

LINK CHAMPIONS

The NHS Care Home Contract focus, is to deliver and improve services that keep people well in their 'own home', maximising their potential to live full and independent lives, help reduce unnecessary hospital attendances, reduce time people must stay in hospital when they are deemed well enough to leave, and delay individuals requiring long term care by providing more rehabilitation services. Care Homes are pivotal to community working and should be developed to provide expertise in Learning Disability, Autism, and Elderly Care.

The service provider needs to be responsive in the way they offer care and support, (not necessarily be led by disease management) and to ensure that the care and support which is provided consistently delivers a positive experience as well as the best outcomes for the people using their services. The provider must facilitate protected learning time for self-directed study to develop experts and ensure champions have adequate time within their role to develop, implement and review changes in practice. The provider must remain up to date with national and local policies to ensure that their own policies and procedures remain in line with current guidance and reflect new ways of working.

Acknowledging this, service providers need to nurture and support their staff to learn and develop in areas where they have a real passion for making positive changes and a difference to people's lives. Providers will need to ensure that they are able to identify and support Link Champion Programmes as part of their normal day to day workload. Each service provider must nurture a culture within their environment where learning and development is pivotal for the people they employ.

The role will enable the champions to access training and development across the following areas:

Table one

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Nutrition and Hydration | Oral Care | Skin Integrity | Falls | Digital |
| Diabetes | Dementia | Mental Health | End of Life | Activity Co-Ordinator |
| Infection Prevention and Control | Continence | Sleep | Staff Health and Wellbeing | |

Link Champion Programmes will keep the Champions up to date with national and local guidance, enabling them to work innovatively within their own chosen specialist field. It is envisaged that the champion will bring this knowledge to their work environment,

- To review and influence changes to policies,
- Implement changes to current practice/procedures,
- Upskill their peers,
- Challenge poor practice,
- Advocate for the person and be their voice,
- Work in an integrated way with colleagues and professionals.

All champions need to be able to demonstrate the following attributes to successfully promote and embed changes in practice.

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| Empathic | Good communicator | Confident | Good listener | Patient |
| Show respect and listen to all staff and residents | Willing to get involved in discussion | Understanding, caring and compassionate | Non-judgemental | Honest |
| Approachable | Receptive to change | Motivated | Have a commitment to learn and develop | Open |
| Lead by example | Relate to others in a collaborative way | | | |

Good practice would suggest that the provider needs to identify a cohort of staff from different sections of the workforce to become a link champion team within each of the specified areas noted in table one.

Examples of a Gold Standard link champion models could include:

Nutrition and hydration Link Champion Team would be:

Cook x 1, Kitchen Domestic x 1, Senior care days x 1, Senior Care nights x 1, Care days x 1, care nights x 1.

Infection Control Link Champion Team would be:

General Assistant/Domestic x 1, Senior care days x 1, Senior Care nights x 1, Care days x 1, Care nights x 1.

Falls Link Champion Team would be:

Activity Co Ordinator x 1, Maintenance Person or General Assistant x 1, Senior care days x 1, Senior Care nights x 1, Care days x 1, Care nights x 1.

All link Champion teams must commit to attending monthly, bimonthly/ quarterly meetings (as set out per each link champion lead), and all, must aim to achieve at least 80% annually between the team.

Job description

Our Nutrition & Hydration Champions focus on the people they support to promote early interventions for better health and to provide a better quality of life for everyone who receive care and support in our organisation.

The duties of our Nutrition & Hydration Champions are:

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|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| Gaining and Sharing Knowledge | Attend basic Nutrition and hydration training and then the Enhanced Nutrition and Hydration training every 2 years provided by Doncaster Council. Also, complete Online RDaSH Malnutrition and food first training package. | Attend Link Champion Meetings as per above. Also access the Monthly Training tips and QA Virtual Meetings held by RDaSH Dietetic services when required | Implement any changes from the link meetings, required to improve the service currently delivered | Promote the Improvement around staff's knowledge about malnutrition, Nutritional Action Plans, healthy diets, and all other relevant subject matters | Promote a food first approach through fortifying meals and snacks and nourishing drinks. |
| | Increase understanding and application of nutritional support guidelines for example NICE 2006. | Increase understanding, and application of the use of food and fluid charts | Improve communication throughout the home in terms of nutrition and hydration. | Support colleagues to understand early identification of malnutrition/dehydration or any other dietary needs (such as Dysphagia) and to influence timely discussions within MDT | Increase understanding and application of high-quality documentation to support the evidence and use of food first and fortifying meals, snacks, and drinks in line with the MUST Pathway |
| Assess and Report | Ensure the relevant Nutrition and MUST screening are completed on time. (New admission within 24 hours) | Ensure the right Nutritional Action plan is in place according to the risk assessment and is person centred (New admission within 48 hours) | Complete Audit to ensure all aspects of the pathway have been implemented and reflect the persons own needs. | Communicate audit findings to manager and all relevant staff including action plan for changes to be implemented. | Link champion team must ensure audit is completed monthly. (Or, relevant link champion audit) |
| Review and Support pliers | Ensure care plans are completed and reviewed/updated to reflect any changes to individual MUST scores, eating habits including likes and dislikes, ensuring these are completed as changes occur or at least monthly. | You will work with the lead to ensure that all weights are completed when required (Weekly, Fortnightly, or monthly) | Ensure reviews have taken place and new changes communicated across the team. | Following review, support the relevant staff to liaise with the enhanced care home team to identify people with any ongoing changes/issues for review at MDT with request of the dietetic team. | Ensure all relevant staff have undertaken either the DMBC nutrition and hydration (Basic) training or RDaSH MUST training package |
| Becoming an expert | Work collaboratively as an expert with the Care staff, senior Care, cook and kitchen staff to devise specific menus and snacks and nourishing drinks to address any specific issues. | Be confident to check and challenge as an expert within your service, if this proves unsuccessful understand how and where to escalate any issues or concerns you may have. | Be a direct point of contact for the Dietetic services, in terms of assessment of individuals and any other related matters. | | |

Staff Sign: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Managers Signature: _____ Date: _____