

PREPARING FOR THE CONVERSATION CHECKLIST

Common sources of information that would help you prepare for the initial conversation might include:

- The person
- Their informal network e.g. family, friends or neighbours
- Electronic or paper care records, for example referral / start of assessment any previous assessments for that person
- Colleagues who have had previous contact with person or family
- Other professionals or support agencies working with the person

In additional to gathering information from the above sources you should also consider gathering information on:

- Research literature or other evidence relating to specific conditions or illnesses (if known), consultant or GP report, information from family etc.
- Any aspects of culture or religion that might be of significance – should you take your shoes off?
<https://expatsincebirth.com/2013/11/24/take-off-your-shoes-please>
- Community resources / support available in the area local to the person including recreational, cultural and religious amenities

When analysing the information you should be:

- Thinking about what might be going on for the person and what this might mean for them and their informal network
- Creating multiple hypothesis rather than accepting the first explanation that presents – avoiding making assumptions
- Evaluating the information in terms of reliability, robustness, replicability and relevance
- Identifying what might be fact, what might be observation and what might be opinion – and how you might substantiate this
- Considering what further information you might need to know and where you would get this from

When planning the conversation you should use the information you have gathered and analysed to consider:

- How to ensuring the person is as involved in the conversation as they want to be and/or can be e.g. do they require support such as advocacy
- Has the person asked for anyone else to be present – who needs to be part of conversation and who doesn't?
- Any communication needs – is an interpreter required, do you need any documents in other formats or languages
- Any cultural / religious considerations
- Any known risks, to you or the person, and how to mitigate these
- What the person might expect from the assessment process

- The structure of the conversation including:
 - it's length
 - time of day
 - the preferred method of assessment
 - the setting or environment in which the assessment will take place, for example at home, in hospital, etc.

After planning the conversation you should reflect on the plan. Try:

- Thinking "How would it feel for me if?....."
- Rehearsing the conversation. How will you:
 - introduce yourself?
 - find out how they want to be addressed?
 - open the conversation?
 - explain the purpose or the visit - What is your role?
 - manage expectations by being clear about what you can and can't offer? What can I do / not do?
 - keep it on track whilst allowing the person to fully express their views
 - keep a focus on their strengths and assets
 - close the conversation and summaries the discussion and actions agreed?

Reflecting on how to establish and/or build the relationship between you and the person

THINK Do I know everything I need to know before I go?

References and Further Reading:

Hall, E. (1976) *Beyond Culture - Cultural Iceberg Model* [Accessible online at https://equity.spps.org/uploads/iceberg_model_3.pdf, accessed 03/06/2016]

LGA (2014) *Making Safeguarding Personal – Guide 2014*. London: Local Government Association.

Nosowska G and Series L (2013) *Good decision-making: Practitioners' Handbook*. Dartington: Research in Practice for Adults.

Nosowska (2015) *Good Assessment Practitioners' Handbook*. Dartington: Research in Practice for Adults.