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Participant



I went on the programme because a leaflet was shoved under my nose and I thought person-centred care, that's right up my street! Having said that, I had thought that patient-centred and person-centred were pretty much the same thing, I was later to be proved wrong on that one!

How did the programme differ from others that you have done?

I felt that it differed from a lot of other courses in many ways:

Firstly, a lot of the programme, and what I got out of the programme was from the interaction with the other professionals as opposed to previous courses, especially traditional leadership and management courses, where they deliver the theory and you sit down and you learn it and then you write an essay and it's very academic.

"I didn't anticipate the learning that I got from this course because a lot of it was participatory."

Looking at problems with the other people and getting their perspectives, coming from a different world than mine, helped me understand things a lot more and I think that was more powerful than being talked at and reading articles.

When I first started, I realised the participants were all very different, from different backgrounds and I thought that this was possibly a really good strength. But as we went through the programme, we felt like we had more similarities than differences and there was a good bond and a good connection with all the other people. There was that element of learning in the group that you wouldn't get from a normal course.



There was also the creative element to it. I am quite a creative person and so when we went in the door and there was a whole table laid out with all sticky bits and fiddly bits and pens and glue, sticks and scissors and magazines and things I said hurrah! Some people were a bit less so, but I got straight in and started making things. And that really speaks to me as well, it's something I'm trying to take into my world of work

as well. Overall, the creative and participatory elements of the course were definitely much appreciated from my perspective.

The fact that it was spread over such a time meant that we all went through various different things in our lives and in our jobs that we were able to reflect on. It helped us understand each other as persons and understand that our teams were composed of persons. When we met, we shared and were able to be our authentic selves.

You've now changed jobs

I'd been nursing in palliative care for 16 years and ended up getting myself into a small specialist, maybe into a bit of a cul-de-sac career wise. I was managing a small team of carers and the Person-centred Cultures Development Programme gave me lots of ideas of what might be possible, but I really struggled to put that in place in practice because of the way that the team worked and the difficulties in the sector finance wise. Sadly, I couldn't make it work. It was time to move on.

"I've now taken a massive leap to a job as a unit manager in a rehab unit where I am the manager of around 50 people! I have more scope and hopefully will be able to implement these ideas in terms of facilitating person-centred care; doing with not doing to!"

I wouldn't have gone for it if I hadn't done the programme and known that you didn't have to be perfect; that it's OK to be authentic, vulnerable, a quiet leader. And to do things *with* people, so I didn't need to know how to do it all myself. I seem to have landed in a place where they accept me being me.

In the interview I talked a lot about person-centred care and I talked about the programme and I talked about how I don't have the background in rehab, I've got the background in palliative care. But actually, palliative care is really just good person-centred care and whether the goals are about where you want to be in the last days of your life or whether the goals are about what you need to do before you can feel safe at home, it's still person-centred.

It's early days in this new role but it's good because I've had some meet and greets at different times of day. I've done night shifts with the night staff, done shifts with the healthcare assistants and the nurses and the therapy shift and been there with the doctors. I've been into the hospital to talk to the community transfer of care team and see what is going on from their perspective. I've had lots of shadow days and lots of opportunities to talk to people about what it's like to work here. What do you like? What would you change? How do you see it developing? I'm trying to use it as an information gathering exercise.

Naturally, there was concern that I would come in and change everything. The previous manager had been there for quite a long time and had her own style and ways of doing things. But, from the Person-centred Culture Development Programme, a lot of what I've learned is about curious questioning and that it's important to ask what's your perspective? Why are things like this? Have you ever tried anything else? Is there a different way that you would prefer to do it? I'm not coming into steamroller and change things!