

## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Caring for People with Dementia

**CODE** D11A 12

**COURSE** Mental Health Care (Higher)

### SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to develop knowledge and understanding of Dementia and the effects it has on the individual and their Carers. It will also enable candidates to develop awareness of the skills and strategies necessary for the support and care of people with Dementia and their Carers. Candidates will also explore the role of statutory, voluntary and self help organisations who support those affected by Dementia.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe the types, causes and progress of dementia.
- 2 Identify the strategies and skills required to meet the needs of people with dementia.
- 3 Explain the ways to assist the carer in coping with the stresses associated with caring for people with dementia.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally benefit from having some knowledge and understanding of mental health issues. Candidates would also benefit from having attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ D11H 11 Mental Health Issues: An Introduction (Intermediate 2)
- ◆ D8XV 12 Practical Skills for Carers (Higher)

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### Administrative Information

**Superclass:** PN

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## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

**UNIT**      Caring for People with Dementia

### **CREDIT VALUE**

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6\*)

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

### **CORE SKILLS**

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this Unit.

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

### **UNIT Caring for People with Dementia**

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

#### **OUTCOME 1**

Describe the types, causes and progress of dementia.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) The definition of dementia is correct in relation to current research.
- (b) The description of the types of dementia are correct in terms of current knowledge.
- (c) The description of the possible causes of dementia are valid in terms of current research.
- (d) The description of the phases of dementia are correct in terms of current knowledge.

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Identify the strategies and skills required to meet the needs of people with dementia.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) The explanation of the effects of dementia on the basic physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs of the individual with dementia is accurate in terms of their individual circumstances.
- (b) The identification of the strategies to meet the behaviour of the individual with dementia are valid in terms of minimising the distress of the person with dementia.
- (c) The identification of strategies used to cope with the management of the affairs and routines of the individual with dementia are valid in terms of maintaining normality.
- (d) The explanation of the skills and attitudes required to care for the individual with dementia is valid in terms of accepted practice.

#### **OUTCOME 3**

Explain the ways to assist the carer in coping with the stresses associated with caring for people with dementia.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- a) The identification of problems faced by the carer in coping with the person with dementia are valid in terms of the caring situation.
- b) The explanation of the various ways to assist the carer in coping with the stress produced by the person with dementia is valid in terms of the caring situation.
- c) The identification of the roles and responsibilities of the main statutory and voluntary agencies offering assistance to carers of people with dementia is accurate.

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **UNIT Caring for People with Dementia**

#### **EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT**

Written and/or oral evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidate has achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. A holistic approach to assessment across outcomes should be taken. This could be in the form of case studies covering two different caring situations.

#### **Specific advice**

- Outcome 1 — Candidates should be assessed on Alzheimer, vascular and other types of dementia. The following phases of dementia should be assessed: mild, moderate and severe.
- Outcome 2 — Candidates should be assessed on physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs and be able to identify appropriate strategies to meet the needs.
- Outcome 3 — Candidates should be assessed on the effect of caring for a person with dementia and should identify sources of support for the carer.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT Caring for People with Dementia**

This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

#### **GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT**

##### **Outcome 1**

Candidates are asked to investigate dementia and its effects on the individual and the carers and how they are supported in coping with this condition. Those involved with the delivery of this Unit should emphasise that dementia is not part of the normal ageing process. It is common in adults over 60 years but can occur in younger people.

Define dementia — refer to brain failure due to abnormal brain cell death. The condition we call dementia is a practical deterioration with respites of recovery (remission). These periods become less as the condition progresses.

Effects:

- ◆ lose ability to do simple tasks
- ◆ disorientation and confusion
- ◆ personality changes
- ◆ incapable of caring for themselves

Types of Dementia:

- ◆ Alzheimer type — 50% of cases
- ◆ Vascular — 20% of cases
- ◆ Pseudo-dementia — 10% of cases
- ◆ Others — 20% of cases.

Causes of Dementia:

- ◆ identify types and their causes
- ◆ Pseudo dementia may be reversible
- ◆ Others covers Picks Disease, Creuzfeld Jacob Disease or Alcohol dependent

Phases:

- ◆ mild
- ◆ moderate
- ◆ severe

Candidates should be encouraged to find out about this disease from friends, relations or from visiting specialists or someone who has or is caring for a dementia patient. Where a placement is used as part of the Course, it may be possible to be involved with those clients who have dementia.

