



Promoting Excellence:

planning for dementia learning and development

www.sssc.uk.com/promotingexcellence

Welcome

This guide has been created to support managers and learning and development teams to plan for dementia learning in social service settings. This guide is intended as a useful tool that should be used alongside the Promoting Excellence learning framework. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) would like to express thanks to Scottish Care for contributing to this guide, and to Cecelia, Alison and Birrell for sharing their learning experiences.

This guide will introduce you to:

- [levels of knowledge and skills \(practice levels\)](#)
- [key areas for learning](#)
- [recommended learning resources by practice level](#)
- [learning experiences shared by social service workers.](#)

It will help you to:

- understand how the Promoting Excellence practice levels can be applied
 - plan and discuss areas of dementia learning during supervision
 - develop new learning programmes or enrich existing ones
 - promote formal learning for qualifications, such as SVQs in social services and healthcare
 - encourage learning for [Post Registration Training and Learning \(PRTL\)](#) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
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What is the background to this guide?

In 2011 the SSSC and NHS Education for Scotland published [Promoting Excellence: a framework for all health and social services staff working with people with dementia, their families and carers.](#)

People with dementia will often have contact with care and support services, therefore education and lifelong learning across the social service workforce is essential. This will lead to a better quality of life for people with dementia, their families and carers and will support services to embed the [Standards of Care for Dementia in Scotland \(2011\)](#).

This guide forms part of a suite of resources to support dementia learning.

View the resources at:

www.sssc.uk.com/promotingexcellence

Levels of knowledge and skills

The four practice levels of Promoting Excellence

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The four practice levels within the framework represent the type of knowledge and skills that workers should have according to their role and practice setting. The minimum required practice level does not relate to a worker's seniority within their profession or organisation. Instead it relates to the contact that a worker has with people with dementia, families and carers, and their particular responsibilities in care, treatment and support.

Planning for dementia learning should begin with developing an understanding of the practice levels and deciding how they can be appropriately applied to workers in particular practice settings. This provides a basis for developing suitable learning programmes and deciding which resources to use. Promoting Excellence is an aspirational framework which encourages continuous learning so that the best possible outcomes are achieved for people with dementia, their families and carers.

Informed	Skilled	Enhanced	Expertise
The dementia informed practice level outlines the baseline knowledge and skills required by everyone working in health and social service settings, including in a person's own home.	The dementia skilled practice level outlines the knowledge and skills required by all workers that have direct and/or substantial contact with people with dementia and their families and carers.	The enhanced dementia practice level outlines the knowledge and skills required by workers that have more regular and intense contact with people with dementia, provide specific interventions or manage services.	The expertise in dementia practice level outlines the knowledge and skills required for workers who by virtue of their role and practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with dementia.
Examples of role	Examples of role	Examples of role	Examples of role
Workers in a variety of roles will need this level of knowledge and skills, including cooks or gardeners in care homes, drivers for day centres, and receptionists in care and support services. This level will also be appropriate for those working in services for children, and other workers in community settings.	Workers who require to achieve the minimum of skilled practice level will include support workers and practitioners in a variety of settings, especially care at home, day care and care home settings. This level will also be suitable for many trainers, educators and assessors who contribute to learning and assessment in social services.	Workers at this level can be anyone with a more focused or intense role supporting people with dementia, their families and carers. This level will suit a wide variety of workers in social care and social work roles. This would usually include supervisors, managers, social workers, post diagnostic support dementia link workers and occupational therapists.	Workers at this level may include mental health officers, mental health nurses, dieticians, and speech and language therapists. This level represents comprehensive knowledge and a high degree of responsibility within specialised areas. This often requires completion of post-qualifying learning programmes.

Key areas for learning

Explore key areas of dementia learning for the social service workforce

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Understanding dementia

This includes learning about who is affected by dementia, the common signs and symptoms of dementia and adopting and encouraging positive attitudes to counteract stigma.

Supporting and protecting people's rights

This includes knowledge of Scotland's National Dementia Strategies, the Charter of Rights for People with Dementia and their Carers in Scotland, the Standards of Care for Dementia in Scotland and how to apply relevant safeguarding, protective and rights based legislation in practice.

