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# Level 2 Award in Understanding Health Improvement

January 2011

7 Guided Learning Hours

Credit Value 1

QCA Qualification Number

## Description:

The aim of this qualification is to provide candidates with a knowledge and understanding of the principles of promoting health and wellbeing and of how successful candidates can direct individuals towards further practical support in their efforts to attain a healthier lifestyle.

The qualification covers examples of inequalities in health within the UK, explains possible reasons for why there are inequalities in health and current approaches to tackling these inequalities. How individuals can help others improve their health is central to this qualification. Candidates will learn how effective communication can support health messages, how to promote improvements in the health and well-being of others and understand the impact of change on improving an individual's health and well-being.

*Supported by the Department of Health*



## Summary of Outcomes:

To achieve this unit a candidate must:

1. **Know how inequalities in health may develop and what the current policies are for addressing these, *by being able to:***
  - 1.1 Give an example of health inequality, its effects and possible impact on local communities
  - 1.2 Identify the factors leading to health inequalities
  - 1.3 Outline the policies and methodologies for reducing inequalities in health
  
2. **Understand how effective communication can support health messages, *by being able to:***
  - 2.1 Identify the communication skills that are effective in communicating health messages
  - 2.2 Identify barriers to communication that may affect the understanding of health messages and strategies for overcoming these
  - 2.3 State the role of effective communication in the promotion of health messages
  
3. **Know how to promote improvements in health and well-being to individuals, *by being able to:***
  - 3.1 Give the western scientific model and World Health Organisation definitions of the term 'health and well-being'
  - 3.2 Identify positive and negative influences on health and well-being
  - 3.3 Give an example of a strategy for the promotion of health and well-being
  - 3.4 Identify resources that can be used for promoting health and well-being
  - 3.5 State how individuals can promote health and well-being
  
4. **Understand the impact of change on improving an individual's health and well-being, *by being able to:***
  - 4.1 Give an example of behaviour change that can improve an individual's health and well-being
  - 4.2 Outline how individuals can be encouraged to change their behaviour
  - 4.3 Identify positive and negative influences on behaviour change

***Examination questions may be set on any part of the content that is shown below***

**Content:**

**1. Inequalities in health**

1.1 *Examples of health inequalities:* differences in incidence of coronary heart disease, hypertension, cancer and obesity between different geographical regions, social and ethnic groups; variation in access to and uptake of health care services; effect of these differences on mortality and morbidity.

1.2 *Factors leading to health inequalities:* effect of factors such as social class, gender, ethnicity, income, environment, age and education on health and life expectancy.

1.3 *Policies for reducing inequalities in health:* Broad aims of Government policies such as *Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier* (2004) and *Our health, our care, our say* (2006); strengthening individuals; strengthening communities; improving access to health provision; encouraging a healthy public; dietary goals (simple goals only such as 'eat five a day', reduce fat and salt, increase fibre); NICE guidance (concept of NICE as a provider of guidance rather than specific examples).

**2. How effective communication can support health messages**

2.1 *Methods of effective communication:* role of communication in health improvement; communication skills – non-verbal, para-verbal, verbal and active listening; examples of each of these skills and their application; closed and open questioning.

2.2 *Barriers to communication:* barriers to communication and strategies for overcoming these such as use of translators, simplification of terms and words, repetition.

2.3 *Role of effective communication in promoting lifestyle / behaviour changes:* how brief interventions and simple statements of fact about health and healthy lifestyles can be used to prompt individuals to consider and make changes to their lifestyle; examples of brief interventions, their construction and use; use of signposting.

### 3. **Promote improvements in health and well-being**

3.1 *Definitions of health and well-being:* definitions of health to include the western scientific model and World Health Organisation definition; dimensions of health.

3.2 *Positive and negative influences on health and well-being:* effect of lifestyle, attitudes, smoking, diet, physical activity, alcohol intake and sexual health on health.

3.3 *Strategies for promotion of health and well-being:* definitions of health promotion; strategies for health promotion such as behavioural change, educational approach and social change; strengthening individuals and communities; immunisation programmes; improving the environment; improving access to healthcare facilities and resources; encouraging a healthy public policy; the concept of health as everyone's business.

