

# Outcomes training and developing the skills of our workforce

Find out about the strategic programme 'collaborative communications skills' which supports skills development and system change across the sector.

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Find out about the strategic programme 'collaborative communications skills' which supports skills development and system change across the sector.

## **Collaborative Communication Skills Programme**

We have training available for organisations who want to invest in developing the skills and capabilities of their workforce to deliver outcomes focused strengths-based practice.

The training also considers the wider organisational implications and practicalities of embedding this way of working as a whole system approach is required.

The training includes the:

- theories of human behaviour that inform effective responses
- principles that underpin our professional responses
- skills and strategies that practitioners can use to engage with people at times of challenge and stress
- how organisational systems can support effective practice.

The training has four phases:

- planning and engagement with senior management
- core team training with follow-up sessions
- mentor training with follow-up sessions (practice champions)
- follow-up session with senior management and mentors.

Further detail about the programme can be found here:

[More information about the Collaborative Communication Skills Programme](#)

[Contact us](#) if you would like to discuss the Collaborative Communication Skills Programme, and know more about how its delivered and how much this would cost.

## **How is the Collaborative Communication Skills Programme supporting the embedding of outcomes focused practice?**

We commissioned an independent evaluation of the Collaborative Communication Skills programme and how this has supported the embedding of outcomes practice within local authorities across Wales.

The evaluation involved focus groups and interviews with practitioners, managers and senior leaders across five local authorities in both adults and children's services. The evaluation also reviews care and support plans.

The evaluation found the following:

### **Implementation**

Effective and sustainable implementation of an outcomes focused way of working needs a 'whole system' approach which involves:

- strong leadership support – strategic and operational and also throughout the organisation led by mentors and practice champions
- linking the approach to a vision and a set of values which is coherent, convincing and unifying

- aligning systems, processes and structures so that they support rather than get in the way of the approach
- ensuring a critical mass of staff have received the training and are engaged
- taking a sustained approach to developing and applying the skills in practice via supervision and team reflection
- acknowledging the role of time – change takes time to bear fruit and workers need time to apply the skills confidently.

## **Impact**

Significant distance has been travelled since the programme started and the impact on individuals, families and practitioners includes:

- building better relationships with individuals and families by being more open and transparent in communications
- developing personal outcomes with individuals by using effective communication skills
- a consideration of the individual or family's strengths and resources in each conversation to enable more balance and collaborative decision-making
- moving from a service-led model to one where the focus is on what the individual/family wants and needs, and their own solutions are incorporated
- jointly agreeing collaborative action plans with individuals and families
- increased job satisfaction for practitioners who feel they are making a positive impact.

The evaluation report concluded with some recommendations for further embedding the approach:

- commit to and invest in regular reflective practice, refresher and induction training
- build on and link to existing models, resources and knowledge within the organisation

- further develop strengths-based leadership and supervision skills
- align systems and processes including paperwork and resource panels
- train together or extend key messages from the training to partner agencies.

You can read the full report here:

### [Collaborative Communications Skills Programme evaluation report](#)

PDF 539KB

Listen to two practitioners talk about how they and their staff have embedded personal outcomes and sustained the new approach since doing the Collaborative Communication Skills training:

[View transcript](#)

00:00

So in Monmouthshire we now have 12 mentors and we will have another 5 after

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the next piece of work. What we did is we took the collaborative

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communication training and we sort of broke it up into bite-sized pieces the

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bite-sized pieces that we felt people needed the opportunity to revisit and

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then to practice and it's practice, practice, practice.

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So, we work in pairs - the person that I work with is a Direct Care Lead. OTs and

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physios work together with social workers, you know

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you're not all social workers anyway and we each, each pair tries to

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deliver a mentor session three times a year. The sessions are about two hours

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long, we normally have somewhere between 8 and 15 people coming to a mentor

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session. They're bite-sized pieces of the training as I say and these are the

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overarching sort of headings that we advertise. Who benefits from coming to

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these sessions? Every member of staff benefits for different reasons,

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we often talk in terms

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of our workforce loosely falling into thirds, a third spent a day with Rhoda and

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thought "oh my god this is fantastic I want to, you know, get on with it". Then

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there's a third who think "oh this is the emperor's new clothes you know we're

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going to be, we've done this before it'll soon go away", and then the third in

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the middle who've needed a lot more support. So the mentor sessions people

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can self-select but equally as supervisors and team managers for people

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who are struggling and finding it a bit more difficult you can direct them to

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those sessions so it's somewhere that you can pass people on to to continue to

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have more help. Okay like we said we do lots of training with people,

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we've done lots of collaborative communication but still there are times

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when you think "what is it about this that people

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are struggling with? Why is it that they don't get some of this, or do they get it

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but they just find it quite difficult to write it down and to record it?". So despite

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all the efforts that we've put in, we have an IT system now



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whereby people have to put personal outcomes down at the end of every

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assessment or through the assessment process and they are scored, so from the

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person themselves, so we took some of the outcomes, some, we took about 700 of the

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outcomes and I read through them and from a thirds perspective

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a third of them you sort of go "whoa, that's amazing",

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a third you go "you're getting there but it just needs something else", a third were

03:04

"have you been listening, do you understand, do you know what we are doing

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and why?". And then that's a third a third and a third makes one, but there was

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still also a little percentage that were complete howlers where you think "oh my

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god are you really qualified?". 'To be hoisted by the nurses' - that was a

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personal outcome on somebody's file and you think, really? So we did

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this activity this exercise which went down

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really well so basically we put loads of outcomes on people's on

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tables and people in teams looked at the outcomes and they had to score them they

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had to rate them - is that a red outcome

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(red being not a great outcome), is that an amber outcome (as in, you're nearly there

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or it could be good) and is that a green outcome (which is great). Now the impact

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that this had on our staff has been really, really, really quite inspiring

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because they've all looked at some of those outcomes and gone "oh my goodness I

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really do write things like that" and they've really thought about how they

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have so easily at times slip from being person-centered and

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person-focused back into that 'service' sort of language or back into professional

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language, you can read some of the outcomes and you know whether you're

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looking at the outcome of a social worker, a physio, an OT by the language

04:40

that's written.

## Contact us

If you have a question or if you can't find what you are looking for [get in touch with us](#).