



PERson CENTred Training; AGE care planning

Trainers' Guide

A learning framework designed by
partners across Europe

OCTOBER 2008



INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to inform and support trainers who are looking to implement the training contained in the Percentage learning programme. It is intended to explain structural elements of training delivery under a series of headings. It reflects the views and experiences of project partners gained in particular during the testing phase of the project. It is highly recommended that it be read alongside the Percentage “Course Planner” which offers more detailed guidance on course delivery unit by unit.

THE PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

The PERCENTAGE project started from a clear and shared vision between its partners who wanted to make sure that care is provided to older people in ways that grow out of the wishes and needs of the older person themselves and other people important to them. This is a key “value statement” for project partners and is a value that we feel is vital for care workers to have and follow.

THE LEARNERS

We were always clear that the PERCENTAGE project was carried out for the ultimate benefit of older people who are receiving packages of care, either in their own homes or in residential care homes of different types. In order to provide the quality of care we believe people are entitled to, care must be delivered by skilled and knowledgeable workers. The target group of learners for the PERCENTAGE programme are those people who work directly in providing frontline care. Typically these staff will have few formal educational qualifications, will often be migrant workers and will work long and/or irregular hours.

It is important that anyone looking to deliver the PERCENTAGE programme has a clear understanding of this target group and takes their typical characteristics into account when designing guidance and learning materials.

THE TRAINERS

Just who is likely to deliver the PERCENTAGE programme will vary from one place to another. Whether this is a trainer within a training centre or a specialist trainer within an employing organisation it is important to be clear that they are able to carry out their ascribed role proficiently. This requires two key things: subject knowledge and training ability. Both are to be determined locally the PERCENTAGE project partners have decided. A common principle is that in both cases the criteria for deciding someone is capable of delivering the training should be transparent. Any organisation wishing to deliver the programme should satisfy itself on both these points and be able to produce details of the basis upon which these decisions have been made.

ACCESS AND ENTRY

There is no formal requirement for learners to have undertaken any particular other training programme in the past in order to be able to undertake the PERCENTAGE learning programme. In this way there is no formal entry requirement in terms of vocational or professional qualifications already held or general level of education to date.

Depending upon the situation in which a learner is entering the programme they may apply to a training centre to take part, or they might enter via an internal organisational process if the programme is being offered as part of an in-house training or induction programme. In the second case the suitability of an individual to take part in the programme will have been determined as part of a larger job application process.

In some cases it may be that the possession of language skills for example are necessary for a learner to sensibly take part in the programme. If this is the case training centres or employers might wish to impose restriction upon entry. They are entitled to do so if decided to be appropriate, but project partners are clear that such language skills provision is not part of the PERCENTAGE programme itself. There may be scope here to make links with pre-vocational training providers and to work together to deliver joined-up programmes of training.

ACCREDITATION OF EXISTING LEARNING

In many cases, learners who start the PERCENTAGE programme will already have some experience of working with older people. It follows that they may already possess some of the competences that the programme requires them to demonstrate.

It is good practice that in such circumstances learners are supported and encouraged to identify ways in which their existing competences can be accurately measured and recognised. This rewards existing competence and prevents unnecessary duplication of work and effort. In order to achieve this, particular help and guidance will be given as to how existing skills and knowledge can be used as a way of claiming competence and the exact evidence requirements that will apply. In particular, learners wishing to claim some form of accreditation of prior experience or learning should be aware of the need to meet all the principles and practices of evidence collection and presentation – there may for example be particular issues about currency and these will have to be taken into account.

THE UNIT STRUCTURE

The PERCENTAGE learning programme is structured as a set of learning outcomes supported by competence requirements (skills, knowledge and attitudes).