3.4 *Resources:* sources of information and advice on health issues; advantages and disadvantages of information from different sources; resources for health improvement activities such as healthy eating and physical activity; health care centres and fitness centres.

3.5 *Role of individuals:* role of individuals in improving health and supporting local communities, identifying resources and ensuring their accessibility; examples of specific workers such as health trainers and health champions; importance of maintaining client confidentiality and methods for achieving this.

### 4. **Impact of change**

4.1 *How behaviour change can improve an individual's health and well-being:* benefits of increasing physical activity, reducing alcohol intake, reducing / stopping smoking and changing diet to health and well-being; goals for physical activity and diet; guidelines for alcohol intake; use of evidence from DCRS (Data Collection Reporting System) or other evidence records regarding the success of different health improvement strategies.

4.2 *How individuals can be encouraged to change their behaviour:* Different ways in which individuals can be encouraged to change their behaviour and supported whilst doing so, such as how to motivate individuals, confidence building and self-efficacy; goal setting; application of smart principles.

4.3 *Positive and negative influences on behaviour change:* effect of an individual's attitude, values and beliefs on behaviour change; peer pressure; set-backs and lapses and how to support these; non-achievement; use of rewards.

## Assessment:

Attainment of the Learning Outcomes will be assessed by a multiple-choice examination. A candidate who is able to satisfy the learning outcomes will be awarded a score of at least 20/30 in the examination.

The multiple choice examination is provided by The Society. The examination consists of 30 questions. The duration of the examination is 45 minutes.

## Guidance:

### Suggested Reading:

- Bernard, M. (2000). *Promoting Health in Old Age: Critical Issues in Self Health Care*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Burnard, P (1997). *Effective Communication Skills for Health Professionals*. London. Nelson Thornes.
- Ewles, L., Simnett, I. (2005). *Promoting Health: A Practical Guide, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. London: Bailliere Tindall.
- Mason, P & Butler, C. (2010) *Health Behaviour Change- A guide for practitioners*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Elsevier Ltd.
- Naidoo, J., Wills, J. (2000). *Health Promotion: Foundations for Practice*. London. Bailliere Tindall
- Sidell, M. (1997). *Debates & Dilemmas in Promoting Health: A Reader*. Basingstoke: Macmillan for Open University Press.
- Sussex, F., Scourfield. *Social Care: Level Four*. Oxford Heinmann Educational Publishers.
- Squire, A (2002). *Health and Wellbeing for Older People: Foundations for Practice*. London. Bailliere Tindall.
- The Data Protection Act 1998 <http://www.dataprotection.gov.uk/dprhome.htm>

### Department of Health publications and papers:

- Improving Health: Changing Behaviour: NHS Health Trainer Handbook. Michie S et al. DoH 2007
- Promoting Optimal Self Care S. Tomkins & A Collins DoH 2005
- The white paper, Saving Lives: our Healthier Nation - DoH July 1999
- For the Record: Managing Records in the NHS Trusts and Health Authorities <http://www.doh.gov.uk/nhsexec/manrec.htm>
- National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE): Public health programme guidance on Behaviour Change, Oct 2007. <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11868>

### Recommended prior learning:

There are no recommended prior learning requirements for this qualification. The Society does, however, recommend that candidates have a level of

literacy and numeracy equivalent to *Level 1* (but see notes on Special Assessment Needs below)

### **Key Skills:**

It is expected that the delivery of this qualification should provide opportunities for the development of the following key skills:

Application of Number Level 2  
Communication Level 2  
Information and Communication Technology Level 2

Guidelines for key skills are shown in Appendix 1.

### **Other Issues:**

The delivery of this qualification could provide opportunities for contributing to an understanding of Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural issues and an awareness of Environmental issues, Health and Safety considerations and European developments. Possible areas for discussion are shown below.

