

THE WORKPLACE LITERACY PROJECT



Writing objective progress notes – Trainer guide

Includes session plan and trainer prompts

Last revised 16 May 2017

Session objectives

At the end of the session support workers will be able to:

- Define objective writing
- Recognise the benefits of objective writing
- Identify when to write objectively
- Write objectively, appropriate to workplace documents

Resources required

- Whiteboard, markers and eraser
- Timer
- 'Writing objective progress notes – trainer guide' a copy for the trainer (this document)
- 'Writing objective progress notes – workbook' a copy for each learner
- Pens for learners
- Highlighters
- Name tags
- Registration form
- Evaluation forms

Duration

One hour

Learner group

Disability Support Workers

Context

To be held during team meeting or as a stand-alone training session

NOTE

Each session needs to have someone attend who can confirm that content that needs to be included in progress notes.

Writing objectively is the tip of the iceberg – it can evidence the approach to practice. The practice on the floor is the remainder of the iceberg. A workshop can look at the actual task of writing, however the content needs to be informed further by practice leaders. If workers make assumptions about behaviour in practice, then they will document it that way. We can't expect that document writing will change if the approach to analysis of behaviours doesn't change. This is an ongoing focus for many disability service providers. This workshop can address this in a limited way, but need to be backed up by the organisation's practice leaders.

If someone attends who can address this aspect of the content as it arises during the sessions, it might save some potential confusion and lead to an overall more successful outcome from the training.

Session Plan

Time	Focus	Aim	Activity	Grouping	Resources
5	Introduction	Learners understand purpose of session	Discussion	Whole group	Workbook p1
5	Purpose and audience influence the content needed	Learners understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why progress notes are used • Who reads progress notes • What information is needed 	Discussion and writing	Whole group	Whiteboard Workbook p2 Trainer prompts
5	Define objective writing	Learners understand the difference between objective and subjective writing	Discussion	Whole group	Workbook p3
10	Be aware of objective and subjective writing	Through exploration of disability specific examples, learners demonstrate their understanding that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective words express interpretations, assumptions and opinions • Objective writing records observations 	Practical activity and discussion	Pairs Whole group	Workbook p3 Trainer prompts Matching cards (prepared from trainer guide)
5	Benefits of objective writing	Learners recognise the benefits of writing objective progress notes	Discussion and writing	Whole group	Workbook p4



Time	Focus	Aim	Activity	Grouping	Resources
5	Getting started	Learners understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The steps to take • That objective progress notes can still reflect their interpretation, but it needs to be identified as such 	Discussion	Whole group	Workbook p5
7	Practise writing objective progress notes	Learners demonstrate that they can write objective progress notes	Writing and discussion	Pairs Whole group	Workbook p6
5	Guidelines for writing objectively	Learners understand that progress notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to be factual • Can report on things that are heard, but need to identify this • Need to be accurate and specific • Need to be logical • Need to be edited 	Discussion	Whole group	Whiteboard Workbook p7-8
10	Practise writing objective progress notes	Learners fine tune their writing	Writing	Individual	Workbook p9
5	Close	Learners know where they can seek further training	Discussion	Whole group	Whiteboard

Trainer prompts for page 2

The purpose of writing progress notes is:

- To record events and activity
- To communicate information with the team
- To provide evidence of events, which may be used in an investigation
- To demonstrate what the organisation is doing to assist the person to meet the goals in their individual plan
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The progress notes will be read and used by:

- The person being supported
- The person's family and/or carers (with appropriate permission)
- Case managers
- Team members
- Team leaders
- Key workers
- Senior practitioner
- Allied health clinicians
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The information we need to include in progress notes is:

- The activity the person undertook in relation to their plan
- Any unusual events or activity
- The person's level of participation
- The person's achievements and changes
- Appointments attended/referrals made
- Any group activity involvement
- Any information given to the person
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Trainer prompts for page 4

Benefits of writing objectively are:

- Enables different people to use different pieces of information from the notes
- Patterns and changes in behaviour, experiences, events, etc. can be identified
- Does not rely on one person's interpretation, judgement, etc.
- Information can be matched to personal support plans
- Helps identify triggers that can inform a behaviour support plan
- Active support is documented
- Can provide information for use in other workplace documents
- Assists to provide information in a logical order, e.g. chronological
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Trainer prompts for page 5

Show the learners the documents on the last page of the booklet. Explain that these can be used as a reference by taking them off the booklet, if they want to.

Explain the difference between the way we used the same information in the table about responding to and reporting behaviours of concern for two slightly different purposes.

In the game, we used the cards to show the difference between subjective and objective. We didn't distinguish between the appropriateness of the different interpretations.

In the poster, which is as it this information was originally laid out, there is an intention to move away from the subjective interpretations in the left column, and consider if the behaviour exhibited is actually the person's way of communicating one of the options on the right, or something else. It's beyond the scope of this session to discuss too much about this, however it is important to note. Practice will inform the way progress notes are written. If we want objective notes, then we need to promote objective analysis of behaviour in practice.

This is why it is really important to make sure someone with the appropriate skills about the content of the notes is available in this training session. Defer to them, as needed during this discussion ... but be careful of your timeframe. They might need to run a separate session about this as a follow up.

Trainer prompts for page 6

Ask the group, "What information was missing in the original notes?"

Ask each group to read out their notes.

After all have been read, discuss whether:

- There is other information that could be included
- There was anything that didn't need to be included

Activity – be aware of objective and subjective writing

Adapted from 'Positive behaviour support - Getting it right from the start: Facilitators reference manual V2'.

Print out a set of cards for each pair of learners. You will need to cut them out into cards before the workshop.

<p>The person follows staff or family members around the house, touch others inappropriately, attempts to pass objects at seemingly inappropriate times, teases others, interrupt others or act in a way that is found to be annoying.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attention seeking• Initiating relationships – they want friends• Seeking company – they are lonely• Seeking reassurance – they are scared• Seeking help or support – they lack skills or confidence• Personality issues
<p>The person rocks, twists or plays with their fingers and toes; slaps their face or their legs persistently; twirls around; pokes at their eyes; hums or signs inappropriately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-stimulating• Bored, overwhelmed or over stimulated and may need to calm• Unable to identify or initiate an alternative activity• Syndrome specific behaviours, possibly related to neurological problems• Health and medical needs
<p>The person picks at their skin, cuts themselves with sharp objects, places objects in their body cavities, pulls their hair out, eats or drinks to excess.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-injuring• Nervous• Anxious• Depressed• Psychiatric issues• Bored/Boredom

<p>The person does not do things as they are asked to do them, when they are asked, or does not finish things they start.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-compliant • Not interested • Not understanding • Not being asked the right way • Not having sufficient skills • Not having sufficient stamina (tired) • Recalling bad memories of a past experience
<p>The person talks or makes noises at inappropriate times, yells, interferes with the work or activities of others or break things.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruptive • Frightened • Scared • Stressed • Lacking understanding of the situation
<p>The person throws objects or hit out at others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive • Not knowing what is expected of them • Frustrated or even threatened • The requirements of the current situation exceed their skill or level of tolerance • Other attempts to communicate are not responded to