



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:**

**P**erson Centred – work in a relationship

**O**pen – to challenge and be responsive to change

**S**pecialist – draw on the particular needs of ageing people

**I**ndividualised – strive to respond to both needs and wants

**T**imely – meet needs when they occur and anticipate future need

**I**nclusive – involve others collaboratively

**V**alued – rewarded for skilled and professional care provision

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

### **MENTORSHIP should be:**

**M**eaningful – relevant to the needs of the learner – student or health care assistant

**E**ducational – help learners and mentors learn in partnership

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

**T**imely – allowing the student to learn in action and post-action

**O**bjective – have clear action plans for learning with a sense of purpose

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

**S**upportive – providing support as well as challenge

**H**olistic – seeing the student as a person as well as a practitioner

**I**ndividualised – including a personal development plan to respond to needs and wants

**P**artnership – acknowledging that the learning is a two-way process.