licence and I have to buy in bulk, so I can't get fresh food'.

The worker provides Jeff with information on a free transport service so he can shop on a regular basis. She also provides him with local options to access free food when things are tight, including Foodbank and the Salvation Army. She goes with Jeff to his preferred option on his first visit to ensure he is comfortable with the service.

## Practice task 22

1. What are some signs a worker might observe that indicate a person is experiencing financial issues?

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2. Describe some possible impacts on a person's wellbeing of not being able to fully participate in culture.

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**Click to complete Practice task 22**

# 4G Identify risk and protective factors in relation to mental health

One in five Australians will experience symptoms of poor mental health at some point in their lives. Good mental health means a person feels a sense of wellbeing, feels good about themselves and confident. Good mental health enables a person to enjoy daily life, interact positively with other people, deal with challenges and reach their potential.

You should be aware of the factors that increase risk for people, and factors that become protective issues for mental health. Workers do not need to be mental health professionals, but do need to be aware of the issues.



## Mental health issues

A way to understand mental health is to think of a spectrum: one end being good mental health and the other end being serious mental health issues. A person's mental health can move backwards and forwards along this spectrum during their lifetime. Good mental health allows people to fully enjoy and participate in life. Mental health issues affect a person's ability to engage with other people, the community and aspects of everyday life.

Resources explaining a range of mental health and other issues can be found at the following site:

- ▶ <http://aspirelr.link/mental-health-issues>

## Identify risk

Part of working towards preventing serious mental health issues is to identify risks and put supports in place to reduce risk. If you have serious concerns, refer the person to a mental health professional so they may be formally assessed. Risk factors can be individual, environmental or social, as described below.

### Individual

- ▶ Use of non-prescription drugs or alcohol
- ▶ Chronic physical illness or poor physical health or traumatic injury
- ▶ Poor nutrition, lack of exercise, sleeping problems
- ▶ Grief and loss
- ▶ Experiencing violence, abuse or neglect
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Genetic predisposition (family members who have mental health issues)
- ▶ Limited coping skills

### Environmental

- ▶ Housing issues
- ▶ Financial or work-related problems (for example, under or unemployment)
- ▶ Neighbourhood crime
- ▶ Lack of community services

### Social

- ▶ Isolation, lack of social networks
- ▶ Family problems (relationships, mental health, financial)
- ▶ Relationship difficulties

## Risk and protective factors

While risk factors can be present at different times in a person's life, so too can protective factors. Protective factors are anything that supports mental health and wellbeing. Protective factors support resilience when difficult situations occur and reduce the impact of stress and other risk factors.

Here is more information about protective factors and how they can be categorised as individual, environmental or social/cultural.

### Individual

- Good coping skills
- Good interpersonal skills
- Positive self-esteem
- A sense of empowerment – self-efficacy
- Good physical health including nutrition, exercise and sleep
- A good understanding of own health and wellbeing

### Environmental

- Financially secure
- Living in a safe neighbourhood
- Local community supports

### Social/cultural

- Having a supportive family who lives nearby
- Being involved in social activities
- Having good friendships
- Having a healthy relationship
- Having opportunities to engage in meaningful work or volunteering
- Having good links to culture and opportunities to practise culture
- Having opportunities to engage with spiritual activities

**Example**

**Risk and protective factors in mental health**

Mia lives alone in her own home and a worker visits once a week to provide support. Mia has arthritis and requires support with some tasks; however, the worker notes that Mia appears to be in good mental health with some strong protective factors. Mia has a large family who visit regularly and often contact her by phone to talk. Mia owns her home and has a secure income. She participates in several activities including attending church weekly and participating in a walking club. Mia has a number of friends in the neighbourhood and they often get together to have afternoon tea, go shopping or go to the movies. Mia volunteers as a guide at a local art gallery and enjoys introducing visitors and school groups to her favourite artists.

## Practice task 23

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Silvia lives alone in her own home after her partner of many years died suddenly six months ago. Silvia experienced a serious episode of depression after her partner's death and was hospitalised for more than a month. Rona, Silvia's community mental health worker, has been supporting her since she left hospital. Silvia is active as a volunteer at the state art gallery, paints at home and engages with an art group weekly where she teaches and participates in different groups. During the past month Rona has noticed that Silvia looks tired and appears to have lost weight. In addition, Silvia does not always answer Rona's phone calls or answer the door, where previously she always did so. Today Rona receives a phone call from Silvia's sister saying the family is concerned that Silvia hasn't been attending the family's weekly Sunday lunch as she usually does.

