

Dementia UK Level 7 academic module

Client

Dementia UK is the only UK charity to offer specialist one-to-one support and expert advice for families affected by dementia through the support of Admiral Nurses. Admiral Nurses use a relationship-centred approach to support family carers and the person living with dementia. They provide specialist information and advice to inform best practice, promote partnership working, coordinate care, and 'help families face dementia'. Dementia UK supports the ongoing development of Admiral Nurse practice through the provision of professional and practice development, informed by the Admiral Nurse competency framework.

Background

Admiral Nurses are specialists with significant experience and background in dementia care. Originally based within community mental health services, Admiral Nursing has responded to the changing nature of care provision and developed services within care homes, hospitals, hospices and home care services. This has meant a need for new models and approaches.

Interventions provided by Admiral Nurses need to align with the best evidence for supporting families affected by dementia including case management, psychosocial interventions, education and facilitating quality improvements. This approach requires a clear development pathway, which enhances the knowledge, skill and competencies of all Admiral Nurses, across all settings.

Requirements

The University of Worcester were approached to develop an advanced practice module to help support Admiral Nurses engage with the Admiral Nurse competency framework, enhance reflective practice and support revalidation through the use of an electronic portfolio, Pebblepad.

How ADS met the need

Our expert multi-disciplinary team was able to create a bespoke practice informed module to meet the requirements of Dementia UK, which met the strict academic requirements of the University's Quality Framework. This was done by:

- Ongoing engagement with the Practice Development Lead
- Having an in-depth understanding of the specialist role of Admiral Nurses who would be attending the course and their competency framework
- Incorporating into the learning and teaching of the course the introduction of PebblePad, as means of students recording their learning in personal portfolios.

The outcome

The module has successfully run and the third cohort is currently underway. Eleven Admiral Nurses have completed the module and the pass rate is 100%. Evaluation indicates that the students have benefited from attending the module with every student responding positively to all evaluation statements including

- *'I learnt a lot from this module', 'the module challenged me to develop my thinking' and 'overall I am satisfied with the quality of this module'.*
- *'The module was challenging and also informative and I would highly recommend it to other Admiral Nurses. It has been invaluable to me.'*
- *'The course has increased my confidence in the Admiral Nurse model. I have introduced new interventions with as a result of the detailed understanding I have gained of a specific competency'.*

'The Admiral Nurse competency module has provided a timely and valuable programme to support this unique group of specialist dementia nurses in consolidating and developing their practice. Participants have been able to critically examine individual competencies and develop their knowledge and skills in providing evidence based care. This will support Admiral Nurses as leaders in the field and ensure the support they provide for those affected by dementia is the best it can be.' (*Dementia UK*)