##### **Outcome 2**

Candidates should identify the needs of those with dementia.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Caring for People with Dementia

#### Physical needs:

- ◆ nutrition
- ◆ fluid intake
- ◆ cleanliness
- ◆ clothing and warmth
- ◆ sleep
- ◆ exercise
- ◆ protection from abuse

#### Emotional needs:

- ◆ privacy
- ◆ dignity
- ◆ choice
- ◆ independence
- ◆ hope
- ◆ humour
- ◆ comfort

#### Social needs:

- ◆ friendship and contact with the wider community

#### Intellectual needs:

- ◆ stimulation
- ◆ conversation
- ◆ access to activity

#### Particular needs:

- ◆ patience and empathy by those caring
- ◆ continuity of care
- ◆ structured and supportive environment
- ◆ independence as far as possible
- ◆ settling of legal affairs when of sound mind
- ◆ being allowed to take risks
- ◆ affirmation of self

Candidates should identify strategies for coping; they should identify the behaviour and the strategies to meet it, eg food and diet, feeding problems; find out what they like – ignore table manners and encourage them to eat.

#### Other:

- ◆ repeated questions or repeated behaviour
- ◆ wandering, incontinence and soiling, aggression and sleeplessness
- ◆ will not go out, lack of movement and no routine or plans

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Caring for People with Dementia

Affairs:

- ◆ financial and legal
- ◆ banking and bills
- ◆ safety in the home environment
- ◆ driving a vehicle
- ◆ coping with hazards outside

Candidates could use case studies to examine the problems and to reach conclusions on the coping strategies.

Personal skills and attitude needed for working with dementia could include effective communication skills, patience, understanding, respect for dignity, privacy, choice and independence. Use of video case studies or role play could explore these skills and attitudes.

#### Outcome 3

Candidates are asked to investigate the problems faced by the carer in coping with a person who has dementia. Candidates are asked to cover the following caring situations.

Caring Situations:

- ◆ at home
- ◆ within the community
- ◆ in residential homes
- ◆ in hospital

The problems include:

- ◆ frustration
- ◆ anger
- ◆ exhaustion
- ◆ grief
- ◆ loss
- ◆ affects children
- ◆ affects expectation at stage in life

Factors leading to stress in the carer:

- ◆ isolation of the carer
- ◆ frustration
- ◆ lack of skills knowledge and timely help
- ◆ feeling of not being appreciated
- ◆ financial

Candidates are asked to explore ways to assist the carers of people with dementia in various care settings.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Caring for People with Dementia

This will include the following help for carers:

- ◆ respite care
- ◆ specialist agencies
- ◆ support groups
- ◆ training
- ◆ help from health, social, medical and psychiatric services

Candidates are expected to investigate the roles of statutory and voluntary services.

**Department of Social Security:** relevant benefits, ie care allowance

**Health:** doctor, hospital, district nurses and health visitors

**Local Authority:** social work, special housing, home carer, etc.

**Voluntary Services:** Crossroads, Church of Scotland, Alzheimer's Scotland, Age Concern, Carers National Association, Mind.

Examination of the agencies will highlight aspects of legislation that affect their roles and responsibilities. Agencies do not work in isolation but comprise a network of support. Someone who has experienced this help could be invited to talk to the students.

### GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates should be introduced to the types, possible causes and stages of dementia at the beginning of the course. This will mean they have a foundation of knowledge which will build further understanding as the Unit progresses.

Use of video, case studies, work sheets, role play and small group work could be used to encourage candidates to explore the needs of individuals affected by dementia and the needs of their carers. Candidates should be encouraged to examine various issues associated with caring for someone with dementia and could make use of research to explore the role of organisations in supporting those affected by dementia. This would include the skills and attributes of the professional carer. A visiting speaker, eg, a Community Psychiatric Nurse, Mental Health Social Worker, or someone who works for a voluntary agency such as Alzheimer's Scotland would enhance delivery of this Unit.

### GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

A variety of approaches to assessment could be used, such as:

- ◆ case studies with associated questions
- ◆ stimulus material with related questions
- ◆ written or oral reports, which could be based on investigative/project work
- ◆ extended, restricted and short answer response questions, as appropriate

Integration of assessments across outcomes may be used.

Assessment should be carried out under supervision at all times.



## **National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

### **UNIT**      Caring for People with Dementia

#### **CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).