



6Cs in social care



Introduction

The 6Cs, which underpin the **Compassion in Practice** strategy, were developed as a way of articulating the values which need to underpin the culture and practise of organisations delivering care and support. These are immediately identifiable as values which underpin quality social care provision too. As integration between health and social care continues and increases it is helpful to focus on common values expressed in ways which increase consistency within all aspects of our work, workforce, leadership and organisations.

This document explains how the 6Cs link to the values, recruitment, qualifications, and leadership frameworks in social care. It includes a grid mapping the 6Cs to:

- current social care qualifications from the Care Certificate through to the level 5 diploma
- the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England
- the Social Care Commitment.



Background

The 6Cs are the values which underpin **Compassion in Practice**, the national strategy for nurses, midwives and care staff, which was launched in December 2012. Since then a significant programme of work through six action areas has created a momentum across the country which has recognised the very crucial role that organisational culture plays in determining the experience of patients and users of services.

In Compassion in Practice the 6Cs are defined as:

Care

Care is our core business and that of our organisations and the care we deliver helps the individual person and improves the health of the whole community. Caring defines us and our work. People receiving care expect it to be right for them, consistently, throughout every stage of their life.

Compassion

Compassion is how care is given through relationships based on empathy, respect and dignity - it can also be described as intelligent kindness, and is central to how people perceive their care.

Competence

Competence means all those in caring roles must have the ability to understand an individual's health and social needs and the expertise, clinical and technical knowledge to deliver effective care and treatments based on research and evidence.

Communication

Communication is central to successful caring relationships and to effective team working. Listening is as important as what we say and do and essential for 'no decision about me without me'. Communication is the key to a good workplace with benefits for those in our care and staff alike.

Courage

Courage enables us to do the right thing for the people we care for, to speak up when we have concerns and to have the personal strength and vision to innovate and to embrace new ways of working.

Commitment

A commitment to our patients and populations is a cornerstone of what we do. We need to build on our commitment to improve the care and experience of our patients, to take action to make this vision and strategy a reality for all and meet the health, care and support challenges ahead.

Compassion in Practice – 2 years on reports that the ‘6Cs are for everyone’ initiative is growing across health and social care. Other professions, both clinical and non-clinical, are signing up to the values of the 6Cs.

In this initiative there are examples of commissioners basing the services they commission on the values of the 6Cs, and examples of how the 6Cs have been implemented in many different care settings. It reports that there is now a great deal of qualitative evidence about how the 6Cs improves care.

It finds that “the 6Cs continue to find new supporters and advocates as part of a social movement, and the adoption of the values outside of nursing, midwifery and health care assistants feels like a natural evolution, which is no surprise. People relate to the 6Cs because they are real and universal.”

The 6Cs are described simply in a [short video clip](#).

This could be used to introduce the 6Cs as part of a team briefing or learning session.

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In our values

Putting the person in control of their care and support and treating people with dignity and respect have been fundamental to the legislation and policy governing social care practice - for example Think Local Act Personal (TLAP), the Care Act, Care Quality Commission (CQC) outcomes and Making Safeguarding Personal.

The 6Cs are a simple expression of values which can be used within an organisation to reflect on these aspects through team meetings, away days, and supervision

The values articulated through the 6Cs run through the Social Care Commitment and the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England.

We’ve mapped the 6Cs to the Social Care Commitment and Code of Conduct. If you look at how you put the 6Cs into practice it’s one way of starting to explore how you make aspects of the commitment and codes a day to day part of your practice.

In recruitment

Skills for Care’s values based recruitment toolkit supports employers to recruit staff with the values that are important to high quality social care. These values include the 6Cs.

The description of the 6Cs is a useful tool if you’re recruiting into roles at all levels within social care - from senior management to frontline workers. They can be used to assess the values people are bringing to the role.

This could be done by including them in person specifications and through interview questions.



In learning

We've mapped the 6Cs at learning outcome level to the Care Certificate and the diploma in health and social care mandatory units at levels two, three and five.

The mapping shows that the 6Cs values are relevant at all levels. It is important that learning providers see their work as an opportunity to embed the 6Cs into social care practice, through the values and behaviours they encourage and through the activities and materials they use.

Where the mapping indicates a C is relevant to a particular learning outcome it means that it is likely that a learner in demonstrating they meet that learning outcome could demonstrate that value.

It looks surprising that some learning outcomes are not mapped to a particular C when the unit heading would suggest it should be. However this is because the demonstration of those learning outcomes does not require demonstration of that C.

This mapping is not intended to suggest learning providers should exclude reference to or demonstration of a particular C where an opportunity arises.

In leadership

The culture of an organisation is reflective of the values of those leading it. Every organisation and individual in a leadership role should ask whether the 6Cs underpin the leadership and management styles of the organisation. If they do not then it is unlikely they will be part of the organisational culture or experience of those receiving its services.

Skills for Care, home of the National Skills Academy for Social Care, has published the Leadership Qualities Framework (LQF). It illustrates the attitudes and behaviours needed for high quality leadership at every level of the sector. Those using the framework may find it helpful to use the 6Cs by reflecting on how they demonstrate the 6C values within the domains of the framework.

The LQF mirrors the NHS Leadership framework and can be used in integrated services, as can the 6Cs, making them a common platform for integrated teams to reflect on their values and practice.

