

Unit 28: Caring for Older People

Unit code:	A/600/8983
QCF Level 3:	BTEC Nationals
Credit value:	5
Guided learning hours:	30

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to enable learners to develop an understanding of the ageing process and how the health and social care sectors work in partnership to promote and maintain the independence and wellbeing of older people.

● Unit introduction

Demographic trends indicate an increase in the number of older people. In order to address their health and social care needs, an integrated approach to the assessment of needs and delivery of services has been adopted by the sectors. Policies relating to the support and care of older people reflect the changing attitudes of health and care professionals who see older people at the heart of planning and service delivery. The philosophy of the health and social care sectors is that of 'healthy ageing', with a focus on health promotion to reduce the need for admissions to hospital or residential social care.

Learners will study ageing as a process, rather than a fixed age. Learners' own values and attitudes towards older people will be considered, challenging stereotypical thinking. They will research issues relating to ageing, and develop an understanding of the factors which may impact on the independence, health and wellbeing of older people. They will also consider the quality of the 'end of life' stages, and potential choices associated with them. Learners will research legislation, working frameworks and policies which underpin the work of the health and social care sectors. The role of health and social care workers, and how they must work together to meet the holistic needs of older people will also be explored.

The unit has close links with *Unit 4: Development Through the Life Stages*, *Unit 11: Safeguarding Adults and Promoting Independence*, *Unit 9: Values and Planning in Social Care* and *Unit 40: Dementia Care*. The unit will be particularly useful for learners who wish to pursue a career in an organisation which provides health or social care for older people.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the ageing process
- 2 Understand the role of health and care workers in supporting the wellbeing of older people.

Unit content

1 Understand the ageing process

Definition of older age: stages, eg Erikson's stages, frail older age, end of life stage; individual perspective, attitudes, ageism; government perspective; delivery of free services (dental, prescriptions, eye tests)

Theories of ageing: sociological/psychological, eg disengagement theory, activity theory, social creation of dependency; biological, eg disposable soma theory, genetically programmed theory; gender differences

Changes in demography: increase in average life expectancy; differences in life expectancy between males and females; changing family patterns; retirement

Factors influencing health and wellbeing: negative; positive; socio-economic, living conditions, lifestyle; social isolation, bereavement, family, friends; financial; improvements in healthcare; reduction in harmful working practices

Changes in later life: physical (mobility, balance) vision; hearing; reduced metabolism; cognitive changes

Diseases: age-related, eg Alzheimer's disease, osteoporosis, macular degeneration, emphysema

2 Understand the role of health and care workers in supporting the wellbeing of older people

Frameworks for practice: National Service Framework for Older People; Dignity in Care Initiative; Mental Health Services for Older People; Our health, our care, our say; codes of conduct; organisational policy and procedures

Legislation and regulations: relevant sections from, eg Human Rights Act, Data Protection Act, Nursing and Residential Care Homes Regulations, Care Standards Act, Age Discrimination Act, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act

Services to support needs: eg podiatry, speech therapy, physiotherapy, palliative care, personal care, dietary, counselling, creative and therapeutic activity, exercise, social activities, occupational health; palliative care; equipment and resources to aid self-care

Promoting choice and independence: empowerment; involvement in care planning; holistic approach; safeguarding; methods of communication; advocates; equality of opportunity; health promotion, balancing rights and freedoms

Principles of care: diversity; respect, dignity, confidentiality; anti-discriminatory practice

Possible outcomes: improve or maintain wellbeing, eg physical skills, mobility, balance, communication, social interaction, emotional stability, independent living

Quality and choice at the end of life: medicalisation of death, informed choice, emotional support, living wills, legality and ethics of assisted suicide and euthanasia

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 explain theories of ageing [IE3; SM3]	M1 compare two theories of ageing	
P2 explain factors influencing ageing [IE3; IE4; CT1; SM3]		
P3 explain ways in which health and social care workers support the independence and wellbeing of older people. [IE6; SM3]	M2 assess ways in which health and social care workers support the independence and wellbeing of older people.	D1 evaluate ways in which the sectors work together to support the independence and wellbeing of older people.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills which are embedded in the assessment of this unit. By achieving the criteria, learners will have demonstrated effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Ideally, learners studying this unit will undertake work experience with older people. Alternatively, experience could be gained through voluntary work, or learners' own family members. Issues relating to the ageing process may be introduced through class or small-group discussion, with learners sharing and discussing their own experiences. Learners should be encouraged to develop empathy and an understanding that ageing is a relative concept. The idea that to young children learners themselves are 'older people' or drawing attention to 'older' actors or singers, for example, could provoke thought and discussion.