Learning disabilities and dementia

This includes learning how to best support a person with a learning disability and dementia, communicating well, the importance of specialised support and an insight into the importance of environmental design.

Promoting health and wellbeing

This includes learning about the impact of dementia on health and wellbeing and promoting the best level of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing at all stages of a person's journey with dementia. This will include valued relationships and community connections

Understanding stress and distress

This includes learning about factors which can contribute to stress and distress for people with dementia and adopting person centred and personal outcomes based approaches in anticipating, preventing and alleviating stress and distress.

Supportive environments

This includes learning about how the social and physical environment can affect a person with dementia, the positive contribution of life story work, supportive communities and the role of assistive and innovative technologies in helping people to live well with dementia.

Post diagnostic support

This includes learning about the support that can be offered to a person following a diagnosis, for example signposting to resources in the community, planning for the future, decision making and helping a person to understand dementia and manage their symptoms.

Promoting psychological wellbeing

This includes learning about dementia from a psychological perspective in order to enhance care and support.

Communication

This includes learning about the impact of dementia on communication and the importance of using strengths based approaches to communicate well with people with dementia.

Palliative and end of life care

This includes promoting the wellbeing of the person with dementia, and their families and carers, towards the end of life. Learning can include spiritual support, pain assessment and management, nutrition, pharmacological and non-pharmacological supports.

Personalisation and personal outcomes

This includes personalisation and self-directed support, and the importance of adopting a personal outcomes focused approach to working with people with dementia.

Working with families and carers

This includes identifying who carers are and understanding the impact of the caring role. See the Equal Partners in Care (EPiC) Core Principles for Working with Carers and Young Carers.

Recommended resources

The resources below can be accessed free online at: www.sssc.uk.com/promotingexcellence

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Informed



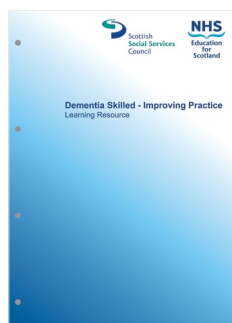
Informed about Dementia: Improving Practice

This interactive DVD is designed to support the learning of all people working in health and social service settings.

The Informed about Dementia DVD is available in an online format and has an accompanying [Workshop Facilitator's Guide](#).

This DVD provides learning for all workers at the dementia informed practice level. It is a good starting point for learning and a useful induction resource for new workers.

Skilled



Dementia Skilled: Improving Practice

The areas of learning within Dementia Skilled: Improving Practice are relevant to a variety of workers but especially to those in day care, care at home, housing support and care home settings. It is recommended that learners first achieve the dementia informed practice level.

- Module 1** [Understanding dementia](#)
- Module 2** [Promoting person and family centred care and community connections](#)
- Module 3** [Promoting health and wellbeing for people with dementia](#)
- Module 4** [Meeting the needs of the person with dementia who is distressed](#)
- Module 5** [Supporting and protecting people's rights](#)

With accompanying [Guidance for assessors, educators, trainers and managers](#).



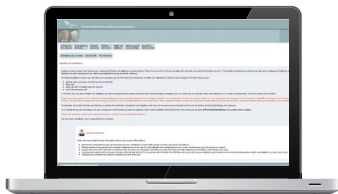
Learning technology

The SSSC has developed dementia learning apps which will support learning at the dementia skilled practice level:

- [Understanding dementia](#)
- [Understanding stress and distress](#)
- [Understanding personal outcomes for people living with dementia](#)

The material within the recommended resources can be used in a variety of ways to support learning

Enhanced



Enhanced dementia practice for social workers and other professionals

This online resource contains enhanced level dementia learning. It was designed to support social workers to develop the knowledge and skills they need in specific areas of care and support for people with dementia. The learning in this resource will also be relevant to other professionals including managers, allied health practitioners, trainers and educators.

- Section 1 [Understanding dementia](#)
- Section 2 [Personal outcomes – valued relationships and community connections](#)
- Section 3 [Working with carers](#)
- Section 4 [Health and wellbeing](#)
- Section 5 [Rights, support and protection](#)
- Section 6 [Supportive environments](#)



Promoting psychological wellbeing for people with dementia and their carers

This enhanced practice level resource from NHS Education for Scotland supports people in a variety of roles to develop their understanding of dementia from a psychological perspective. The resource covers a wide range of learning areas and can be used in a variety of ways to support workforce learning.

