Think COULD

Raising awareness of the need for improved support for individuals with learning disabilities within the justice system

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Background

To celebrate 100 years of Learning Disability Nursing, the Burdett Trust for Nursing created and funded an opportunity for eight learning disability nurses from across Scotland to complete the Queens Nurse development programme.

With a focus on learning disability and the justice system, the group were required to undertake an evidence based project that could support people with a learning disability and practitioners working in the justice system.

Aim of the Project

• To co-design and co-produce an outcome focused project to reduce inequalities within justice services.
• To develop an accessible resource to support practitioners about what is a learning disability; promoting health needs, communication needs and how to make reasonable adjustments. *We are a voice advocating for people with a learning disability.*

Evidence Base and Literature Search

• The Independent Forensic Mental Health Review (2021) identified gaps in how people with learning disabilities experience justice services with poor outcomes.
• Many of these inequalities are preventable.
• People with learning disabilities are more likely to be involved in the justice system.
• Justice practice for people with learning disabilities is under researched and under resourced.
• Existing resources, education and knowledge of learning disability is limited.
• There are gaps in training for practitioners working in justice services.

Developing the resource

Evidence demonstrated that practitioners need support to identify someone who has a learning disability and information about how to access services to provide timely assessment and intervention including, trauma informed practice.

After consultation, the project team choose to develop an animation

• Collectively utilising diverse learning disability nurse experiences, knowledge, skills, and evidence base to create the animation.
• Accessible, an animation can provide practical information quickly.
• Can help to educate using real-world examples of people with lived experience.
• Support to raise awareness of what a learning disability is, and its impact
• Demonstrate simply, the communication, health and environmental needs of the person and how to make reasonable adjustments.

Project Team Engagement with Stakeholders

• Met with people with lived experience to understand impact of being involved in the justice system
• Supporting Offenders with Learning Disabilities (SOLD)
• NHS 24 Breathing Space
• Police Scotland
• Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities
• RCN Learning Disability Network
• Prison Nursing Network
• Scottish Learning Disability Lead Nurse Group
• Professional Learning Disability UK Senate

Creating the Animation

• Worked closely with QNIS animation creator to inform an inclusive visual storyboard.
• Identified key learning disability areas and themes to inform practice.
• Identified an acronym that communicated the educational purpose of the animation.
• Engaged and collaborated with our key stakeholders and people with lived experience to elicit feedback on draft versions of the animation.
• **Think COULD** was established.

Think COULD

COMMUNICATE
OBSERVE
UNDERSTAND
LEARNING
DISABILITY

Launch and Informing Practice

• Animation launched in May 2023 with extended stakeholders and funders.
• Shared on social media and with learning disability services across the UK.
• Shared with organisations within justice services, prison and custody suites across Scotland.
• Animation will be hosted on a national platform as well as available on YouTube and the QNIS website.

• Animation is now part of Police Scotland training resource 2023
• Added to suite of training tools for Lord Advocate; Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Policy and Engagement Dept.
• Ministerial support in informing policy and practice in Scotland.
• UK wide requests from justice services to access the animation

Think COULD Now available to watch on YouTube! #ThinkCould

Early Evaluation

The animation seeks to encourage practitioners within the justice system to ask the question 'Could you recognise if someone has a learning disability'.

Initial evaluation data indicates:

• Increased awareness of learning disability as well as the support and communications needs of people with learning disabilities.
• There is a need for additional resources to supplement the animation that can support clinical practice and education.

Next Steps

• Formal evaluation on the impact of the animation with Police Scotland and how nurse peers and justice services are using the resource.
• Feedback will inform development of a digital poster signposting to educational resources to enhance the key aim of **Think COULD**.

Making an Impact

• Presentations at Scottish and UK wide learning disability conferences including, nursing in justice services.
• Presentation to Scottish Executive Nurse Directors.
• Article in Learning Disability Practice.
• Coverage in the healthandcare.scot website.
• **WINNERS** Innovative Practice Award: Scottish Learning Disability Nurse Network.
• **WINNERS** Nursing Times Award for Learning Disability Nursing.

Nursing Times Awards 2023 WINNER