

Dignity Newsletter



Adults, Wellbeing and Health

July 2009 - First Edition

Welcome to the first edition of Dignity

The term dignity refers to a person's right to respect and ethical treatment in the care they receive. It is increasingly high on the list of priorities for all agencies. The Department of Health Dignity in Care Campaign is one example of what is being done to highlight the importance of considering dignity as an integral part of all the work we do.

The Dignity newsletter will showcase examples of how dignity for all is being championed in County Durham. It will be a focus for sharing examples of good practice in improving dignity as well as highlighting what's happening within agencies that could make a difference and ensure dignity is at the forefront of everything we do.

In this first edition we look at;

- **The Department of Health Dignity in Care campaign**
- **One manager's experience of being a dignity champion**
- **The Safeguarding Practice Team – how they improve dignity in care in the work they do with residential and nursing homes**
- **Links between dignity and safeguarding**
- **Dignity in care training sessions**



If there is anything you would like to see in future editions please email Elaine McClelland, Safeguarding Practice Officer:
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Department of Health Dignity in Care Campaign

The Department of Health launched its Dignity in Care campaign in November 2006. Their campaign, including a ten point dignity challenge, highlights the importance of considering dignity in all the work we do.



High quality services that respect people's dignity should:

1. Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse.
2. Support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family.
3. Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service.
4. Enable people to maintain the maximum possible level of independence, choice, and control.
5. Listen and support people to express their needs and wants.
6. Respect people's right to privacy.
7. Ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution.
8. Engage with family members and carers as care partners.
9. Assist people to maintain confidence and a positive self esteem.
10. Act to alleviate people's loneliness and isolation.

Department of Health Dignity Challenge

Dignity in care is fundamental, no matter what work we do. The Durham multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Board, on which the County Council leads, is committed to supporting the campaign and raising awareness of dignity. Why not show your personal support and sign up as a dignity champion?

What are Dignity Champions?

Dignity in care champions are people who are interested in taking steps, however small, to ensure everyone is treated with dignity. It is not envisaged the role will take up a great deal of time. Often what you may see as making very small changes can have a big effect on someone's dignity.



Who can become a Dignity Champion?

Anyone who is interested in promoting Dignity in Care can sign up as a Dignity Champion. Dignity champions include front line staff and managers in health and social care, people who use services, relatives and carers, people from voluntary organisations, advocacy workers, councillors and MPs. The Dignity Ambassador is Sir Michael Parkinson.

What are the benefits of becoming a Dignity Champion?

Becoming a Dignity Champion could help you make a real difference. You will have access to a network of champions, giving you the opportunity to share information and good practice. You will also have access to the national 'Dignity Champions Newsletter' and conferences such as the National Dignity Conference.



How do I become a Dignity Champion

You can sign up as a Dignity in Care Champion by logging onto www.dignityincare.org.uk or telephoning **0207 972 4007**.

Being a Dignity Champion – one manager's experience

Viv Shingleton, manager of Mendip House in Chester-le-Street has recently signed up as a Dignity Champion. She says;

'I signed up as a champion in March after seeing information about the campaign at a safeguarding conference.

It is important to ensure that there is acknowledgement of the values of care that we should bring to the workplace every day. Reading the dignity standards reaffirmed for me the importance of this and how providing care for someone should not be just about the physical care they require.

We now have dignity posters in the staff room, have accessed information on the Dignity in Care website and staff have attended the one hour dignity awareness sessions.

All this emphasises the importance of respecting our residents, empathising with residents, listening to people, and the importance of providing a service that meets an individuals needs and promotes their independence.'

Dignity in Care Sessions



The safeguarding practice officers are offering care home providers, both in-house and from the private and voluntary sector, the opportunity of accessing an hour-long Dignity in Care awareness session. These sessions take place within the care home to enable as many staff as possible to attend. The session is based on the Royal College of Nursing Dignity training pack and its aim is to encourage staff to think about how they can improve dignity in all the work they do, including thinking about the little changes that often mean a lot.

A real positive outcome has been from staff about what they will do as a result of attending the course.

This has included:

- 'Being much more aware of clients' feelings'
- Thinking of all residents as individuals who need individual care'
- 'Taking the residents wishes on board and not assuming I know best'
- 'I'll think about the way I present food to make it look more appetising'

Are you a residential care provider in County Durham and interested in Dignity in Care Sessions for your home? If so please contact the Safeguarding team on 0191 383 5171 for more information or to arrange a date.



Focus on Safeguarding

Point one of the Department of Health's Dignity Challenge is **'Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse'**. The Durham Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Board also states their clear policy of **zero tolerance of abuse** and that it is every person's right to live their life free from violence and abuse (Durham Interagency Policy and Statement of Commitment January 2009).

At the National Dignity Matters Conference, held in November 2009 the National Programme Manager (No Secrets) talked about the links between safeguarding and dignity and how this was being looked at within the No Secrets review.

The links between Dignity in Care and Safeguarding Adults is therefore clear and as stated in the County Durham Inter-Agency Policy and Statement of Commitment (Jan 2009);

'Successful prevention of adult abuse and neglect demands that service providers tackle the factors which contribute to its occurrence at all levels.'

Therefore by highlighting the importance of dignity in all the work we do and the care we provide, we can help ensure the successful prevention of abuse.

Meet the Safeguarding Practice Officers

The safeguarding practice officers are new posts, based in the safeguarding and practice development team. Based at Priory House and consisting of two qualified nurses and two qualified social workers, the team is joint funded by Durham County Council and County Durham PCT.

The team focuses on supporting homes with safeguarding issues including becoming involved in strategies under the County Durham Interagency Policy and Procedures and supporting the development and implementation of action plans. We also work with homes to help them develop and share good practice and can signpost providers to support available from other organisations.

As dignity is so fundamentally linked to safeguarding, we also support staff and management in homes to ensure that dignity in care is high on their agenda. This includes delivering a one hour Dignity in Care awareness session to staff at all levels in the homes.

Images: www.careimages.com

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Adults, Wellbeing and Health, Marketing and Information Team, 2009