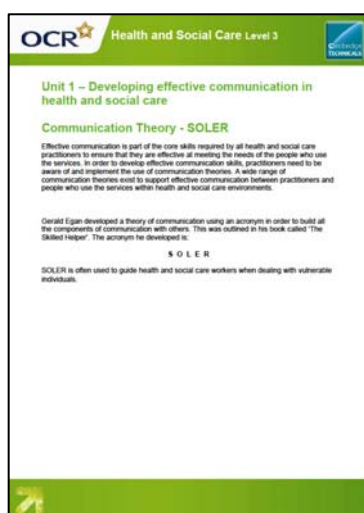


## Unit 1 – Developing effective communication in health and social care

### Communication Theory - SOLER

#### *Instructions and answers for Teachers*

*These instructions should accompany the OCR resource 'Communication Theory - SOLER', which supports the OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in Health and Social Care Unit 1 – Developing effective communication in health and social care*



**Associated Files:**  
Communication Theory - SOLER

**Expected Duration:**  
Task 1 – approx 30 minutes  
Task 2 – approx 60 minutes  
Task 3 – approx 30 minutes

#### **Introduction**

Effective communication is part of the core skills required by all health and social care practitioners to ensure that they are effective at meeting the needs of the people who use the services. In order to develop effective communication skills, practitioners need to be aware of and implement the use of communication theories. A wide range of communication theories exist to support effective communication between practitioners and people who use the services within health and social care environments.



Gerald Egan developed a theory of communication using an acronym in order to build the components of communication with others. This was outlined in his book called 'The Skilled Helper'. The acronym he developed is:

## S O L E R

SOLER is often used to guide health and social care workers when dealing with vulnerable individuals.

### Task 1

Research and define each letter of the acronym. Provide an example of why it is important to implement each section of the acronym in health and social care environments.

Sample answers below:

#### **S - Sit attentively at an angle**

It is important to sit attentively at an angle to the person who uses the service. This means that you can look at the person directly and shows that you are listening to the person seated beside you and that you are conveying interest.

#### **O - Open posture**

It is important for a practitioner to have an open posture. This means not sitting or standing with your arms folded across your chest as this can sometimes signal that you are defensive or that you are anxious. If a practitioner has an open posture the person may be more inclined to elaborate on their concerns.

#### **L - Leaning forward**

It important that practitioners lean forward towards the person using the service. This shows that you are interested in what the person is talking about. It is also possible that the person may be talking about personal issues and so may speak in a lower or quieter tone of voice. In addition you may want to convey a message in a lower or quieter tone of voice if you are seated in a public environment.

#### **E - Eye contact**

Eye contact is important as this demonstrates that practitioners are interested and focused on the message that the person using the service is conveying. You can also develop a sense of the person's emotional state by making eye contact, therefore, enabling you to judge the extent to which the person may be experiencing difficulty.

#### **R - Relaxed body language**

It is important to have a relaxed body language as this conveys to the person using the service that you are not in a rush. This will enable the person to develop their responses to questions in their own time.

Allow 30 minutes to complete this task.



## Task 2

Working in groups, develop two role-plays between a nurse and a person using the service. One in which SOLER is followed and one in which SOLER is not followed. Present your role-plays to your colleagues.

Role play 1 – SOLER followed	Role play 2 – SOLER not followed

Ask your colleagues to identify which sections of the acronym were not effectively implemented.

Allow 60 minutes to complete this task.



### Task 3

Ask your colleagues to identify the benefits of using the SOLER communication theory to a person using the service and a health and social care practitioner.

Sample answers:

Benefits to a person using the service.

- He/she will feel empowered to make decisions because they feel that they are being listened to.
- He/she will develop a close relationship with the practitioner and feel that they care, which will make him/her feel less vulnerable.
- He/she is more likely to have a speedy recovery from illness if they have a positive relationship with their carers and can identify any issues that they experience.
- He/she will feel more positive about asking for help if they feel that they will receive it in a non-judgemental and productive manner.

Benefits to a health and social care practitioner.

- He/she will understand the needs of the person using the service.
- He/she will effectively address the needs of the person using the service and review care plans more efficiently.
- He/she can ask the person using the service to elaborate on concerns that they may have, this may enable the practitioner and person using the service to develop a more meaningful relationship.



Ask your colleagues to identify the negative effects on the person using the service of ineffective communication.

Sample answers:

- Feeling of isolation and disempowered.
- Resistance to complying with their care plan because they feel that they did not have a part in designing it.
- Deterioration in health/well-being because they do not feel that they need to follow the advice of the practitioner. They do not understand the consequences of not following the advice.
- Possibility of harm to themselves or others as they feel that they are not being supported or listened to.

Allow 30 minutes to complete this task.



*These activities offer an opportunity for English skills development.*

## LESSON *Elements*

**The building blocks you need to construct informative and engaging lessons**

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