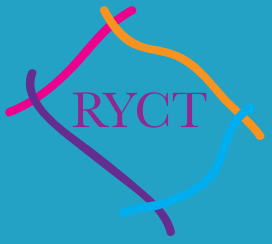




Reminiscence  
Network Northern Ireland



Remembering Yesterday  
Caring Today



## Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme

7 Apprentices

Evaluation & Feedback

### Western Health and Social Care Trust

6 week Apprenticeship Programme

Abbey House. Apex Housing, Derry-Londonderry

24th Jan 2014 - 18th Feb 2014



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## Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme Remembering Yesterday Caring Today

### Apprentice 1

1. What was your main reason for wanting to join this apprenticeship?

I wanted to further advance my interpersonal skills when working with people with Dementia and their families. This is a new area of practice for me.

2. In what ways did the apprenticeship meet your needs and expectations?

My apprenticeship programme provided me with a practical toolkit of ideas for Reminiscence in a group learning environment. It has also provided ideas for life-story work and memory boxes which can also be undertaken on an individual/one to one basis. It has developed further my skills when working with a variety people with different needs and expectations from the experience.

3. Were there any ways in which it did not meet these needs and expectations?

No I found it to be an amazing experience one which I plan to use and develop within my individual practice and group-work.

4. Which parts of the apprenticeship were particularly relevant or significant for you?

All sessions were highly relevant, however the session on cooking and home life seemed to capture everyone's imagination. The mixing bowl and wooden was a simple prop, it was passed around and mixed with great enthusiasm.

This was the first session I brought (some-one/service user) to the group, which they thoroughly enjoyed. One of the first things which I had noticed and the service user had also noticed was the inability to discern who the carer was and



who the person with the diagnosis of Dementia was. His was a refreshing observation for it was a group of people reminiscing together.

5. Were there any particular issues which were not covered by the apprenticeship? (please specify)

No, not that I can recollect.

Transport can be an issue for older people and it was arranged that if necessary apprentices could bring some service users in cars. I transported service users on two occasions which provided me with greater insight into the value of Reminiscence work with older people, as they on the journey there were excited and looking forward to the experience. Then on the way home relaxed and looking forward to the weekend with family/friends.

6. How did the apprenticeship relate to your previous work experience?

The apprenticeship programme is highly relevant to my current placement, I work with people with Dementia and their families and carers. A whole family approach was very relevant as Reminiscence further validates the role of the person within their family. It also provides a therapeutic environment for the sharing of memories. My earlier experience was with children and families so this is a new and exciting area of learning.

7. How will you apply your learning to your work situation?

I plan to use the new learning and skills in my personal practice within both individual and group work. The Apprenticeship Programme Certificate will (I hope) add to my employability and skills as a future practitioner.



## Remembering Yesterday Caring Today



### 8. Any further comments?

I was/am very pleased to avail of this opportunity to enhance my skills in the therapeutic area of reminiscence work. The facilitators were very experienced and used their skills to place all at ease during the sessions. They picked up on subtle cues, choosing what was suitable for exploring in more detail and what memories are best left alone. I recognise the great skill involved when discussing/reflecting which can result in introspection/unhappiness. The potential for unhappy memories is inherent within the Reminiscence processes however the potential for an empowering experience is much greater. The skill of Reminiscence work is guiding, what is good to explore a little longer and what should not, prompting using relevant props for inspiring discussion. These are highly adaptable skill for practice which I plan to develop further in myself.



**Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme  
Remembering Yesterday Caring Today**

**Apprentice 2**

1. What was your main reason for wanting to join this apprenticeship?

To develop my skills in reminiscing in a group environment and work more with client's and carer's

2. In what ways did the apprenticeship meet your needs and expectations?

I felt it exceeded my expectations as I realized how important reminiscence work is.

3. Were there any ways in which it did not meet these needs and expectations?

I would have liked a few more sessions as I felt the group would have benefited from it. In all other ways it met my expectations.

4. Which parts of the apprenticeship were particularly relevant or significant for you?

Generally I feel I had forgotten the importance of reminiscence. One of the participants with cognitive impairment described somewhere he used to play and I felt a real sense that he was there and felt the joy of that time. Even though it only lasted a short time, it was invaluable and I feel we can be so caught up in managing the present we can forget how effective talking about the past can be for the individual and their carer.

5. Were there any particular issues which were not covered by the apprenticeship? (please specify)

None that I can think of. It is impossible to cover some unexpected issues which may arise within sessions but it is important to be aware of the group and their needs at all times.

6. How did the apprenticeship relate to your previous work experience?



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The apprenticeship was particularly relevant to my work as it reiterated the importance of this work for both individuals and their carer's. As I work with both it was of great value.

### 7. How will you apply your learning to your work situation?

I will encourage the use of reminiscence work with individual's, carer's and families and I will promote its value.

I hope in the future to carry out these groups within the cases known to the community mental health team.

### 8. Any further comments?

The six weeks were enlightening as I feel it reiterated my passion for working on a therapeutic level with individuals and their carer's. It was lovely to have the time to do this. The value of spending time with individuals to do this work was clearly evident.

