



Royal College
of Nursing

AGE
Concern

An ageing population: Education and practice preparation for nursing students learning to work with older people

MENTORSHIP: rights and responsibilities

A mentor is a role model willing to help a student develop clinical competence through support, honesty, appraisal, reflective communication and being a 'critical friend'.

As a nursing student in this area you are encouraged to participate in learning opportunities in order to develop knowledge and skills in nursing older adults.

In order for this to happen, **mentors and students must take equal responsibility for learning.**

Mentors must be available, approachable and open. They will provide timely, constructive feedback and help students to identify learning opportunities and how to learn from them.

Mentors will identify issues to be tackled and opportunities for learning specifically around the care of older people. They will complete the necessary placement documentation.

Students must attend placements, engage collaboratively and be willing to participate in the activities within that area. They will communicate their learning needs and negotiate opportunities to meet them with their mentor.

Students will take this opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills around older people. They will provide constructive feedback about the placement.

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MENTORSHIP: rights and responsibilities



Care for older people should be POSITIVE:

Person Centred – work in a relationship

Open – to challenge and be responsive to change

Specialist – draw on the particular needs of ageing people

Individualised – strive to respond to both needs and wants

Timely – meet needs when they occur and anticipate future need

Inclusive – involve others collaboratively

Valued – rewarded for skilled and professional care provision

Evidence-based – at all times, remembering that evidence sometimes comes from older persons themselves, as well as best practice examples.

MENTORSHIP should be:

Meaningful – relevant to the needs of the learner – student or health care assistant

Educational – help learners and mentors learn in partnership

Nurturing – developing a critical friendship to enable growth and to support in times of concern or distress

Timely – allowing the student to learn in action and post-action

Objective – have clear action plans for learning with a sense of purpose

Relevant – to the student's learning needs and the context in which the student is learning. **Reliable** – both student and mentor must be committed

Supportive – providing support as well as challenge

Holistic – seeing the student as a person as well as a practitioner

Individualised – including a personal development plan to respond to needs and wants

Partnership – acknowledging that the learning is a two-way process.