**Discriminatory practice**

**Real life care…………**

The following conversation took place at 7.30am in a resident’s bedroom in a care home.

*Care worker:* Morning Mabel, let’s have you up then, come on…

*Service user:* What time is it?

*Care worker:* It’s 7.30 – time you were up and dressed.

*Service user:* I want to stay in bed

*Care worker:* Now come on, don’t give me a hard time. I have to get you up just like everyone else. They’ll say I’m not doing my job if you stay here and I’m not having that. (Lifts service user to side of bed) Right now, what dress shall we have today? The blue one, that looks nice – let’s help you into this.

*Service user:* What’s for breakfast?

*Care worker:* Bacon and egg, same as always – something nice – eh? I wish someone would wait on me and cook me breakfast!

*Service user:* But I don’t eat bacon.

*Care worker:* Well you ought to be grateful – you don’t have to eat it, you know. Hey, you’re not one of those nutty one’s who don’t eat meat, are you? I hate all those moaners, never pleased what ever you do for them, meats too good for ‘em, that’s

what I say!

Right now I’ll wash your face and hands, it’ll be quicker. I haven’t got all day. After that t, I’ll put you on the toilet while I help Rose downstairs.

*(Shouts down the corridor)* I’m just putting this one on the toilet. I won’t be a minute

Rose.

Activity; In pairs discuss the following and make a list below…

1. 1. Describe how this conversation could have negative consequences for Mabel.
2. 2. Identify some of Mabel’s rights which have been ignored.
3. 3. Explain how the conversation should go in order to meet Mabel’s rights

Make your list here….

Compare your list of rights that have been ignored with the one below;

1. **Discrimination**. The service user may not like bacon because her ethnic customs, religious or moral beliefs. People who do not-meat are labelled 'nutty ones' by the care worker. The care worker discriminating against people who do not think the way they do. The worker is also forcing their opinions on a powerless person.
2. **Care**. The service user is not being cared for in a way that meets hi needs or takes account of her choices; she is being given orders by the care worker. The conversation fails to value Mabel. In the end, the service user gives up and groans 'Oh
3. **Respect for others**. There is no evidence of respect. The service user is accused of being 'nutty'. She is not allowed to stay in bed (although in the past she used to get up later). The service user's routine is not respected. Finally, the service user gets put on the toilet while the care worker helps Rose. The service user is treated like an object rather than a person.
4. **Choice and dignity.** The service user's rights are not respected; is given no choice. She has no dignity and is ignored, e.g. by being pulled out of bed against her wishes. The service user is not given any independence and has to follow the care worker's routine. The service user has no choice of what to wear or eat for breakfast. Everyone gets eggs and bacon!
5. **Privacy**. The service user has no right to privacy The care worker shouts down the corridor that ‘this one’ is being put on the toilet. Going to the toilet is now a public event –The service user is denied any privacy for her personal body functions

The conversation between Mabel and the care worker lasted only a few minutes, but in that time Mabel's rights were ignored. If this were to go on throughout the day, the service user would have a very poor quality of life. Some people might say that Mabel would have little to live for!

If care workers respect individual rights and work using the care values, a caring conversation might go like this:

*Care worker:* Good morning, Mabel. How are you feeling this morning?

*Service* user: What time is it?

*Care worker:*  It's 7.30. Do you feel like getting up for breakfast yet? Service user: No, I want to say in bed a bit longer.

*Care worker:* That's all right. Shall I come back in half an hour?

*Service user:* Mmmmm

*Care worker:* See you later. (Iater) Good morning, Mabel. It’ s 8 o'clock, ready to get up now?

*Service user:* All right.

*Care worker:* What would you like to wear? There's the blue dress or the white one, or the yellow top and skirt. What do you think?

*Service user:* Don't know.

*Care worker:* Well, would the blue dress be good? It matches the colour eyes, you know.

*Service user:* (Laughs) Go on then ... What's for breakfast?

*Care worker:* Well, there is bacon and egg.

*Service user:* I don't eat bacon.

*Care worker:* Oh, I'm sorry; I forgot you don't eat bacon. There's lots of things you can have toast or cereal, or fruit, coffee, bread and marmalade. What would you like?

*Service user:* Don't know.

*Care worker:* Well, we'll go through the list when we get downstairs.

*Service user:* Toast.

Care worker: OK, toast. I'll make sure you get some toast. Would you like wash now or later? Would you like me to help you? Do you use a flannel? Let me see if I can find it for you.

This time, the care worker enables the service user to communicate her needs and be empowered and feel valued as an individual. Communication is used effectively and in a way that values diversity and is non-discriminatory. The service user is respected and her needs understood. Mabel's privacy is respected and she makes her choices.

Tensions between rights and responsibilities

Service users have a right to choose their lifestyle and their beliefs, but person's lifestyle and beliefs must not reduce the quality of other people's lives. Rights have to be balanced with responsibilities.

People have a rights act as they wish, but not a right to cause problems for others.

For example, people have a right to smoke, even though smoking causes serious illnesses, including heart disease and cancer. However, people do not have the right to make others breathe in their smoke and risk their health.