Learning Unit 1: User/Family Engagement
Learning Unit 2: Proactive Care Planning
Learning Unit 3: Care Plan Production
Learning Unit 4: Care Plan Recording
Learning Unit 5: Care Plan Implementation
Learning Unit 6: Sensitive Communication
Learning Unit 7: Care Plan Evaluation
Learning Unit 8: Representing user's needs and interests
Learning Unit 9: Maximising Independence through Care Planning
Learning Unit 10: Care Planning & Personal Beliefs
Learning Unit 11: Accessing Health Services
Learning Unit 12: Medication Management
Learning Unit 13: Risk Awareness & Safeguarding in the Care of Older People

The programme is modular; that is to say it is made up of a number of “learning units”. These units reflect the key skills areas that project partners have identified as necessary for high quality care planning and care delivery. Learners are required to demonstrate their competence in a minimum number and mix of these units. Local and different requirements will vary regarding the number and mix of units that an individual learner will be required to successfully complete. It is vital that this is always transparent so that it is clear exactly which parts of the programme a learner has followed.

This flexibility within the programme is deliberate and has been used so that it can be applied differently in different parts of Europe. This manifests itself in two key ways – it enables the course content to vary so that for example a trainer in the United Kingdom will evidence knowledge and understanding of national legislation relevant to the course, an Italian learner will be required to demonstrate the same level of knowledge and understanding, but in this case with regard to Italian law. This may seem obvious but it is important to bear in mind these flexibilities if one is planning to gain transnational recognition of qualifications. Each Learning Unit is made up of a number of key parts:

Key learning outcome

This is a statement contained within the body of each learning unit that sets out the key required result of the learner successfully undertaking the unit in question. In other words it explains what it is that the learner will – and is required to – have achieved, and be able to evidence. Each statement begins “By the end of this unit the learner will be able to

Skills outcomes

These grow directly out of the learning outcome and focus upon the skills elements within the broader overall learning outcome for the unit. They are presented as a list of “skills within skills”, detailing the things that the learner will be able to demonstrate competence in so as to successfully complete the unit. The skills outcomes should form a full list of the important aspects of carrying out a given set of tasks to the required standard.

Underpinning knowledge and understanding requirements

As well as doing things, it is important that the learner understands why things are done – or need to be done - in certain ways in given circumstances. In other words their competence should be “knowing”, based upon knowledge and understanding of what they do and why they do it. The things which learners are required to know and display an understanding of are listed under this heading; in many cases it is this knowledge and understanding that serves as a foundation for competent working practice.

Competence range

As well as being able to demonstrate their ability to do certain things to an agreed standard, the learner needs to be able to show they can do them across a range of circumstances before they can be considered competent. These different circumstances are listed within this section of each unit. For example many units require learners to show that they can work with both new and existing service users and their families. All three categories will appear within the competence range in such cases.

Means of assessment

This section of each unit is designed to provide guidance to both trainers and learners as to how they can in reality provide evidence of their competence against the listed skills outcomes and knowledge requirements. The means listed are similar for many units and use a relatively small menu of items. As well as being advisory, the lists also indicate what is acceptable and preferred as a type of evidence and are selected to be appropriate to the unit contents. For example some skills are very easily observed in practice, other things are far more subtle and a genuine understanding and competence is better demonstrated by questioning a candidate who is encouraged to demonstrate their understanding in discussion. The lists do not preclude other means of assessment being used as long as it can be shown that they are genuine means of demonstrating skills, knowledge or values.

Evidence requirements

This section of each unit is used to highlight particular things that should be borne in mind by the trainer and trainee when considering the evidence of competence that is to be presented. For example when considering anything that is related to close team working, it is vital that the learner can show that what they are presenting is

evidence of their own competence and not someone else's, it is essential that their own individual part in a shared process is clear and can be evidenced. Another example regards the need to ensure confidentiality of personal details and this is important to bear in mind when deciding what evidence is to be presented and how.

COMPETENCE BASED LEARNING

The principle of competence-based learning means that learners are required to demonstrate they have reached a standard of competence as judged by others. In other words, it is not sufficient that a learner takes part in the learning programme; they must be able to demonstrate that they have developed the required skills and knowledge and are able to put these into practice. Learners will do this by bringing forward direct evidence of their competence. By competence we mean a combination of skills (things that learners do), knowledge (what they know and understand in the "doing") and values/attitudes, (the difficult to measure values and approaches that learners adopt in the "doing" of things).

