

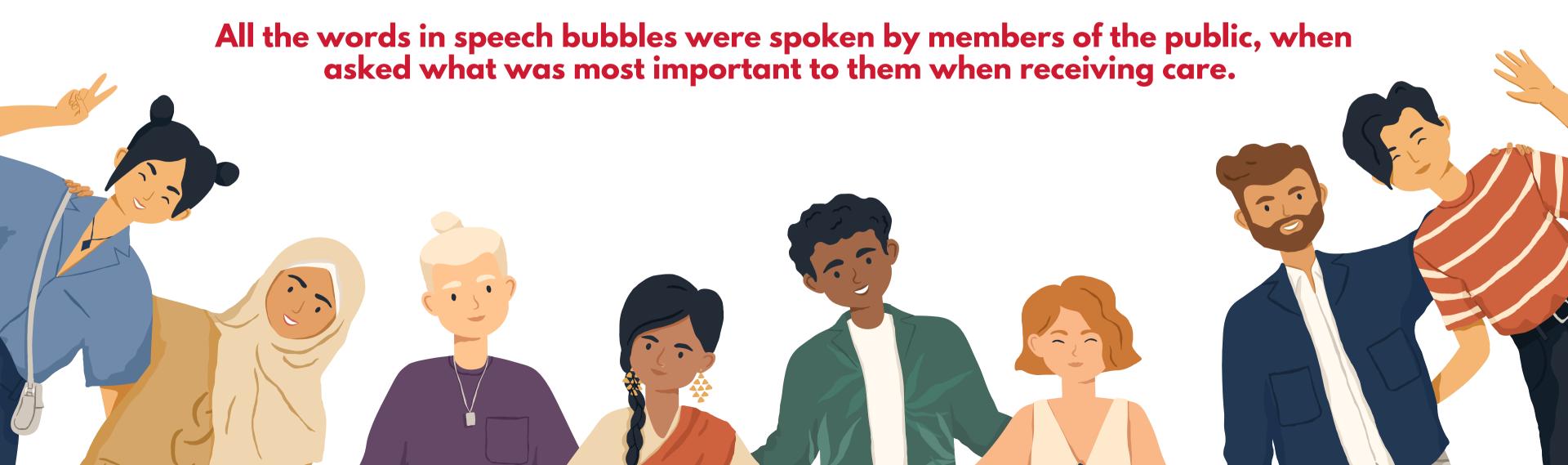
Understanding the people you are caring for

A COMMUNITY RESEARCH PROJECT



During the summer of 2023, Staffordshire University Service User and Carer Team was awarded funding to complete a community research project. The team decided to create an educational resource to help health and social care students to understand the diverse needs of service users and carers. We found that these needs fitted into four categories...

Communication Holistic Care Equality Carers' Experience



Communication

Hear, not just listen.

Repeat key words.

Be person-centred.

Do not use jargon.

Think about body language – open not closed.

Stop making me feel rushed.

I found it difficult to understand what they meant.

There's an assumption we won't always understand, which quite often isn't the case.

Initial contact can make or break trust.

Actually look at me.

No decision made about me without me.

Communication is the fundamental key to a positive journey and outcome.

MILLE

Some discussions where it may be routine to a medic are very personal to a patient.

Maintain dignity – patients can be vulnerable.

Polite, patient, respectful.

Be clear.

Discuss options with the patient.

Explain each aspect of my care.

Ask for advice – understand your limitations.

Understanding – not sympathy.

It can be quite uncomfortable hearing others discuss your medical conditions openly on a ward or in a waiting area.



Holistic Care

See the person, not just the illness, symptoms or process.

Be present. Use a whole-person approach.

I'm not a problem to be solved

Treat each service user as an individual not as a condition.

I am not 'the gall bladder in bed 8'.

Helping is collaborative.

Try to understand both – the patient and the illness.

Don't assume

Add value to a patient's life.

I am unique.

Use my name.

Protect yourself as well as the patient

The person you see in front of you has not always been the person you now see... they were not always vulnerable and dependent on others.





Equality

Empathy is one of the best qualities of a healthcare professional.

Treat each person as an individual

Start by reflective practice – it can really make a difference to you and to patients.

Having empathy to be able to connect with the service user or carer and the situation they are in.

It's not the condition that defines them.
Who are they?

Create a safe, nonjudgmental environment

Culture, beliefs, values, biases and prejudices need to be understood.

MILLE

Feeling respected enables relationships to develop.



Imagine how you would wish your loved ones to be spoken to.

Carers' Experience

is paramount, with the patient, families and with colleagues.

MILLE

Focus on the service user but also communicate effectively with the carer.

Treat them as you and your nearest would like to be treated, with care, kindness, dignity, understanding and compassion, but above all with your time and respect.

Ill-health impacts that of their full-time carers/partners/supporters - this is not always considered.

Understand the role of the carer and always include them.

Making sure that patients and families are fully informed about what is going on.

Including family carers in information sharing leads to improved health care and wellbeing.

Not only are your patients nervous, frightened, suffering and vulnerable, so are their family and carers.



Thank You



Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this project by giving us their time and honest opinions.

With thanks to the Connected Communities Team at Staffordshire University for funding this Participatory Action Research Project and to the University Ethics Team for their guidance.

Particular thanks to the community researchers, Tricia Fullwood, Janet Holdcroft and Robert Lafferty.

Please share this resource with anyone who may find it useful. We hope that this resource reminds us all to keep care person-centred.

For more information, please contact anna.richards@staffs.ac.uk