Theories of ageing need to be introduced with opportunities for learners to discuss and reflect so they can relate theories to current practice in and philosophy of the care of older people. Learners could research demographic changes and potential explanations for increases in life expectancy. Individual or small-group research could be used to introduce learners to factors which influence the ageing process, including age-related diseases. Research may then be shared through presentations or by a 'snowballing' activity.

In terms of the role of health and social care workers learners must firstly understand the principles and values of care and be familiar with current guidelines and legislation which govern work with older people. Learners could be encouraged to talk to older people they know to develop their awareness of different needs. Stereotypical ideas should be challenged and discussion stimulated through case studies of older people from different genders, cultures and lifestyle preferences. These should be used to stimulate discussion about the role of the health or social care worker in assessing holistic needs of older people and how they work in partnership with other professionals, family and informal carers to promote independence and maintain the rights of older people. Role play could follow class discussion to consolidate learners' understanding of the strategies used.

Guest speakers from residential, day care and domiciliary services would broaden learners' knowledge of the more complex needs of older people and how these may need to be met by several services. Delivery of issues related to quality of the end of life will need sensitive handling. Ethics relating to assisted suicide and euthanasia would stimulate discussion and possibly strong views. Professionals, for example Macmillan nurses who support people in the last stage of life, could provide a positive view of their work to support older people and their families.

Learners' ability to plan for the needs of older people will be supported by their experiences from work placements. With permission, and ensuring confidentiality, learners should observe and reflect on the needs of people using services. Where suitable work placements are not available DVD/video and/or case studies could be used to extend knowledge and understanding. Learners who have studied *Unit 9: Values and Planning in Social Care* will be able to draw on their understanding of the planning cycle when considering the role of health and social care workers in assessing and identifying services to meet the needs of older people.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Unit introduction.
Learning outcome 1 Group and class discussions: on the definition of 'old age'. Tutor input: an introduction to the ageing process, case studies. Tutor input: introduction to theories of ageing. Independent research and reading. Work/home study discussing issues with professionals/observations.
Assignment 1: Theories of the ageing process (P1, M1) Buzz group: factors which influence health and wellbeing of older people. Group research: on age-related diseases and conditions – group presentations to class.
Assignment 2: Influences on the aging process (P2) Learning outcome 2 Tutor input: introduction to key legislation, frameworks and policies. Discussion/guest speaker: explore values and principles of care. Learner research: services for older people and interagency working. Tutor input: introduction to the role of a health or social care worker. Discussion: explore quality and choice at end of life. Visiting speakers.
Assignment 3: Supporting the needs of older people (P3, M2, D1) Unit review and assessment.

Assessment

Evidence for this unit may be produced through separate assignments and in response to case studies. An integrated assignment relating to learners' work experience, and allows learners to generate evidence for both learning outcomes, may be used. Where learners use observations and evidence from a real environment, close monitoring must take place to ensure that ethics and confidentiality are observed. If separate assignments are used, learning outcome 1 may be met through group investigation and presentation. However, authenticated evidence of individual contributions must be available. Influences should include both positive and negative effects on an individual's health and wellbeing.

The role of a health or social care worker must include learner's understanding of the principles of care and how workers must see the older person at the centre of planning. They should consider ways that workers involve individuals to ensure that choice, preferences and lifestyle are taken into account. Evidence should demonstrate that learners understand the relationship between good practice and consideration of holistic outcomes for individuals. Learners should also reflect on the needs of people and the end of life, understanding that positive outcomes and wellbeing are not always about improving health but providing comfort, quality of life and emotional support.

At pass grade, learners may need direction to access sources of information. Work should be coherent and ideas should follow logically. Learners will need to explain the main aspects of sociological/psychological and biological theories of ageing (P1). Learners will consider the particular needs of older people with work relevant examples of influences on needs. The explanation of influences should include physical, emotional, social and intellectual wellbeing (P2). Learners will explain the ways in which health and social care workers support the independence and wellbeing of older people, taking into consideration relevant frameworks, legislation and principles of care (P3).

At merit grade, learners will be able to select and use appropriate information sources. Evidence should be well structured and include terminology appropriate for the sectors. They must compare a sociological/psychological and biological theory (M1) considering their relevance to current practice. To achieve M2, learners will demonstrate an understanding of complex needs of older people, including end of life care, demonstrating an understanding that these may not be met by a single carer or through one service. Learners must assess different strategies used by health and social care workers, demonstrating an appreciation of the principles of care and how they empower older people.

