

Unit 14: Policy in Health and Social Care

Delivery guidance

Approaching the unit

Individuals who work in the health and social care sector must follow rules and codes of practice when treating those in their care. This unit will identify how policy making has an impact on health and social care provision by investigating the role of central agencies in creating policies that affect the health and social care sector. This unit gives learners the opportunity to improve their research skills and understand how data is used by central agencies when they formulate policies, and the other factors that can have an impact on the ways that policy is used to bring about change in the sector.

Learners will develop a clear understanding of how policies are made, especially if they are encouraged to research a local health and social care organisation that implements regulations, such as hospitals and care settings. The final part of the unit looks at how policies affect individuals who are employed in the health and social care sector and those who use the services they provide.

Studying this unit will prepare learners for a wide variety of roles in health and social care and to move on to higher education and further study.

Delivering and assessing this unit is more interesting if applied to a practical learning environment, for example a visit to a care setting to interview care staff and clients, or to a local office or central agency where policies are made and implemented. A guest speaker, role play and the use of TV documentaries can bring the topic to life and can inspire learners.

Delivering the learning aims

Learning aim A covers themes that are closely related. This can be introduced with an initial tutor presentation to identify the different departments and agencies involved in the policy-making process before viewing a documentary to discuss current funding of care.



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Learning aim B covers topics that can be introduced by an initial tutor presentation to identify and discuss the factors that influence policy making. Case studies are a useful tool to extend knowledge and open discussion, which can be further extended by individual research tasks. Learners will enjoy designing and completing a survey of staff in a range of care settings. The survey can then be used to identify the different priorities in various types of care settings. Viewing documentaries discussing current funding of care and a trip to the local or central care agency where decisions are made are also very informative. If this is not feasible, watching a virtual debate on funding for the health and social care sector may be an alternative.

Learning aim C can be investigated by learners either completing research online, undertaking a visit to a care setting or through a tutor presentation. A combination of all three methods of delivery would ensure that all learners are aware of the contents of this crucial element for future employment. A quiz leading to a discussion is a final activity that can be used to consolidate learning.

Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Understand the role of government agencies in health and social care policy making	<p>A1 The background to the policy-making process</p> <p>A2 The policy-making process in the health and social care sector</p>	A report on how practice of a local health and social care setting is affected by government agency policy and other factors in meeting objectives and represents the needs of service users with a specific need.
B Examine the factors that may influence policy making in health and social care	<p>B1 Factors that influence policy making in health and social care</p> <p>B2 Priorities of organisations in the health and social care sector</p>	
C Explore the impact of policy on local health and social care organisations and individuals	<p>C1 Current regulations in health and social care</p> <p>C2 Ways that local health and social care organisations implement regulations and policies</p> <p>C3 Ways that policy affects individuals working in the health and social care sector through codes of practice</p> <p>C4 Ways that policy affects health and social care service users</p>	A report on ways that regulations and codes of practice affect workers and service users in different local health care or social care settings.

Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed. There is a maximum of two summative assignments for this unit. Tutors should refer to the assessment guidance in the specification for specific detail, particularly in relation to the requirements for Pass, Merit and Distinction grades.

It is suggested that **learning aims A and B** are assessed together through a report explaining how the practice of a local health and social care setting is affected by government agency policy, and how other factors meet objectives and represent the needs of service users with a specific need.

To support learners in their report writing, they should be encouraged to use headings, subheadings and annotation such as pictures and diagrams to support explanations.

Evidence of individual research and records of practical experiences could be included as well as tutor or learner observation records.

Written records of any verbal discussion of the interpretation of the policies and regulations can be included.

It is suggested that **learning aim C** is assessed through a report that identifies ways in which regulations and codes of practice affect workers and service users in different local health care or social care settings. This lends itself to designing and distributing surveys and questionnaires which can be collated and forms evidence for any conclusions and statements made by the learner in their report.

As most people in the centre will be a service user at some point, a lot of information and evidence can be collected within the teaching environment.

Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Introduction

Introduce this unit with an initial session giving an overview of the whole unit. A quiz or a small group task can identify current learner knowledge and areas for development.

Learning aim A: Understand the role of government agencies in health and social care policy making

- Learners must be aware of the policy-making process in the health and social care sector and as A1 and A2 are so closely related, both topics can be introduced by an initial tutor presentation to identify the different departments and agencies involved in the policy-making process.
- Learners may view documentaries to discuss current funding of care. A visit to an appropriate central decision-making agency would be illuminating for learners. However, if such trips are not accessible, watching a virtual performance on funding for health and social care is an informative, interesting alternative format which can be further developed through discussion and individual research.
- A visit to the classroom from a local centre manager or a virtual link to a professional working in the care sector can help to bring the workplace into the curriculum. Alternatively a documentary can be useful for discussion.

Learning aim B: Examine the factors that may influence policy making in health and social care

- Both B1 and B2 topics are related and can be introduced through an initial tutor presentation to identify and discuss the factors that influence policy making.
- Case studies are a useful tool to extend knowledge and open a discussion which can be further extended by individual research tasks. Learners will enjoy designing and completing a survey for staff in a range of care settings, which can help to identify different priorities that influence policy making.
- A visit from a member of staff from an appropriate local funding agency or a virtual link to a funding agency can be informative and interesting for learners, helping to bring the topic into perspective.

Learning aim C: Explore the impact of policy on local health and social care organisations and individuals

- For C1, this will have been introduced in previous sessions and therefore a recap of legislation, regulations, policies and procedures currently in the care sector could be enough.
- For C2, ways in which local health and social care organisations implement regulations and policies can be experienced in a visit to a setting. If this is not possible, a visit from a local care setting manager could be informative.
- C1 and C2 can also be researched by learners online, through a visit to a care setting, or via a tutor presentation. A combination of all three methods of delivery would ensure all learners are aware of the content of this crucial element for future employment. A quiz leading to a discussion as a final activity can be used to consolidate learning.
- C3 can be explained by a guest speaker, a visit to a setting or a virtual link to a professional working in a care setting. Case studies can be useful if visits and virtual links are not available.
- Ways in which policy affects individuals working in the health and social care sector through codes of practice can be explored through a survey or via a questionnaire completed during a visit to a care setting.
- C4 can be ascertained through surveys and the review of customer quality feedback forms from a setting.

Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

Unit 3: Enquiries into Current Research in Health and Social Care

Unit 6: Promoting Public Health

Unit 8: Sociological Perspectives

Unit 10: Supporting Individuals with Additional Needs

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Resources

Textbooks

Fatchet, A – *Social Policy for Nurses* (Polity, 2012) ISBN 9780745649191

Spicker, P – *Social Policy Theory and Practice* (Policy Press, 2014)
ISBN 9781447316107

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