1. What mental health risk factors are present for Silvia?

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2. What protective factors could Rona identify?

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**Click to complete Practice task 23**

# 4H Recognise and report possible indicators of abuse or neglect

You need to be aware of how the people you work with may be at risk of abuse or neglect. People with support needs tend to be more vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

Workers should be aware of some of the indicators of harm and know how to follow organisational procedures to report abuse or neglect.

## Recognise abuse

Abuse can be intentional or unintentional. Intentional abuse is when a person deliberately causes harm to another person by depriving and/or hurting them. Unintentional abuse can occur when another person doesn't realise, through ignorance or other reasons, that their behaviour towards the person with care needs is abusive. An example would be when a primary carer hasn't had a break and is caring for someone with very high needs. If there is no-one else the carer can call on, they can become very tired and resentful and not provide appropriate care as a result. They may not realise the impact their behaviour is having. This is still abuse and needs to be reported.

Here are some other causes of abuse.

### Causes of abuse

The primary carer may be stressed at home or at work.

A person may be in debt and may steal from another person.

There is conflict, arguments and fights within the family.

The person is isolated and alone and the abuser thinks no-one will find out if they treat them badly.

A carer may be using drugs or drinking too much alcohol and cannot care for the person properly.

## Recognise neglect

Neglect is when the person with care needs is neglected either through intentional or unintentional acts that result in the person not being provided with basic necessities. Here is further information about neglect.

### Neglect

Neglect includes:

- ▶ not providing enough food or drink
- ▶ not providing an adequate level of care
- ▶ not spending time with the person – leaving them alone for prolonged periods
- ▶ inadequate provision of clothing or personal items
- ▶ unwillingness to allow for adequate medical, dental or personal care
- ▶ inappropriate use of medication; for example, overdosing them so they sleep for longer periods of the day
- ▶ leaving the person in the same continence aid for the whole day.

### Indicators of neglect

- ▶ Weight loss, dehydration, poor skin quality
- ▶ Person appears unkempt – same clothing worn every day of the week, loose or baggy clothing, clothing in poor state, hair unwashed, untrimmed nails, poor hygiene
- ▶ No dentures, hearing aids, mobility aids or glasses
- ▶ Skin burns from urine being in contact with the skin for too long

## Physical abuse

Physical abuse is when a person is being physically assaulted. This can occur through physical acts of violence. Indicators might include physical pain or injuries. Physical acts of violence include hitting, slapping, punching, pulling hair, spitting at the person, pinching, biting, twisting an arm or wrist, physical restraint such as tying a person to a bed or chair, confining a person to a room or using objects to hurt a person (throwing rocks, using a strap). This abuse must be reported.

Indicators of physical abuse can include:

- ▶ bruises, cuts, scabs and scars
- ▶ abrasions, welts, rashes
- ▶ swelling, burn blisters
- ▶ agitation, cowering
- ▶ tenderness, pain, restricted movement
- ▶ broken or healing bones
- ▶ drowsiness, unexplained weight loss, unexplained hair loss.

## Sexual abuse

Unwanted or uninvited sexual contact, language or exploitative behaviour by another person is sexual abuse. Sexual abuse includes sexual harassment, indecent assault and rape. This abuse must be reported.

Here are examples of indicators of sexual abuse.

### Sexual abuse indicators

Withdrawal, disturbed sleep patterns, nightmares, agitation, fear

Unexplained difficulty sitting or walking

Bruising of genital areas or thighs

Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases

Unexplained bleeding from the genital areas

## Psychological/emotional abuse

Psychological and emotional abuse is ongoing intimidating behaviour that is designed to disempower a person. Psychological and emotional abuse can be both verbal and nonverbal. It can include belittling, threats and withdrawal of affection. This abuse must be reported.

Here are some indicators of this form of abuse.

### Indicators of psychological/emotional abuse

#### Sense of hopelessness

- ▶ Fearfulness, helplessness, withdrawal, reluctance to make decisions

#### Behaviour swings

- ▶ Anxiety, anger, moodiness, agitation, depression, passivity, low self-esteem

#### Tiredness

- ▶ Sleep deprivation, insomnia, confusion

#### Unexplained weight loss or gain

- ▶ Change in appetite, increased alcohol consumption

## Financial abuse

Financial abuse is not always easy to spot. It can include a person's money, property or assets being mishandled or taken and used without their consent. It can be restricting a person's access to their own money, or requiring them to account for how their own money was spent in minute detail. It can also include situations where a person with impaired cognitive abilities has given consent without truly understanding what their consent means. This abuse needs to be reported.

