How to be a good role model

Look to colleagues you admire and try to emulate what they do well

By Mandy Day-Calder

The Cambridge dictionary defines a role model as ‘a person who someone admires and whose behaviour they try to copy’. When considering what professional traits you would like to portray to others, it might help to think of colleagues who inspire you.

Ask yourself what particular qualities they display and how these positively affect patient care. Then reflect on what you can do to develop your practice so that you embrace some of these behaviours.

**Lead by example**

Starting on any ward or clinical environment can be stressful. As a new member of staff tries to fit in with the team, they will be influenced by how others behave.

Usually it is impractical to roster someone with their mentor every shift, so all staff have a responsibility to promote professionalism and demonstrate safe and respectful practice. In particular:

- **Strive for high standards at all times:** As well as focusing on the care you deliver, pay close attention to the way you communicate with patients and staff and how cooperative you are with other members of the multi-disciplinary team.
- **Watch your language:** This doesn’t just mean don’t swear. Be careful of what phrases and terminology you use – are they appropriate for your patient’s age and culture? Something you consider funny others might find offensive, so use humour sensitively.
# How to be a transformational leader

‘By modelling a willingness to work directly with individuals, families and groups, I hope to get the best out of the staff I manage and the students I teach.’

rcni.com/transformational-leader

‘There is much more to CPD than just learning something – it is about putting into practice, reflecting on how it went and receiving clinical supervision’

RCN professional lead for older people and dementia care Dawne Garrett

# How to be a good role model

» Respect others: By demonstrating compassion, honesty and integrity you are setting a good benchmark for others to copy. Simple phrases such as ‘I’ll be there in a minute’ are often not true. Try setting a more truthful example for new staff to follow, for example by saying ‘I will be back once I have done X’. Treat others as you would want to be treated and hopefully your approach will ‘catch on’.

» Work as part of a team: Admitting when you need assistance or guidance is an effective way to show new staff what accountability in practice really means. Be supportive of all members of the team, not just those to whom you are closest. Don’t allow conflicts to escalate – address them quickly, sensitively and without being defensive.

» Keep learning: Let junior colleagues see that you are open to new opinions and experiences. Also make sure that you admit to any mistakes and show that you are able to learn from them and adapt.

Mandy Day-Calder is a freelance writer and life/health coach

# Free e-learning next step for ‘isolated’ care home nurses

Online CPD sessions already available to NHS staff will soon be free for those working in care homes, covering a wide range of topics

By Erin Dean

New research involving more than 350 care home nurses, managers, community healthcare professionals and nurse educators has identified priority areas for CPD – with personal care, dementia care and managing long-term conditions top of the list.

Tissue viability, end-of-life care, falls prevention, medicines management and clinical skills such as venepuncture were other areas highlighted by participants.

Nurses also described feeling isolated and said they struggle to access CPD, according to the research, published last month in Age and Ageing journal.

‘This is an important part of the CPD jigsaw that can be accessed anywhere’

Jean Christensen

RCN professional lead for older people and dementia care Dawne Garrett urges care home nurses to reach out to each other for support. The RCN’s older people’s forum