



CONVERSATIONAL TIPS

TALKING WITH CLIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES/CARERS

Talking about wellness and reablement with clients and their families/carers can be daunting for front line employees. If clients and their families are unfamiliar with the concept and its benefits, it can be difficult to generate support and encourage participation. This can be even more difficult if front line employees are uncertain of term or do not feel confident talking about wellness and reablement.

This tool is designed to help front line employees have conversations with clients and their families/carers about wellness and reablement.

It provides conversational tips for communicating with clients on the approach and benefits of wellness and reablement.

In communicating and understanding your client's goals, concerns, and experiences, it is important for you to ensure your conversation style invites honesty and accuracy in information, so the care plan truly reflects the client's context. Engaging with the *OARS conversation technique* will assist you with this by:

- ensuring your questions are *open* ended
- you *affirm* the client's experiences and observations
- you practice *reflective listening*, so you do not direct the conversation
- you *summarise* the conversation so the client can hear your understanding of what they have spoken of.

A process for communicating

Wellness and reablement can be a confusing concept to clients and their families/carers. Many people are unfamiliar with the words and what they mean. It is important to communicate the concept in a way that is easy for clients and their families/carers to understand and that highlights the outcomes a client can enjoy from these approaches.

There is a sequence of steps you can follow to ensure the messages of wellness and reablement are clearly communicated.

STEP ONE: DEFINE

Define your delivery approach to set the right expectations



Align your approach to client's situation, explain to your client how you will work with them. That your wellness and reablement approach involves focusing on what they can do, rather than on what they can't do. Explain how you will include them in the process to help build their confidence and maintain/regain their independence.

Use the *More Good Days Wellness Wheel* to explain your approach in a way that is easy to understand and that the client can see themselves in. This will personalise it for the client and set the right expectation. It also prepares people and their families/carers to participate actively in their progress.

STEP TWO: ILLUSTRATE

Use examples to illustrate your approach



It is important that clear examples are also given to demonstrate how wellness and reablement works in reality. You can begin collecting your own organisation's case stories that can show wellness and reablement in action. These can be used in staff meetings to strengthen people's understanding of how wellness and reablement is applied and its outcome. These can also be shared via the community of practice platform to promote best-practice and good news stories.

It is important to focus on sharing stories which emphasise how you worked with the client to reach their outcomes e.g. we can get you gardening again once we work on some alternative techniques that will increase your confidence and regain your independence.

STEP THREE: BENEFITS

Bring it back to how your client will benefit



People have the most success implementing wellness and reablement when they outline the benefits and how they can help the client. Be clear with specific benefits of wellness and reablement approaches, including how the client will be able to regain/maintain a level on independence as well as often improving their overall wellbeing. Tie it to what is important to the client and gives their life meaning, think about the areas of the *More Good Days Wellness Wheel*.

A GUIDE TO THE BENEFITS OF WELLNESS AND REABLEMENT

A useful tool for front line workers to have is an overview of the benefits of wellness and reablement to share with the client and their family/carer, as this is key to enthusiastic participation.

Illustration of elderly consumer



Client

- improved sense of independence and self-worth
- improved physical and emotional health and wellbeing
- reduction in dependence on others for help
- increased ability to remain living safely in their own homes for longer
- greater quality of life
- increased sense of pride and dignity
- improved connection with their local community
- improved relationship with family and carer



Family/Carer

- an opportunity to be involved in supporting their loved one to reach their outcomes
- improved wellbeing and more time to focus on other areas of their life with the reassurance their loved one is developing independence
- improved relationships, by reducing the strain and pressure caring can have
- increased confidence about the older person's ability to care for themselves
- reduced concern over their loved one which can lead to more enjoyable experiences when they are with their loved one

REFLECTION TIME:

What experiences have you had with your clients which exhibit these benefits?

Can you think of any other benefits?

STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH TO COMMUNICATING

It is important that when you are communicating with a client about wellness and reablement you use a strength-based approach as opposed to a problems-based approach. This means, rather than focusing on what a person cannot do, you focus on what they can do. It is important to use encouraging words, promote independence and provide options to the client so they have a choice in how they participate.

Below are some examples of the differences between the problems-based approach and the strength-based approach. While the list is not exhaustive, it highlights some of the situations you will have with clients and their families/carers and provides you with an understanding of the **do's and don'ts**.

Context	 Do's	 Don'ts
Introducing how you are going to work with the client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "I am here to support you to achieve what matters most to you." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ "I am here to deliver your services for you"
Developing care plan with the client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "What does a good day look like for you?" ✓ "What does a good day look like for you?" (Using the <i>More Good Days Wellness Wheel</i>) ✓ "What is important to you?" ✓ "What can you picture yourself doing again?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ "What's the problem?" ✗ "What's not working?" ✗ "What's missing?"
Understanding the client's strengths and weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How can we work together to support you have more good days?" ✓ "What would you like to be doing/ do again?" ✓ "What's working and not working?" ✓ "What are you doing well?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ "What are some the things you can't do?" ✗ "What can I do for you?" ✗ "What do you need?"
The client/family/ carer objects wellness/reablement approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Describe the benefits of working together and how it will benefit the client in the long term ✓ Short-term support helps to build on, promote and enable action and choice ✓ Builds on client's strengths, motivations and works together to achieve client goals ✓ Increases their confidence and maximises their autonomy and independence ✓ Invite family to be involved in the process from the very first day to understand their role in their loved one's life and continue communication with them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Use jargon and/or unclear terminology that the client and/or family/carer does not understand ✗ Explain wellness and reablement in a generic way that has no meaning or value to the client
Encouraging the client to participate in wellness /reablement service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus on the outcomes they will achieve ✓ Collaborate with the client and empower them to identify solutions/approaches that are right for them and where they want to be ✓ Encourage and celebrate when your client succeeds ✓ Client has autonomy and should be involved in the decision-making process ✓ "Let's work together to do X, Y and Z" ✓ "Next time I come over, could you have X, Y or Z ready?" ✓ "Would you like to learn how to do this with me, so next time, we can practice you doing it?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Decide on the approach the client has to take ✗ Staff are experts and know best ✗ "I am here to do X, Y and Z"