COURSE LEVELS

The launch version of the PERCENTAGE learning programme is presented as a single-level programme. The key aspect of its design is that it is made up of a series of key learning outcomes expressed in terms of both skills outcomes and knowledge requirements. In their totality, these learning outcomes equate to what has been judged necessary for working competently with care plans.

No attempt has been made to break these units into a more complex structure where some are judged to apply at one level and others at a second or more advanced one. In time this may change as the programme is developed and reviewed at the local level but as of now units are offered as a set of complementary pieces of learning towards all of which any one learner is encouraged to work.

During the course testing process, it emerged that Units 9 11 12 13 are potentially more challenging in their requirements than other units, nevertheless, no formal two-tier structure has been adopted.

UNIT ORDER AND GROUPINGS

There is no fixed order in which it is intended or required that any individual learner follows the learning programme. Again, this partly reflects the fact that learners will come to the programme with different experiences and existing expertise and the course should be flexible enough to be entered into by a number of different routes.

In practice, learners will find that the order in which they are able to start work on developing their own learning and undertaking the process of amassing evidence of competence will be determined by their own working circumstances. Again, the course has been designed to be flexible in this regard, exactly so that it is accessible to as many people as possible.

It is also important to remember that accreditation of prior experience and learning for example can be sought for any unit in any order and that in reality a learner will be addressing several units at any one time and be using the same pieces of evidence against more than one unit.

LEARNING UNIT DURATION/TIME CREDITS

As has already been said, the programme has been designed so that it is defined by a series of learning outcomes. There has been no “weighting” used in designing any one unit against any other – i.e. no unit is awarded a greater or lesser importance or value than any other. This has been done deliberately so that the learning outcomes themselves are the driving force of the learning process.

Similarly there is no “time value” assigned to different units, i.e. there is no set suggestion as to how long it might take any one individual to successfully complete a unit. This has been done deliberately for a number of reasons

1. To allow for individual learning styles and speeds
2. To maintain as flexible a learning programme as possible
3. To recognise the overlap that exists between units
4. To take account of the fact that learners will come to the programme with different levels of existing experience and competence

Note: The requirements regarding producing evidence of competence over a period of time must always be respected and this will inevitably have an effect on the overall period of time over which unit/s can be successfully completed.

This is not to say that in reality some units might not be expected to require more time to be completed than others. This will reflect not only the content of different units but also the amount of opportunities the learner has to develop and demonstrate competence in any one unit area across the required competence range. This is likely to vary from learner to learner depending upon their own working circumstances and their experiences to date.

ASSESSMENT & SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Project partners have highlighted appropriate assessment means for each learning unit. These include:

- Observations/shadowing
- Paper or electronic evidence – care plans themselves and other authenticated “work products”
- Question sheets/tests
- Witness testimonies /statements
- Case studies
- Reflective accounts
- Presentations
- “Professional discussions”/questioning sessions

Producing Evidence

Whatever form of evidence is used it will need to be clearly cross-referenced to the content within one or more of the learning units with regard to which it is being claimed as competence. In addition to ensuring that it respects all the underpinning principle requirements listed above, all evidence should be clearly indexed and signed and dated.

Records of observations

These constitute direct evidence of competence and might take the form of videos, tape recordings or DVDs where the carrying out of tasks to a required standard can literally be observed. Records of observations can also be at a more indirect level and take the form of signed and dated statements by an approved assessor or similar and which set out what they have observed a learner do. An observation report of a training session prepared by a senior trainer is a common example of this approach.

Case studies

A useful way to compile and structure evidence is for learners to prepare a narrative which details a particular aspect of work in which they have been involved. This can be used as a way both of demonstrating knowledge and understanding through narrative and as a starting point for assembling a range of pieces of direct and supporting evidence. Case studies might relate for example to a training programme delivered to a particular group of learners or to a piece of work carried out over a period of time on a given topic, for example a special project looking at updating training needs identification processes.

Here, and in the case of all other forms of evidence, it is vital that due account is taken of the need to make sure that anything that is being written, or of which copies are submitted, take account of the need to respect the privacy, and help ensure the safety, of any individuals referred to or involved. Exact rules regarding the safeguarding of information and confidentiality will vary from one place to another but must always be respected.