Financial abuse includes:

- ▶ embezzlement, fraud, forgery and stealing
- ▶ withholding money from the person or not paying accounts or debt
- ▶ forcing a person to change their will
- ▶ the enduring power of attorney refusing to provide enough money for the person to be able to live
- ▶ the enduring power of attorney refusing to provide money for the person to buy clothing or other required items
- ▶ forcing a person to hand over their money or assets.

## Reporting requirements

You have an ethical and often a legal responsibility to report suspected cases of abuse and neglect. While mandatory reporting requirements in aged care are uniform throughout Australia, the requirements in other community services settings vary between states and territories.

Community services organisations will have procedures for workers to follow in situations where they find out or suspect that someone is being abused. This may include reporting to a supervisor, or to a state or territory department or to the police.

Most organisations will also have documentation that must be completed, including case notes. Children, young people, frail older people and people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse.

**Example**

**Recognise and report abuse or neglect**

Jane is a support worker at a nursing home. She is helping Mrs Lowe, an older person who has dementia, get dressed one morning. Jane notes that Mrs Lowe has distinct bruising on her inner thighs, so Jane contacts her supervisor immediately. Medical attention is sought for Mrs Lowe. An incident report is filled out and given directly to the coordinator, and a note is placed in Mrs Lowe's file.



## Practice task 24

1. How would a worker recognise that a person is being neglected?

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2. Research the legal requirements for workers to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect in children and young people in your state or territory.

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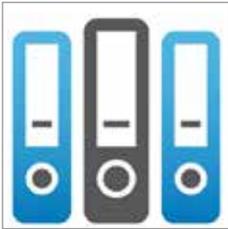
**Click to complete Practice task 24**

# 4 Identify and report situations beyond the scope of your role

There may be times when you are faced with a situation regarding a person's emotional, social, cultural or psychological wellbeing that is beyond the scope of your role. In these situations it is important that you report the situation following organisational procedures.

## Understand your work role

Your job or position description will be given to you when you apply for your job, or when you start work. It outlines the main tasks you are responsible for and who you report to. It should explain how, where and when you need to work. You need a good understanding of your role. You will also undergo an orientation to your work role, which will provide further information about what is expected of you. Here is some more information about your work role for you to consider.



### Keep to your work role

Sometimes you may be asked to do things that are not part of your duties. If you do them, you are working outside your job role. If it is not clear what your duties are in your job description, make sure you ask. You may need to check with your supervisor or look up a policy or procedure. You could also ask a more experienced colleague for information. It is always best to ask questions and make sure you are doing the right thing.



### Explain your role

If you find out that the task is not something you are meant to do, you need to explain this to the person you are supporting. Be polite but firm. Explain that your job involves certain tasks. Be clear about what you can do to help them. Often there is a very good reason for not doing certain tasks as part of your role.

## Identify situations beyond the scope of your role

Attempting to provide support beyond the scope of your role could have consequences for the person and for you. An example of a situation beyond the scope of most support workers' roles would be when you are asked to carry out tasks you have not been trained for. For example, being directed to support a person with complex care needs such as a person with an escalating mental illness or experiencing a significant decline in their wellbeing, or situations where a person is being abused or neglected.

## Report situations beyond the scope of your role

You need to report any situation that is beyond the scope of your work role according to organisational procedures. In most organisations this includes reporting to a supervisor or senior staff member and making a note in the person's file. If there is an immediate risk of harm, you should follow organisational procedures to protect the person – which may include contacting emergency services. Focus on reporting accurately and objectively.

### Objective report

What you saw (for example, the size, location and type of bruising)

When you saw it (date, time, day)

What you did (for example, removed the person from the situation)

What you said (for example, explained to the person that you had to report the incident)

The person's response (what they said or did)

Follow-up action to be taken

### Example

#### Report situations beyond the scope of your role

Jack provides support to Phil. Phil tells Jack his knee is hurting and he is having trouble moving it. Phil asks Jack to recommend some exercises to increase the movement in his leg.

Jack recognises that giving this advice is beyond his role and outside of his experience and qualifications. If Jack develops an exercise program for Phil, Phil's condition may worsen. Instead, Jack reports the situation to his supervisor and after they talk, he suggests Phil visit his GP to discuss his pain. Jack also makes a note of the situation and action in Phil's case file.



