

THE USE OF THE SOLIHULL APPROACH IN PROVIDING A REFLECTIVE PRACTICE GROUP FOR CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY NURSES

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Introduction

The Solihull Approach (Douglas, 2001), an early intervention model that uses key messages from research to promote change in the quality of attachments, is a helpful, structured and practical framework for reflection with a group of Children's Community Nurses (CCN)

Aim

To show that the Solihull Approach could be an effective model to help CCN staff process events cognitively and emotionally in a reflective practice group

Method

Participants: CCNs provide specialist Paediatric nursing to infants, children and young people in the community with complex health needs, including life limiting and/or threatening conditions

A group of 6 CCN was offered monthly 90 min reflective practice sessions with a Clinical Psychologist for a year incorporating the Solihull Approach model

An evaluation of the group was conducted during this time through formal feedback using a self-report questionnaire. Themes from the evaluation's feedback were collated

Results

100% response to questionnaire -83% 5/6 rated sessions as very helpful 1/6 rated them as quite helpful – other helpful aspects of the group included:

- **Facilitating the sessions using the Solihull approach were helpful:** I "feel comfortable to voice opinions and be listened to"; "an open discussion about the team and families on (our) caseload in a non-judgmental environment"
- **Opportunity for reflective practice was rated as most helpful:** the sessions gave me "time to think about things to reflect on my current practice"; "helps to see things in a different light when you have issues/problems"; "facilitates my understanding and coping with situations that are new or stressful to me"
- **(Reciprocity)/** The opportunity to reflect on the family and how they might be feeling was found to be particularly helpful: "thinking more around a parent/carer's perspective and thinking how I would feel and what help I would require in those situations"
- **Confidence/Support** cases were described as becoming more complex and the space helped them to become more "confident" with a "clear direction" for the team and service
- **Team building/growth:** "it is a good opportunity for the team to get together and raise difficult issues"; it has been helpful to see the "personal development of the team and their maturity developing"

Discussion

Reflective practice, a key skill for nurses, helps them to manage the impact of caring for others on a daily basis (Oelofsen, 2012). The three central concepts to the Solihull Approach Model used included **Containment** (Bion, 1959) **Reciprocity** (Brazelton et al, 1974) and **Behaviour Management** (Watson, 1930). The concepts can be seen to underpin the development of attachment, so understanding the concepts can provide a focus for specific elements of the relationship that will improve the quality of an attachment and have a significant effect on the subsequent emotional health and well-being of the child. The evaluations suggest that the opportunity for reflective practice using key elements of the Solihull Approach was most helpful. Reciprocity was found to be particularly helpful. The sessions facilitated the nurses' understanding and processing of difficult issues. Staff reported feeling more supported and confident with their cases and improvements to team development were described

Conclusion

The basic principles of the Solihull Approach could be a useful model in reflective practice groups for other CCN teams or other workforce teams

