Unit 41: Assessing the Physical Health Needs of Individuals with Mental Ill Health

Level:	4
Unit type:	Optional (Group B2)
Credit value:	5
Guided learning hours:	35

Unit introduction

Individuals with mental ill health are less likely to look after their physical health needs. Often, mental ill health prevents them from recognising any other needs they might have, and this can mean that they are less likely to seek treatment or support. When individuals with mental ill health do seek treatment, they can find it difficult to participate in the assessment of their needs. They may be less likely to disclose and maintain good physical health because they are less likely to follow a prescribed treatment or care plan. They may also be less likely to be able to express their needs and preferences, or their personal beliefs. All of these factors make assessment, treatment and recovery more challenging for those involved.

This unit aims to provide you with an understanding of the ways assessments of the physical needs of individuals living with mental ill health are carried out. It will enable you to understand how to assess such needs, and record and communicate the information in an appropriate way. Following the assessment, you will then plan actions and identify the resources that will meet the needs of individuals.

This unit will enable you to understand the context in which assessments are carried out and give you an insight into the wider picture of the link between mental ill health and physical ill health.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, learners need to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand how to assess physical health needs of individuals with mental ill health	1.1	Analyse how physical and mental health needs may be linked and may impact on one another
		1.2	Explain the meaning of needs-led assessment and person-centred planning
		1.3	Explain legislation, policies and procedures that apply to assessment processes
2	Be able to carry out assessments of physical health needs of individuals with mental ill health	2.1	Obtain valid consent
		2.2	Carry out an assessment of an individual's physical health needs in line with agreed ways of working
		2.3	Communicate accurate information in ways sensitive to the beliefs and preferences of the individual
		2.4	Explain why it is important to consider all information gathered during the assessment process as a whole
		2.5	Evaluate which outcomes of assessment require further support, investigation or referral
3	Be able to record outcomes of assessments	3.1	Record assessments in line with agreed ways of working
		3.2	Explain why agreement on sharing of information may conflict with the wishes of the individual
		3.3	Discuss content of assessment records with the individual
4	Be able to plan actions needed following assessments of physical health	4.1	Detail actions that could be taken to meet the individual's needs, as identified by assessment
		4.2	Evaluate risks attached to planned courses of action
		4.3	Plan actions to be taken in line with agreed ways of working
5	Understand resources and services needed by individuals following assessments of physical health	5.1	Evaluate resources and/or services required by individuals as a result of assessment
		5.2	Analyse situations where an individual's needs should be met even when it is difficult to provide resources

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
6 Be able to make referrals	6.1 Obtain and record valid consent where referral is required
	6.2 Make referrals in line with agreed ways of working
	6.3 Explain reasons a referral may be refused

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand how to assess physical health needs of individuals with mental ill health

Mental ill health conditions, to include the following:

- Mood disorders.
- Personality disorders.
- Anxiety disorders.
- Psychotic disorders.
- Substance-related disorders.
- Eating disorders.
- Cognitive disorders.

Physical health needs of individuals with mental ill health

- Chronic/acute needs.
- Needs related to (higher prevalence than general population of) respiratory problems, cardiovascular disease, infectious diseases, obesity and high cholesterol.
- Needs related to lifestyle factors.
- Needs related to day-to-day routines, to include taking medication, self-caring skills, taking exercise, healthy eating.
- Impact of mental ill health on physical needs.
- Individual's ability to:
  - explain mental and/or physical health needs
  - access to monitoring/routine health checks
  - access to healthy living advice.
- Need to give equal consideration to physical and mental health needs.

Needs-led assessment

- Types of methods used, to include checklists, forms, diaries, records of incidents and accidents, observation notes, accounts of discussions.
- The Lester Tool.
- Reasons why needs-led assessment is used.

Person-centred planning

- Key values to include:
  - independence
  - choice, inclusion
  - equality
  - empowerment.

- Stages involved in person centred planning
    - reaching an initial understanding
    - agreeing goals
    - recording and communicating
    - making use of available resources
    - implementing change
    - reviewing, learning and amending.
- Factors about the individual being assessed, to include:
    - those who are important to them
    - their strengths and qualities
    - what is important to them now and in the future
    - what types of support they need to achieve their goals.
- User-led assessments.
- Barriers to person-centred planning, to include:
    - extent and severity of mental ill health
    - associated physical needs
    - complexity of needs
    - willingness/ability of individual to participate in process
    - disagreements between carers and professionals about the most appropriate course of action
    - sensitivity to cultural needs and personal beliefs
    - availability of resources/services/funding
    - skills deficit among front-line workers.

Legislation, policies and procedures to include the following

- Care Act 2014.
- Mental Health Act 1983.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and its code of practice.
- Factors about the individual being assessed, including:
    - those who are important to them
    - their strengths and qualities
    - what is important to them now and in the future
    - what types of support they need to achieve their goals.
- User-led assessments.
- Barriers to person-centred planning, to include:
    - extent and severity of mental ill health
    - associated physical needs
    - complexity of needs

What needs to be learned

- o willingness/ability of individual to participate in process
- o disagreements between carers and professionals about the most appropriate course of action
- o sensitivity to cultural needs and personal beliefs
- o availability of resources/services/funding
- o skills deficit among front-line workers.

Learning outcome 2: Be able to carry out assessments of physical health needs of individuals with mental ill health

Valid consent

- must be in line with agreed UK country definition.