- Section 1 [What makes us who we are?](#)
- Section 2 [Understanding dementia from a psychological perspective](#)
- Section 3 [Assessment of dementia and introduction to the most common dementias](#)
- Section 4 [Communicating with people with dementia and carers](#)
- Section 5 [Evidence based psychological interventions in dementia care](#)
- Section 6 [Psychological approaches to distressed behaviour](#)



**Equal Partners
in Care**

Working together to achieve better
outcomes for carers and young carers

Resources to support you to work well with carers:

Equal Partners in Care (EPiC) is a joint project between the SSSC and NHS Education for Scotland to implement the workforce education and learning elements of the [Carers Strategy 2010-15](#). Access resources and the EPiC Core Principles for Working with Carers and Young Carers at:

www.ssksc.org.uk/equalpartnersincare

www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/equalpartnersincare

Dementia learning experiences in social services

Cecelia



"I am fully committed to improving the journey for people with dementia that I support."

Cecelia is a home care support worker with Highland Home Carers in Inverness. Cecelia's work brings her into regular and intense contact with people who are living with dementia. The support she gives helps people to live safely at home and lead active lives in the community.

"Understanding stress and distress is very important."

Cecelia identified **skilled** practice level was essential for her role especially for learning about communication, rights, adult protection, and health and wellbeing. For developing a greater understanding of stress and distress, Cecelia recommends sections five and six of the **enhanced** practice psychological resource from NHS Education for Scotland which she was able to access online.

Birrell



"It has been a challenging experience but also very rewarding. I identified that training and learning was essential for my team to develop and provide the best support for people with dementia. We have also been supported by a local psychology team."

Birrell has been involved in support work for a number of years and is currently working as a supervisor for Sense Scotland in Bridge of Earn. Birrell's team have accessed a variety of resources, at both **informed** and **skilled** level. One of Birrell's first steps was to make the Informed about Dementia: Improving Practice DVD available to everyone.

"I believe that to support people well you have to work closely with colleagues, develop your practice and communicate well so that everyone is working towards the same goals."

Alison



"It made so much sense - it was simple but answered a lot of my questions."

Alison recently became a supervisor within a care home in Dumfries and Galloway. Alison accessed the Informed about Dementia: Improving Practice DVD immediately and is looking forward to using it to facilitate **informed** level training for each and every worker.

"I am excited about rolling out dementia informed level, and also helping people to progress to the skilled level."

Alison and her team sought support from Scottish Care development officers and SSSC Dementia Ambassadors to access **skilled** level training for all workers who provide direct support to people who have dementia. Alison looks forward to furthering her personal professional development by accessing **enhanced** resources.

Here are more useful resources from the SSSC:

Step into Leadership

Step into Leadership provides you with access to tools and resources to help you explore the concept of leadership at all levels and develop your own leadership capabilities, whatever your role in social services.

www.stepintoleadership.info



Continuous Learning Framework

The Continuous Learning Framework (CLF) is for all social service workers and organisations. The framework's personal capabilities describe positive behaviours which are based around awareness of values and understanding of relationships. Social service workers can evidence these capabilities at work to validate and improve the quality of their practise. Use of the CLF also generates reflective dialogues that can be used in personal and professional development.

www.continuouslearningframework.com



SSSC Learning Zone

Whatever your role and level of experience, the SSSC Learning Zone has apps and resources to help you develop your knowledge and skills. You can work through them at your own pace and use them to contribute towards your recorded learning and development. You'll find resources on leadership, dementia, self-directed support, SVQs, modern apprenticeships and more.

learn.sssc.uk.com

SSSC Learning Zone

SSSC News online

Keep up to date with news from the SSSC and the Scottish social service sector at SSSC News online, the SSSC's online magazine.

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communications@sssc.uk.com

www.ssscnews.uk.com

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Phone: 0345 60 30 891
Fax: 01382 207215
Email: enquiries@sssc.uk.com
www.sssc.uk.com

Scottish Social Services Council
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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