Positive Behaviour Support and Quality of Life in a Residential Support setting

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Background

• STAR Tasmania
  – Leading service provider for Tasmanians with a disability
  – Accommodation
  – Centre-based respite
• Disability Assessment and Advisory Team (DAAT)
  – Group of Allied Health Professionals
  – Create solutions surrounding the individualised needs of individuals with a disability
Rationale

• An important concern when implementing support strategies in the inclusive setting is staff and organisational readiness (McVilly, 1997)

• The uniqueness of the project was that it was about building approaches that fit the readiness of the organisation as well as staff readiness
‘Supporting supporters’

• Strategies include:
  – Access to professional advice
  – Skill development opportunities
  – Quality pre-service and in-service training
  – Regular opportunities for debriefing
  – Regular general team meetings
  – The availability of a mentor
  – Sensible rostering and leave arrangements
  – Regular respite opportunities
  – Effective crisis support strategies

McVilly (2007)
Adapted Support Strategy

• Positive Behaviour Support
  – Applies educational and systems change methods to minimise problem behaviours and enhance quality of life for individuals with a developmental disability (Carr et al., 2002)

• Active Support
  – Model of systematic support to provide staff with the necessary skills and organisational procedures to increase participation in activities for individuals with a developmental disability living in a community setting (Stancliffe, Harman, Toogood, & McVilly, 2007)
The project included:

• Close partnerships between staff and management to ensure STAR’s key values were adhered to
• Coaching for consistency
• Mentoring
• 2 hours of introductory Active Support training
• Updating person-centred plans
• Individual communication and behavioural support assessment used alongside Active support principles, person-centred plans and STAR values to train staff in 5 common approaches
• Project evaluation
Maralinga Drive

- 5 residents with complex needs (3 units)
- Range of behavioural issues across the site including verbal and physical aggression
- Residents displaying frustration, confusion and anxiety
- Staff ready for a change
Support Culture Reconstructed

• Staff
  – Communication
  – Empathy
  – Ongoing monitoring
  – Graded support

• Residents
  – Responsibility
  – Choice
  – Engagement with all aspects of own lives

• Environment
  – Modifications to suit individual and group needs
  – Authentic activities
Leadership and Coaching

Communicate with Style

Communication Support

Social Role Modelling

Activity Planning

Support Skill Development

‘Ownership’

‘Working together’

‘View from other’s perspective’
The Most Significant Change Technique (Davies & Dart, 2005)

- Involves project stakeholders in the decision making process
- Monitoring occurs through the program cycle
- Provides data on impact and outcomes to assess the performance of a program
- Significant change stories – systematic collection of ‘most significant stories’ by designated stakeholders (e.g. staff, family, individual)
Data Collection

• 16 narratives from 4 groups across a range of formats:
  – Family (2)
  – Project group (4)
  – Residents (4)
  – Staff (6)

• Most significant narratives selected by:
  – Staff group
  – ‘Meta’ panel

• Chosen narrative written by a family member
Results

• Stakeholders were asked to describe what has been the most significant change over a given period of time
• A purposefully selected focus group identified the single most significant change narrative
Narrative - Changes

• Most important change – communication with style
  – Staff listening and supporting communication
  – Residents listening to each other
  – Consistent approach
  – Residents to not feel ignored

• Changes now and in the future
  – Improved staff skills and confidence
  – Staff more proactive
  – New insight into residents behaviour
  – Staff able to use their knowledge of the individual in planning
  – Embraced structure

• Most significant change
  – Atmosphere
  – STAR values achieved
Narrative - staff

• About residents:
  – Grown in confidence and maturity
  – Require less support
  – Use skills in the community
  – More independence

• About the process
  – Individualised communication strategies (on paper)
  – Learned strategies
Themes

• Residents
  – Happier and more settled
  – Have better relationships
  – Use more skills to participate fully in their own responsibilities as well as in leisure activities

• Staff
  – More time to respond, and with appropriate responses
  – More attuned to individual and changing needs
Conclusions

• Committed and likeminded individuals cooperated to identify what needed change
• Adapted available evidence-based methods to specific circumstances
• The outcome:
  – Changes in staff attitude and behaviour
  – Improved quality of life for residents
  – a better service for five people with an intellectual disability
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References