Records of questioning sessions

In many instances the underpinning knowledge and understanding that a learner works with is not necessarily self-evident from a record of observation for example. In such cases it is often useful to support this evidence with additional questioning where a learner is invited to reflect upon what they have done and offer explanation for what has been done, why it was done in a particular way and what might have been done differently in different circumstances. This sort of work can easily be expanded to include “what-if” scenarios; these are often a useful way of establishing a learner’s broader grasp of underpinning theory. Records of questioning undertaken by an assessor or similar, test sheets, questionnaires and written “examination” papers are all ways of producing this type of evidence in reality.

Witness testimonies

Witness testimonies are written statements submitted by someone who knows a learner and is prepared to testify to their competence in a particular area or series of areas. They are not a preferred source of evidence but can be useful in providing additional support to direct evidence. Questions will sometimes arise as to the appropriateness and qualification of the witnesses themselves in making judgements

about competence. Any witness testimony will therefore have to make clear who the witness is and the capacity within which they write.

Simulation/role play

This is also not a preferred source of evidence and should only be used where “natural” evidence is not available or cannot be collected for operational reasons. Role Plays can often be a very effective learning tool (and indeed trainers will often use them themselves as a training method) but they lack the real-life authenticity that is being sought with the learning programme. Their use is however acceptable in ensuring that the whole of a competence range is adequately covered or where an observation of a “real-life” situation would be inappropriate perhaps for reasons of confidentiality.

Supporting evidence

This is work (usually on paper) produced by a learner and which is itself used as evidence or in support of evidence of competence. For example a learner might claim competence in planning a training session and submit a copy of a “lesson plan” as evidence of the fact that they produced such a plan and that it contained required elements. Similarly, if a learner is claiming competence in producing and revising individual action plans they might submit a representative cross-sample of plans they have worked on, clearly authenticated and dated and showing clearly the individual role they have played in producing them. One piece of supporting evidence can be used to demonstrate competence against more than one learning unit and indeed learners should be encouraged to produce exactly this sort of “rich” evidence.

RELEVANCE, CURRENCY, AUTHENTICITY AND SUFFICIENCY OF EVIDENCE

Relevancy

The first principle that is to be respected in regard of the evidence being produced by a learner is to ensure that it “fits” the skills outcomes and knowledge requirements of any particular unit. This is an obvious point but one that is easily overlooked: Any evidence being produced in whatever form must be capable of clearly showing that it is indeed evidence of what it claims to be and that it is therefore relevant to the unit against which it is being used. For example to say (and evidence) that a learner has attended a particular training course is evidence only that they attended the course not that they are competent in its subject matter.

Currency

The learning programme is designed to help learners develop competency and it is important to be clear that this competency is up to date and current. In other words it is vital that it is clear that the competency being claimed is present and not historical only. This has a practical effect on what can be considered as valid evidence of competence. As a general rule it is accepted that in order to be used as evidence of competence any evidence source must be less than two years old and refer to competency displayed within the last 24 months.

Authenticity

It is absolutely vital that the learner is able to demonstrate that the evidence they produce in support of their claim to competence is genuine and authentic. As well as

being required to show within “common-sense” limits that it is real and not manufactured, it is also necessary to be able to show that any piece of evidence is indeed the work of the learner themselves. Where a piece of work has been produced by more than one person it is necessary to show where the input of the learner themselves began and ended.

Volume

A robust learning programme will be designed so that what a learner presents as evidence of their competence is sufficient in volume to ensure that the required standard has been achieved with a degree of consistency. For this reason many units will require a learner to demonstrate their competence on a minimum number of occasions and/or over a minimum period of time. This approach is designed to help ensure that competence is genuine as opposed to occasional or sporadic.

ACCREDITATION

The deliberate flexibility of the PERCENTAGE programme has already been mentioned. A further reason for following this approach is so that training bodies can meet the requirements of different external vocational education and training bodies. This will be vital if local operators are to gain external accreditation of the programme in different parts of Europe.

Various plans are in place within different project partner organisations for seeking accreditation of all or part of the learning programme. Details of progress with regard to accreditation will appear in due course on the project website.