Assessing physical health needs

- Involvement of dedicated staff with specific interests and skills in physical health.
- Involvement of other relevant staff.
- Ensuring a balanced picture, taking full and appropriate account of the individual's:
  - o mental health needs
  - o ability to undertake their own healthcare
  - o significant others to meet the individual's healthcare needs.
- Accounting for any risk to the individual, their carer(s), family, community or care practitioners.

Assessment process

- Following agreed ways of working, e.g. expected organisational processes and procedures.
- Obtaining consent.
- Obtaining agreement.
- Information gathering.
- Analysis of situation, e.g. past, current, potential future.
- Documentary

Communicating information

- Sensitivity to individual needs and preferences:
  - o respect, dignity and privacy
  - o language
  - o involvement of those close to individual.
- Identifying priorities.
- Ways to encourage individuals to engage with physical health needs.

Post-assessment priorities

- Mapping/recording changes/improvements.

What needs to be learned
• Contacting relevant staff.
• Following procedures for referral, e.g. which outcomes require support, investigation of referral.
• recording, e.g. agreed, discussed, outcomes, action.

Learning outcome 3: Be able to record outcomes of assessments

Recording assessments

- Ensuring consistency with policies and codes of practice.
- Following agreed ways of working, including policies and procedures where these exist.
- Recording information in suitable and accessible formats.

Sharing of information

- Ways this might conflict with the wishes of the individual.
- Impact of disclosure of other factors not related to assessment.
- Need to inform individual that information will be shared.
- Assessing impact on individual of need to share information.
- Responding to impact on individual of need to share information.

Content of assessment records

- Communicate records of assessments only to those authorised to see them in accordance with organisational, professional and legal requirements for confidentiality of personal information.
- Style of language used in assessment record and discussion of record with individual.
- Use of other forms of communication when discussing content of record with individual, to include Braille, sign language, use of interpreters, learning disability support workers if necessary.
- Sensitivity to cultural issues and personal beliefs of individual.

Learning outcome 4: Be able to plan actions needed following assessments of physical health

Actions that meet the individual's needs

- Plan actions to be taken in line with agreed ways of working.
- Ongoing medical assessment of needs/follow ups.
- Ways to encourage individual to participate in medical and/or other types of assessment.

- Ways to ensure individual follows medical/other advice/takes prescribed medication where provided.
- Appropriate support for family members/others involved in the care of the individual.

Risks

- For the individual.
- For family members/significant others/informal carers.
- For staff/practitioners.
- Level of risk, to include:
    - o the impact of interventions
    - o the settings where interventions are carried out
    - o the staff/practitioners involved
    - o the impact on the health and wellbeing of the individual.
- Consideration of evidence from past practice.

Learning outcome 5: Understand resources and services needed by individuals following assessments of physical health

Resources and/or services

- Identification of relevant services, resources and support staff that meet specific requirements, to include the individual's:
    - o mental health needs
    - o age, sex and physical condition
    - o personal beliefs and preferences
    - o communication needs
    - o need for emotional and psychological support.
- Meeting physical health needs, to include:
    - o medical conditions
    - o physical disabilities
    - o diet
    - o lifestyle.
- Advocacy.

Overcoming barriers

- Ensuring that priorities and needs of the individual are met, to include:
    - o further assessment
    - o referral
    - o intervention or support
    - o advice and guidance to enable the individual and/or significant others to undertake the appropriate healthcare.

What needs to be learned
• Ensuring a suitable range of services is available.
• Ensuring that the individual has a level of need that qualifies for services/support.
Learning outcome 6: Be able to make referrals

Recording consent

- In line with agreed UK policy.
- Providing written evidence.
- Involvement of relevant social care and other staff.

Carrying out a referral

- Following procedures and policies.
- Involvement of relevant social care and other staff.
- Refusal of referral due to:
  - o incomplete or inaccurate information in referral
  - o lack of capacity in service, e.g. unable to provide service at appropriate time, location
  - o individual's choice.
- Where referral needs to be made by another professional.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass the unit, the evidence that learners present for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Assessment decisions for learning outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 6 (competence) must be made based on evidence generated during the learner's normal work activity. Any knowledge evidence integral to these learning outcomes may be generated outside of the work environment, but the final assessment decision must be within the real work environment. Simulation cannot be used as an assessment method for learning outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 6.
Assessment of learning outcomes 1 and 5 (knowledge) may take place in or outside of a real work environment.

The unit is assessed by a portfolio of evidence. Further information on the requirements for portfolios is included in *Section 4 Assessment requirements.*

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic and integrated approach to assessing the skills units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour, minimises repetition and saves time. The focus should be on assessment activities generated through naturally occurring evidence in the workplace rather than on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show that learners meet all learning outcomes and assessment criteria over a period of time. It should be clear in the assessment records where each learning outcome and assessment criterion has been covered and achieved.

Suggested resources

This section lists resource materials that can be used to support the delivery of the qualification.

Textbooks

Graham M – A Practical Guide to the Mental Capacity Act 2005: Putting the Principles of the Act into Practice (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2015)
ISBN 9781849055208
Lloyd, M – A Practical Guide to Care Planning in Health and Social Care
(Open University Press, 2010) ISBN 9780335237326

Websites

www.legislation.gov.uk	UK government legislation
www.mentalhealth.org.uk	Mental Health Foundation – finding and addressing the sources of mental health problems
www.mind.org.uk	Mind – a mental health charity providing advice and support for anyone experiencing a mental health problem
www.nhs.co.uk	The National Health Service
www.sane.org.uk	Sane – a mental health charity working to improve the quality of life for anyone affected by mental illness
www.scie.org.uk	Social Care Institute of Excellence