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A forgotten partnership? The carer-service user partnership and personalisation

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A forgotten partnership? The carer-service user partnership and personalisation

Mary Larkin





Outline of presentation

- partnerships and social work education
- the carer-service user relationship
- the carer-service user relationship as a partnership
- personalisation and the service user and the carer
- personalisation and the carer-service user relationship
- personalisation, the carer-service user relationship and social work education

What is a partnership?

“a shared commitment, where all partners have a right and an obligation to participate and will be affected equally by the benefits and disadvantages arising from the partnership” (Carnell and Carson, 2005:6)



Partnerships in social work education

.....providers will have to demonstrate that all students undertake specific learning and assessment in the following key areas:

- Human growth, development, mental health and disability
- Assessment, planning, intervention and review
- Communication skills with children, adults and those with particular communication needs
- Law
- **Partnership working** and information sharing across professional disciplines and agencies (Department of Health, 2002:3. Requirements for Social Work Training)



All Social Workers Will Learn and Be Assessed On:

The new degree is all about **practice** and academic learning must support this.

Competent Worker

Law

Partnership Working

Communication Skills

Assessment, Planning, Intervention and Review

Human Growth, Development, Mental Health and Disability

The carer-service user relationship

- challenge in the 1990s to the construction of the cared-for person as 'dependent'
- recognition that they are not passive recipients of care
- reconstruction of the carer-service relationship



Recognition of the carer-service user relationship as a partnership

- we all “live in a state of mutual interdependence” (Oliver, 1989: 8)
- characterised by “interdependence and reciprocity” (Walmsley, 1993:137)
- caring relationships usually take place within other relationships, such as those between partners and spouses that involve the reciprocity and mutual dependence that are “part of human relationships” (Morris, 1995:90).
- the “delicate balancing act” of the “mutual process, in which there is agency not just in giving but also in receiving” (Shakespeare, 2000:88)

The importance of the carer-service user partnership

- growing recognition that to be effective policies need to acknowledge this interdependent carer-service partnership , its complexity and its universality (Walmsley, 1993, Barnes, 2006)
- the interdependence in the carer-service partnership is central to the delivery, quality and experience of both contemporary and future social care



Personalisation and the service user

- “every person who receives support, whether it is provided by statutory services or funded by themselves, will be empowered to shape their own lives and the services they receive in all care settings” (Department of Health, 2008)
- service users determine their own priorities and preferences
- many initiatives e.g. Direct Payments, *in Control*, Individual Budgets



Personalisation and the carer

Evidence that:

- carers' identities are constructed and confirmed through caring
- the role of carer is very significant to carers

AND personalisation means that:

- dependants make more of the decisions about their own care
- carers make different contributions to the provision of care which may involve them in new tasks
- formal and/contractual relationship with the service user

Personalisation and the carer-service user partnership

- new rights and roles for both service users and carers
- potential for misalignments between personalisation and carers' needs
- possible erosion of carers' self identity as the move to personalisation gathers momentum
- changes in dynamics of the carer-service user partnership

Personalisation, the carer-service user relationship and social work education

- to what extent does social work education reflect the issues highlighted about the carer-service user relationship and personalisation ?
- how can we ensure that the future curriculum reflects these issues?
- how can students be best prepared to deal with these issues when undertaking placements ?
- are students adequately prepared to deal with these issues in practice?
- further research required to inform contemporary practice?