At distinction grade, learners will work with autonomy. Written work will be coherent and reflect a good understanding of appropriate and current terminology used in the sectors. Influences on ageing will be researched thoroughly. Learners will provide a realistic evaluation of the holistic effects on wellbeing, interpreting and using information effectively in relation to theories of ageing. To achieve D1, learners will draw on their observations from practice and their own research. They will use appropriate examples to evaluate ways in which professionals, from different services, work together to meet the complex needs of older people.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1	Theories of the ageing process	A case study of an older person with complex needs.	Essay.
P2	Influences on the ageing process		Essay.
P3, M2, D1	Supporting the needs of older people		Report.

Links to National Occupational Standards (NOS), other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Health and Social Care sector suite (see *Appendix A*) and has links with units from other qualifications in that suite. See *Appendix E* for NOS links and *Appendix G* for a mapping of the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework against particular units in this qualification.

Essential resources

- Library resources with key texts and other reference materials.
- Access to the internet.
- Case study materials.
- Copies of current government frameworks and guidelines for practice.
- DVD/videos.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

- Guest speakers.
- Access to work experience opportunities with older people/access for visits.
- Copies of policies and procedures from familiar health or social care environments.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Barett S (editor) – *Communication Relationships and Care* (Routledge, 2004) ISBN 9781412922852

British Medical Association – *The Ethics of Caring for Older People, 2nd edition* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)

Core Themes in Health and Social Care (series) (Heinemann, 2006) ISBN 9780435464247

Knowledge Sets for Safe Practice: Safeguarding Vulnerable People (Heinemann, 2007) ISBN 9780435402327

Michie V, Baker L, Boys D and McLeavy J – *BTEC National Health and Social Care Book 2* (Nelson Thornes, 2008) ISBN 9780748781720

Moonie, N – *AS Health and Social Care (Double Award)* (Heinemann, 2005) ISBN 9780435453701

Stretch B and Whitehouse M – *BTEC National Health and Social Care Book 1* (Heinemann, 2007) ISBN 9780435499150

Stretch B and Whitehouse M – *BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Health and Social Care Student Book 1* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 9781846907663

Stretch B and Whitehouse M – *BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Health and Social Care Student Book 2* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 9781846907470

Woolf J and Woolf M – *Caring for an Older Person with failing Memory* (Gorselands, 2003) ISBN 095441280X

Publications

A National Framework for Older Age (Department of Health, 2001)

A New Ambition for Old Age (Department of Health, 2006)

Better Health in Old Age (Department of Health, 2004)

Our health, our care, our say (Department of Health, 2006)

Journals and magazines

Community Care

Care and Health

Caring Times

The Journal of Dementia Care

Nursing Times

Websites

www.ageconcern.org.uk

www.alzheimers.org.uk

www.carersuk.org

www.community-care.co.uk

www.dh.gov.uk

www.dh.org.uk

www.dlf.org.uk

www.elderabuse.org.uk

www.endoflifecare.org.uk

www.healthypace.com

www.helptheaged.org.uk

www.integratedcarenetwork.gov.org

www.macmillan.org.uk

www.mariecurie.org.uk

www.ncpc.org.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.skillsforcare.org.uk

www.skillsforhealth.org.uk

www.stroke.org.uk

Age Concern

Alzheimer's Society

Carers Voice

Community Care

Dignity in Care campaign

Department of Health

Disabled Living Foundation

Action on Elder Abuse

End of Life Care

Health issues

Help the Aged (Rights at Risk publication)

Care Networks

Macmillan Cancer Support

Marie Curie

The National Council for Palliative Care

National Health Service

Sector Skills Council for Care and Development

Sector Skills Council for the UK Health Sector

The Stroke Association

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	[IE3] exploring issues relating to definition of and influences on ageing; exploring theories on ageing [IE4] analysing information from different sources and judging relevance to the ageing process [IE6] supporting conclusions on the most effective ways to support older people
Creative thinkers	[CT 1] asking questions in preparation to explore the influences on ageing
Self-managers	[SM3] organising time, resources and prioritising actions when planning assessment.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	accessing websites to research information on diseases and conditions in later life
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	organising information clearly and logically
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	producing information in a format which meets the requirements of the assessment
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	contributing to group and class discussion generating and asking questions of guest speakers and professionals in work placements
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	reading course texts, journals and summarising information
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	producing assignments and reports for assessment purposes.