

Capable Environments

We can help people with Learning Disability live a fulfilling life in the community by making sure we create an environment that meets their needs.

How to create a capable environment:

(Adapted from McGill et al., 2014)



- ✓ **Positive social interactions.**
Carers regularly interact with the person in a way the person enjoys and understands e.g. using pictures, intensive interaction.



- ✓ **Support communication.**
Carers understand how the person communicates. Clear communication guidelines or passport are in place to ensure this is followed in all settings, by all carers.



- ✓ **Support the person to participate in meaningful activities.**
Carers regularly encourage and help the person to engage with preferred home, leisure, work activities and social interactions e.g. community groups, shopping, music, sports.



- ✓ **Consistent and predictable environment.**
All carers support the person in the same way. They ensure the person understands as much as possible about what is happening now and next e.g. routine, visual timetable.



- ✓ **Help the person to make or maintain relationships with family and friends.**
Carers actively support the person to build and maintain relationships e.g. visit family, activities with friends.



- ✓ **Regular opportunities for choice-making.**
The person is involved as much as possible in deciding on what they would like and how to spend their time e.g. choosing activities, meals, who supports them that day.



- ✓ **Encourage independence and opportunities to learn new skills.**
Carers support the person to learn new skills, try new experiences and encourage independence as much as possible e.g. cooking, house chores, trying new activities.



- ✓ **Personal care and health support.**
Carers are attentive to the person's personal and healthcare needs. They can recognise when a person is in pain/discomfort and gain support from healthcare professionals.



- ✓ **Appropriate physical environment to meet the person's needs.**
The physical environment meets the person's needs/preferences e.g. lighting, noise, space, temperature and safety.



- ✓ **Mindful, skilled carers.**
All carers understand the person's needs and behaviours. They know how to respond and provide the appropriate support e.g. training.



- ✓ **Support from management.**
Carers receive regular support from their manager/s. The safety and quality of care for both the person and carer/s is successfully recognised and delivered.

Reference: McGill, P., Bradshaw, J., Smyth, G., Hurman, M. & Roy, A. (2014) *Capable Environments*. Chapter in: Banks, R. & Bush, A.(eds) *Challenging Behaviour: A Unified Approach*. London: Royal College of Psychiatrists.

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