Spiritual, social and cultural issues	These issues are integral to this award. Candidates may discuss the spiritual, social and cultural influences on individuals and how these may affect how they think and feel about themselves, their lifestyle and changing it.
Moral, ethical and legislative issues, including health and safety	Candidates may discuss moral issues relating to the adverse effects of inequalities on health, by considering aspects such as ethnicity, employment and social class. Ethical issues on maintenance of confidentiality in relation to personal information known or held about individuals may be considered. These issues are integral to this award. Regarding health and safety, candidates may consider whether there are any risk factors relating to their work role and how they might address them.
Economic issues	Candidates may discuss the financial cost to individuals, and the wider economic cost, of poor health. This issue is integral to this award.
Environment and sustainability issues	Candidates may consider ways in which people's lifestyles may impact on the environment and on sustainable living, for example the quantity of waste that is produced (eg food, food wrapping and plastic bottles, cigarette packets).
European and global issues	In considering social and cultural influences on health, candidates may wish to compare such influences on lifestyles in the UK and in other countries. The World Health Organization's definition of health, and its five key principles of health promotion, underpins all the outcomes of this award.

## **National Occupational Standards**

The qualification has been mapped to the following National Occupational Standards of Skills for Health:

Unit HT1 Make relationships with communities

Unit HT2 Communicate with individuals about promoting their health and wellbeing

Unit HT3 Enable individuals to change their behaviour to improve their own health and wellbeing

Further details of these National Occupational Standards can be obtained from RSPH Qualifications.

The qualification is also mapped to the following dimensions of the NHS Key Skills Framework:

Communication: Communicate with a range of people on a range of matters

Dimension HWB1: Promotion of health and well-being and prevention of adverse effects on health and well-being

Dimension HWB4: Enablement to address health and well-being needs

## **Special Needs:**

Centres that have candidates with special needs should consult *The Society's Regulations and Guidance for Candidates with Special Assessment Needs*; this is available from The Society and The Society's web site ([www.rsph.org.uk](http://www.rsph.org.uk)).

## **Recommended Qualifications and Experience of Tutors:**

The Society would expect that tutors have teaching experience and a qualification in a relevant subject area, but recognises that experienced teachers can often compensate for a lack of initial subject knowledge, or experienced practitioners for a lack of teaching experience.

Centres should be registered with The Society

Any enquiries about this qualification should be made to:

The Qualifications Department,  
Royal Society for Public Health,  
3rd Floor Market Towers,  
1, Nine Elms Lane,  
London SW8 5NQ

Tel. 020 3177 1600  
Fax. 020 3177 1601  
E.mail: [info@rsph.org.uk](mailto:info@rsph.org.uk)  
Web-site [www.rsph.org.uk](http://www.rsph.org.uk)

## Appendix One: Key Skills Guidelines

This qualification provides a number of opportunities for candidates to develop competence in key skills and to produce evidence towards attainment of key skills. Successful completion of the qualification does not in itself imply attainment of the listed key skills; this is dependent on the candidate producing a portfolio of evidence and the teaching and learning methods adopted by the tutor(s) and candidate in the delivery of the qualification.

The specification content, which provides the most appropriate opportunity for key skill development, is signposted below.

### Application of Number

Skill	Specification Content
<b>N2.1</b> Interpret information from a suitable source.	Candidates could be asked to interpret statistics on the incidence of ill health caused by smoking, over-eating, lack of exercise and similar lifestyle behaviours .
<b>N2.2</b> Use your information to carry out calculations to do with: a amounts or sizes b scales or proportion c handling statistics d using formulae.	Candidates could be asked to show how statistics compare over time, for the various diseases amongst different age groups, social classes and geographical areas.

### Communication

Skill	Specification Content
<b>C2.1a</b> Take part in a group discussion.	Any part of the content could be used as the basis for a discussion
<b>C2.2</b> Read and summarise information from at least <b>two</b> documents about the same subject. Each document must be a minimum of 500 words long.	Information about any part of the content could be obtained from leaflets, books and articles.



## Information and Communication Technology

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Specification Content</b>
<b>ICT1.1</b> Find and select relevant information.	Information about any part of the content could be obtained from and presented by the use of Information Technology
<b>ICT2.1</b> Search for and select information to meet your needs. Use different information sources for each task and multiple search criteria in at least one case.	Information about any part of the content could be obtained from leaflets, books and articles.