

Preventing Challenging Behaviour within Supported Services for Adults with Complex Needs

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Challenging behaviour is a significant problem in supported accommodation for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. While a result of many factors, it is recognised that such behaviour may be caused, provoked and exacerbated by the social care environment. Drawing on understanding of the environmental factors associated with challenging behaviour, this project seeks to intervene directly in the organisation and provision of social care with a view to altering the factors contributing to challenging behaviour, thus preventing its future occurrence.

Areas of social care examined were: 'Activities and Skill Development', 'Health', 'Service Staff', 'Management', 'Relationships with Family and Others', 'Communication and Social Interaction', 'Wider Organisation' and the 'Physical Environment'. The research investigates whether intervention in these areas:

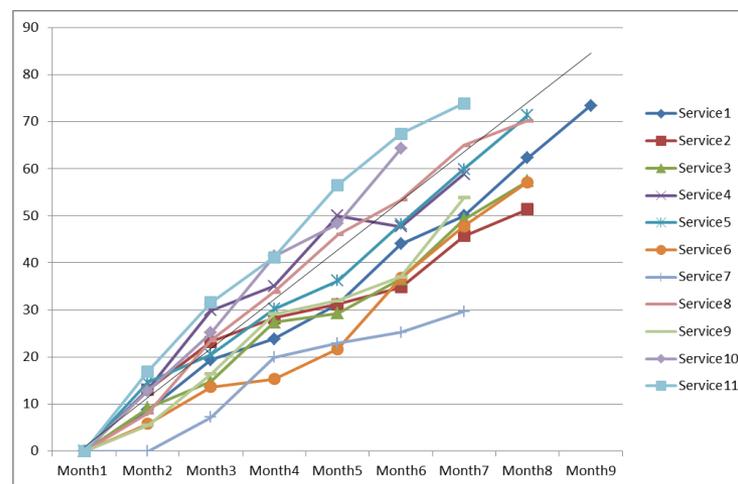
- i. Prevents and reduces the severity of challenging behaviour?
- ii. Enhances quality of life?
- iii. Enhances staff working life through reduction in injury, fear and stress?
- iv. Enhances quality of life for co-tenants of those who have previously displayed challenging behaviour?
- v. Produces broader benefits for the health and social care economy such as reduced need for social care and/or health provision?

Method

- 24 settings within a large social care provider were selected.
- Baseline information gathered about service users and staff in each setting.
- Using a cluster randomised controlled trial design, services were randomly selected to work with as the experimental group.
- 11 settings in experimental group, 13 in control group; 1-8 people supported in each setting; 37 people in experimental group, 42 in control group (roughly half of whom display behaviour described as challenging).
- Approximately 140 staff in each group.
- Using the structured model of social care described above to work with staff and service users, to agree changes that we will try to make.
- Agreeing goals or standards for the setting to achieve, Behaviour Analysts provide ongoing support and training with staff throughout intervention.
- Agreeing monitoring and feedback arrangements.
- Data gathered throughout intervention on services' 'total percentage intervention implementation scores'. (cf. LaVigna et al., 1994)
- Follow up data collection - commencing January to March 2014.

Results

Line graph showing 'total percentage intervention implementation scores' across services



Preliminary data from the 11 experimental services (N=37 service users), collected 1 to 9 months after the beginning of intervention indicates substantial and cumulative improvement across all services, albeit with variation in the extent of improvement.

Discussion

This model of intervention is associated with significant increases in quality of social care. Data to be gathered at the conclusion of intervention will establish whether such improvements are also accompanied by achievement of reductions in challenging behaviour and other dependent variables.

References

LaVigna, G. W., Willis, T., Shaull, J., Abedi, M., & Sweitzer, M. (1994). *The Periodic Service Review: A Total Quality Assurance System for Human Services and Education*. Baltimore: Paul H Brookes.