Thank you for the opportunity.



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**Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme  
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**Apprentice 3**

1. What was your main reason for wanting to join this apprenticeship?

To increase my knowledge and skills in the area of Reminiscence Therapy.  
To introduce more therapeutic interventions within my role as Social Worker

2. In what ways did the apprenticeship meet your needs and expectations?

Provided opportunities for learning in a safe and caring environment.  
Received good direction / guidance from the facilitators.

3. Were there any ways in which it did not meet these needs and expectations?

Having to transport participants to and from sessions proved to be a disadvantage as it reduced the discussion time for apprentices both before and after sessions.

4. Which parts of the apprenticeship were particularly relevant or significant for you?

The sessions provided a new experience for me as I had never participated/facilitated in session work with both clients and their carers before. I found the experience very rewarding and uplifting.

5. Were there any particular issues which were not covered by the apprenticeship? (please specify)

6. How did the apprenticeship relate to your previous work experience?

Having worked in day care in the past I had some experience in Reminiscence work. The training however provided more detailed information / guidance re. structure, content and duration.



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7. How will you apply your learning to your work situation?

I can apply information on a smaller level with clients and their carers to help improve communication through the use of various aids. ie memory box.

8. Any further comments?

The overall experience was very rewarding for all the participants. This was very evident through verbal comments and actions throughout the sessions. Attendance allowed me the opportunity to enter participant's lives and I feel very grateful to have been a part of same.

Remembering Yesterday Caring Today is a great aid to communication between participants. Provided examples for stimulation and valuing individuals.





## Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme Remembering Yesterday Caring Today

### Apprentice 4

1. What was your main reason for wanting to join this apprenticeship?

I wanted to join this apprenticeship as I developed a strong interest in Reminiscence Therapy during my work in Creggan Day Centre. The positive effects of this type of work helped me develop a better understanding of the families I work with.

2. In what ways did the apprenticeship meet your needs and expectations?

The apprenticeship meet my needs by enabling me to have the confidence to try new methods of helping people recall times of their lives which stimulated interaction and display positive emotions. My expectations were met as I had learned from Deirdre, (facilitator) during previous learning and was very impressed with her knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment to the work.

3. Were there any ways in which it did not meet these needs and expectations?

No.

4. Which parts of the apprenticeship were particularly relevant or significant for you?

All parts provided learning opportunities, however the most significant aspect for me was witnessing the closeness which remained between couples who remembered together significant events in their married lives, ie. Wedding Day and having children.

5. Were there any particular issues which were not covered by the apprenticeship? (please specify)

If there were any parts which were not covered I didn't notice. I felt the pace, content and duration of issues covered was perfectly suited to the client's needs.

6. How did the apprenticeship relate to your previous work experience?

The apprenticeship was very relevant as Reminiscence Therapy is used on a weekly basis in some form during my work with people with a Dementia diagnosis.



7. How will you apply your learning to your work situation?

I will apply my learning by initially sharing with my colleagues through Team Meetings, Reflective Practice Meetings and Older People's Activity Review Meetings. I will also use my learning during individual and group work scenarios where Reminiscence Therapy has been proven to promote memory recall and share experiences.

8. Any further comments?

This apprenticeship has been one of the most beneficial I have ever attended. The course was comprehensive, engaging and I have learned more than I could have wished for. Having the opportunity to interact with other professionals gave me the chance to learn from them and share my own experiences. Overall, this was an enlightening, fun and pleasurable learning experience.



**Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme  
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**Apprentice 5**

1. What was your main reason for wanting to join this apprenticeship?
  - To be able to offer reminiscence to clients in the future.
  
2. In what ways did the apprenticeship meet your needs and expectations?
  - This workshop met all my needs, gave me insight, experience, practical ideas and confidence to offer reminiscence therapy in the future.
  
3. Were there any ways in which it did not meet these needs and expectations?
  - No
  
4. Which parts of the apprenticeship were particularly relevant or significant for you?
  - All of the apprenticeship was very relevant and significant.
  
5. Were there any particular issues which were not covered by the apprenticeship? (please specify)
  - No, I feel all issues were covered.
  
6. How did the apprenticeship relate to your previous work experience?
  - It relates very well and I was able to reflect on what I had done and improve through experience.
  
7. How will you apply your learning to your work situation?
  - I will be using this in the future to take groups for reminiscence therapy
  
8. Any further comments?



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- Very insightful, both trainers were a delight to work with and both were very open, honest, positive and empowering.



## Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme Remembering Yesterday Caring Today

### Apprentice 6

1. What was your main reason for wanting to join this apprenticeship?  
*I wanted to see firsthand the therapeutic effects of reminiscence group work for individuals with Dementia and their carers. The two day training I attended previously had roused my curiosity in relation to how this kind of workshop could enhance the carer/service user relationship and equip them with additional skills in managing what can be difficult circumstances. I also wanted to acquire the skills to facilitate a reminiscence group and individual work.*

2. In what ways did the apprenticeship meet your needs and expectations?

*It has provided me with a toolbox of ideas I can replicate and modify with service users either in a group setting or when working individually with service users. It has highlighted how beneficial reminiscing can be for carers and their loved ones. I work with service users and families who are experiencing massive changes in their lives which impacts on the dynamics within relationships. Carers can become caught up in the practical side of caring, the washing, dressing, assisting side and can lose the closeness they had with their loved one. It is my intention to provide carers with knowledge and ideas they can use to spend quality time with their loved one procured from the six weeks during this workshop. One major observation I had over the six weeks was how the carers overcome their initial reservations about how a workshop such as this would work. I was a little concerned that the carer would feel embarrassed about participating in some of the exercises', particularly the reenacting – and was concerned about how they may feel should their partner/parent become disinhibited within the group. I believe that all participating got into the spirit of the group and felt safe enough in the knowledge that everyone was in the same boat. The enjoyment all involved had was tangible.*

3. Were there any ways in which it did not meet these needs and expectations?  
*Personally, I would have liked to co facilitated one of the weeks to give me more hands on experience and more responsibility however, I know this was an apprenticeship and may not have been an option.*



## Remembering Yesterday Caring Today



*Also transporting the service users and their carers meant the apprentices and the Training development manager did not have the opportunity to meet after each session which would have been a good way to summarize and evaluate as a group.*

*Other than the above, I felt the program exceeded my expectations.*

4. Which parts of the apprenticeship were particularly relevant or significant for you?

*Recruiting service users and carers to participate was significant as I would have to identify service users which I feel would benefit from this program in the future. Observing how people opened up and appeared to feel valued again was very powerful- particularly when they connected with others in the group and had shared memories and interests a "common ground". The expertise required from the facilitator to ensure there was a balance and everyone involved was able to take their turn which requires insight into group dynamics and an awareness of persons with stronger personalities and those perhaps less confident in participating or sharing and methods utilized in managing this. As I've mentioned previously, observing how much benefit the carers appeared to take from participating in the program and how much they could learn about different ways of interacting with their relative.*

5. Were there any particular issues which were not covered by the apprenticeship? (please specify)

*The programme was excellent however I felt the sessions could have continued over a longer period to enable participants to have revealed more emotionally. I also feel that this programme should be something that should be continuously offered within the community such are the benefits.*

*Could have integrated use of peoples 5 senses which is very pertinent in the area of dementia as other senses and abilities diminish.*

6. How did the apprenticeship relate to your previous work experience?



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*I have only ever facilitated group activities for educational reasons and have never had the opportunity to facilitate group work in my current position. However I recognize the skills I am currently using when working with service users generally such as active listening skills, observational skills and responding to service users. Using techniques to create a safe environment and issues such as confidentiality, building a rapport and engaging with service users to enable them to tell their stories are all transferable skills used within this kind of programme.*

### 7. How will you apply your learning to your work situation?

*It was highly relevant to social work practice and is an activity I could incorporate working 1;1 with service users. Since completing the programme I have utilized some ideas into my day to day practice such as educating carers in relation to difficult situations and using some meaningful reminiscence activities to divert or engage.*

### 8. Any further comments?

I thought the experience was invaluable in relation to my future work with carers and service users with Dementia. I am looking forward to incorporating skills learned in my day to day practice and educating carers in using some of the activities with their relative.



## Evaluation of Apprenticeship Programme Remembering Yesterday Caring Today

### Apprentice 7

1. What was your main reason for wanting to join this apprenticeship?  
As an activity officer for a dementia residential home I wanted to improve my knowledge on how to engage residents in a meaningful activity which stimulated their minds, I wanted to join the apprenticeship level for a more in depth level of knowledge on how to implement a successful reminiscence session.
2. In what ways did the apprenticeship meet your needs and expectations?  
The apprenticeship exceeded my expectations as to what the residents could do when they react to triggers used, what I have learned during these sessions will be of great use during reminiscence sessions and even everyday activities. Notes which were e-mailed and apprentice meetings to summarise sessions were also useful
3. Were there any ways in which it did not meet these needs and expectations?  
Sometimes the apprentice meetings were not long/private enough
4. Which parts of the apprenticeship were particularly relevant or significant for you?  
Each session was relevant for myself as an activity officer as I can use what I have learned in the home in my own group sessions. The use of actual materialistic prompts relevant to each session made me realise the importance of using such items, and I will be looking to borrow e.g. reminiscence boxes or purchase some items
5. Were there any particular issues which were not covered by the apprenticeship? (please specify)  
Some residents that I can think of do not like music or dancing or group sessions, individual reminiscence can be difficult in these cases, but I have gained some knowledge on how to deal with these residents
6. How did the apprenticeship relate to your previous work experience?  
I previously worked as a community carer and now as an activity officer in a home, it relates perfectly to my current role and I can make use of it
7. How will you apply your learning to your work situation?





## Remembering Yesterday Caring Today



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Letting other staff know what I have learned by inviting them to my own sessions

8. Any further comments?

A lot of the apprentices were social workers, I think it would be good if there were a group of activity officers or staff that work directly with residents activities on the floor on a daily basis