# Practice task 25

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

## Case study

Lionel is a person who was abused as a child. As a result he expects others to hurt him and often forms relationships with people who are abusive. He also self-harms and has scars on his arms and legs. Lionel's worker Peggy notices that Lionel has fresh bruises on his neck and arms and seems withdrawn. Peggy knows that responding to abuse is beyond her job role because she is in Lionel's home to assist him to clean.

1. What should Peggy do in this situation?

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2. As Peggy is leaving, Lionel tells her he is afraid of being alone and says if she leaves him he will kill himself. How should Peggy respond?

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**Click to complete Practice task 25**

## Summary

1. Positive, supportive communication helps to develop a trusting, productive working relationship between you and the person. It also helps the person to feel positive about themselves, their abilities and perhaps how they contribute to their own life and/or that of the community.
2. Routines provide structure, which in turn provides a feeling of control over some aspects of life. It also creates stability, which is comforting. You can support this sense of security by developing routines with the person that meet their needs.
3. A worker can encourage the person to consider what social, cultural and spiritual activities are important to them, as well as to think about what they enjoy and what will help them reach their goals. The worker can then assist the person to participate in these activities to improve their emotional wellbeing.
4. If you identify that a situation or issue with a person is not within your work role or that you do not have the knowledge, skills or experience to support the person, it is important to seek support from a supervisor or more-experienced colleagues.
5. If you identify changes in the person's wellbeing, which could be changes in mood or behaviour, you need to report it to your supervisor according to your organisation's procedures.
6. Cultural or financial issues may impact on wellbeing. Cultural issues include difficulties relating to resettlement; discrimination based on race, language or religion; grief and loss; language difficulties; effects of trauma; separation from country or culture; or difficulties practising cultural rituals or ceremonies. Financial issues can affect the person's ability to feel confident and engage in social activities and/or obtain health care or pay for treatments and medication.
7. Part of working towards preventing serious mental health issues is to identify risks and put supports in place to reduce risk. If you have serious concerns, refer the person to a mental health professional so they may be formally assessed. Risk factors can be individual, environmental or social.
8. Abuse can be intentional or unintentional. Intentional abuse is when a person deliberately causes harm to another person by depriving and/or hurting them. Unintentional abuse can occur when another person doesn't realise, through ignorance or other reasons, that their behaviour towards the person with care needs is abusive. Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological/emotional or financial.
9. Neglect is when the person with care needs is neglected either through intentional or unintentional acts that result in the person not being provided with basic necessities.
10. Attempting to provide support beyond the scope of your role could have consequences for the person and for you. You need to report any situation that is beyond the scope of your work role according to organisational procedures.

# Learning checkpoint 4

## Support social, emotional and psychological wellbeing

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in supporting social, emotional and psychological wellbeing.

### Part A

1. What types of predictable routines can a worker develop with a person to contribute to their sense of security?

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2. What issues, aside from physical health or abuse/neglect, can affect a person's wellbeing?

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3. List five risk factors in mental health.

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2. Research and provide a summary of the reporting requirements (mandatory reporting) for workers who suspect abuse situations in aged care.

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## Part C

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

### Case study

Georgia has had episodes of severe anxiety that have limited her ability to participate in meaningful activities. After a period of time in a clinic, Georgia is back living independently and is considering her future. Georgia tells her support worker, Meg, that she had to quit her university course when she became unwell and she is too embarrassed to go back.

Georgia also tells Meg that she began working on several art projects while at the clinic and would like to continue with art, as she feels she is able to express herself and feels more in touch with what is important. She tells Meg she feels that perhaps this will help her make new friends as she doesn't really have many friends.

1. How can Meg use positive and supportive communication to promote Georgia's self-esteem and confidence?

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2. How can Meg encourage and facilitate Georgia's participation in social, cultural and spiritual activities that meet her needs and interests? How might this support Georgia's move towards self-actualisation?

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3. After working with Georgia for several months, Meg observes that Georgia seems withdrawn and sad. She notices that Georgia has missed some appointments and has not attended her art class, which she loves. Meg also notices that Georgia appears to be losing weight. What should Meg do?

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4. Meg is a community mental health worker. How can she identify aspects of wellbeing support outside the scope of her knowledge, skills and/or job role? What should she do if she identifies that Georgia's current mental health is beyond her job role?

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