Parenting and Disability Facilitator Guide

Welcome to the Parenting and Disability course, designed to explore interprofessional understanding and awareness when caring for new parents who are living with a disability. Each section can be studied independently. However, they have been designed to complement each other and gradually build up your knowledge and understanding of the issues to consider when a woman and/or her partner has a disability. These materials are particularly written for health care professionals that are involved with the family during pregnancy and the early days of becoming a new parent.

Background to Disability and Parenting resource
This learning tool was created using a £2000 grant awarded by East Midlands Workforce Deanery to develop an educational tool which could be used as part of a local Interprofessional Education (IPE) strategy for midwives, nurses, community practitioners, social workers and medical students. Whilst midwives do play an important part in supporting disabled parents they acknowledge the longer term involvement of the wider multi-disciplinary team and other agencies before, during and after pregnancy care. Some research suggests that, despite professional and legislative guidelines to prevent this, disabled parents meet prejudice and discrimination during their encounters with health professionals.

Local service users participated in this project. A number of organisations and agencies were contacted and agreed to send on details of the project including our contact details. Ethical approval was obtained. Written consent was sought from all participants. Confidentiality was assured throughout the project.

Using semi-structured interviews we included fathers and mothers, with children ranging from toddlers to young adults. We interviewed those with physical disabilities including wheelchair users, those with sensory impairments, and some with more complex and self-limiting health needs. Some who were disabled from birth and others who were disabled after the birth of their children, a parent with twins and a foster parent were represented and participants reflect the multi-cultural diversity of the local population.
This qualitative approach, where participants are able to discuss real life scenarios affecting them as individuals, is in line with the adoption of the social model of research advocated by many writers on disability.

It is hoped that this e-learning package could be used independently with students able to reflect upon their own individual practice and submit this as part of their portfolio evidence. Alternatively students can participate in an online IPE forum helping them better understand others’ professional boundaries and responsibilities.

It is hoped that the materials will give you the opportunity to explore disability within maternity and neonatal services. It will challenge you to examine your own practice and whether it meets the needs of disabled parents now and can be improved for future users.

**The Disability and Parenting Learning Materials**

The learning package can be used as individual components in face to face workshops or used to develop a course within a virtual learning environment (VLE).

Each learning object has suggested times for how long it will take to work through the materials to enable facilitators to plan their use with their own learners.

**Running the course within a virtual learning environment**

It can be set up so that it can be run over several weeks applying adaptive release to the materials so that the learners have access to material gradually… *(Note to Facilitator - Suggest that you decide how the course will be run e.g. time period, dates and communicate this to the students in their guide)*. Adaptive release encourages learners to remain as a group responding to each other’s contributions rather than working ahead of the group. The learning materials which have the three themes of access, attitudes and accountability can be delivered in the order you prefer them to be delivered.

The e-tivities are designed so that following individual work a response can be made using an online tool such as a wiki or discussion board. This will promote collaborative working as the learners will need to respond to other learner’s contributions. The tools for collaboration will need to be developed and learner’s discussions/contributions moderated in your own individual virtual learning environment (VLE).
What do ‘e-moderators’ do? What training do they need?
Tutors who work with learners online need to develop skills for this new way of teaching and learning. E-moderators motivate the learners to complete the etivities on line and retain them for the length of the course. Another important skill to develop is how to weave and summarise the materials and give feedback to learner’s contributions. The method adopted by the Beyond Distance Research Alliance (BDRA) at the University of Leicester has been successfully used in the design of this course. All tutors that developed the materials have had specific training to become e-moderators. An example of such a three week on-line course is ‘Barefoot e-moderator’, developed by the BDRA and can be accessed at www2.le.ac.uk/staff-development.

Some materials have been referred to in these materials will need to be accessed using a link to an external website. Links to external websites will need to be made live once the materials have been embedded in your own VLE.

Running the course as a series of face to face workshops
The course can be adapted to be used as face to face workshops.

Selecting Students to attend the course
You will need to decide which students best suit this learning package. To be interprofessional you will need two or more professional groups involved ideally from both health and social care.

For example the following professional groups are best suited to this learning package:

- Medicine (Obstetrics)
- Midwifery
- Adult Nursing
- Mental health nursing
- Maternity Care assistants
- Social work

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The interprofessional lead for each profession selects the students to be involved in the e-learning course or attend and ensures details are sent to them well in advance. If you are going to use the units in a face to face learning environment the time away from practice needs to be communicated to their placements via the Placement Officer.

**Dates and Venues**
This course can be delivered over a number of days or weeks depending on what suits your learners and programme requirements. A number of cohorts may work though the units in any one academic year. The important consideration is the mix of professional groups so the events are interprofessional in nature.

If you are using face to face methodologies students need to receive the full address of the venue and information about the event. We have used a range of venues which may not be the usual area of practice for the students. A flat room is required with furniture that can be moved. It is suggested that a maximum of 40 students are invited that work in student teams of a maximum of 8 people. The room needs to be arranged so that each team can work around their own table.

Some pre-course information will be required about the event. You will need to communicate with the students about any pre-course activities to be carried out

The VLE could be used for this purpose.

Also depending on your local arrangement this event can be counted as part of their practice hours, so the usual arrangements for claiming back your expenses would apply.

**Resources and Equipment required:**
Consider using the VLE direct to access the materials even in a face to face workshop. Sufficient computers with access to the Internet will be required at the venue.

A range of different lecturers and practitioners with different expertise. could contribute to the Programme
The students are placed into groups at the beginning of the workshop and continue working with those students for the remainder of the event.

The students are unlikely to have met before and will come from differing professional backgrounds, but there is huge potential to learn a lot from each other about how your profession would approach and interact with a mental health service user.

For those students who have a portfolio, participation in this event will count as evidence. The tutors need to sign the portfolio at the end of the event to confirm attendance.

**Assessment**

You will need to consider whether you will assess the students are the end of the event/workshop/course.

Depending on the number of students allocated to the course learners from the different professional groups can be allocated to a group. Each group can have their own forum to contribute to. For the course to be interprofessional two or more professions need to be allocated to each group. Students can be briefed about the course face to face or on line using a podcast or written instructions.

**Total Time allocation to each section of the course:**

Guide (Facilitator or learner): 1 ½ hours

Introduction: 2 ½ hours

Ground rules and introductions: 3 hours

Access: 22 hours

Attitudes: 3 hours

Evidence Based Practice: 8 hours

Considerations for communication with parents with particular problems: 4 hours

Follow up e-tivity Resource Section: 6 hours