

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Element 1 *Identify the needs of the customer*

Element 2 *Provide information to customers*

Element 3 *Help customers to resolve queries and complaints*

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Background

Good and effective customer service is 'always doing the right things in the right way' for your customers. This is very important, as it presents your customers with a positive professional image of a service which meets their expectations and needs.

It is important to behave in a courteous manner towards all your customers at all times. Good customer service requires excellent communication skills, empathy and diplomacy.

All your customers are entitled to:-

- receive good quality products and service
- your full focus and attention
- ask questions and receive the appropriate answers and information
- the right to make a complaint about the products or service they have received
- be treated with respect, fairness and courtesy

Your customers may be patients, patient's carers or representatives coming into your organisation, or your colleagues and other healthcare professionals from within your organisation.

Good customer service requires your on-going commitment and should be delivered by staff that are trained to know who their customers are, and are focused on meeting their customers' needs.

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Key words and concepts

These definitions are provided to explain how key words and concepts are used in this unit

Standard Operating Procedures

these are referred to as SOPs and include written protocols and procedures. They state the way your organisation requires tasks to be carried out to ensure a quality pharmacy service is provided. They will include, for example, the questions you must ask a client so that you can correctly identify their needs and the action you must take.

Customers

in this unit this word is used to cover people for whom you, your team or organisation provide a service. Customers refer to a member of your department who is working in a different section, a patient, a patient's representative, other health care professionals or a client.

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Knowledge and Understanding

You must show that you know and understand:

For the whole unit

- K1** The importance of SOPs, what they contain and why it is important that they should be followed at all times.
- K2** The importance of retaining customer loyalty and confidence to the organisation and how you contribute towards it.
- K3** The organisation's policy on customer service and customer relationships and how this applies to your job.
- K4** The organisation's procedure for handling complaints.

Identifying customer needs

- K5** The importance of establishing your customer's requirements clearly and accurately.
- K6** Why verbal and non verbal signals are important when communicating with customers.

Provide information

- K6** How to give clear and accurate information and check the customer's understanding.
- K8** Knowledge of relevant products for which information is required.
- K9** Where to get assistance if you can't provide information and advice yourself.
- K10** What source of information to use, what information is given to the customer, what type of information/advice must be applied by the pharmacist.

Resolve queries and complaints

- K11** How to assess complaints and what action to take.
- K12** When you should refer complaints to a higher authority.
- K13** How to manage conflict and/or customers who are angry.

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Activities

1. **Attend your organisation's training on customer care and communication skills. Complete an evaluation form of what you have learnt. If you do not have these facilities within your organisation, with help from your Trainer/Assessor, use some of the training resources available from London Pharmacy Education and Training.**
2. **With assistance from your Trainer/Assessor, locate and read all relevant departmental and organisational procedures and policies relating to customer care and communication. Discuss key points with your Trainer/Assessor.**
3. **Spend some time work shadowing an experienced colleague, observing how they provide good customer care and deal with difficult situations, both face to face and on the telephone.**
4. **Whilst work shadowing, observe and list as many different types of ' non-verbal communication' as possible, e.g. facial expressions. Discuss with your Trainer/Assessor how you can use verbal and non-verbal communication to help you identify the needs and feelings of your customer.**
5. **Spend some time with your Trainer/Assessor discussing the different roles and expertise of your colleagues within your department, to understand:**
 - a. **when you need to refer information**
 - b. **Who the relevant person is that you need to refer to**
 - c. **How you go about the process of referral**
6. **Identify and list the types of services that your customers may require and what you need to do in order to provide them effectively.**
7. **With your Trainer/Assessor, carry out some role play telephone activities:**
 - **Briefly demonstrate how you would answer the telephone.**
 - **Describe what information you should write down when taking a message over the telephone.**
 - **Describe what you would do if a customer becomes aggressive over the telephone.**
 - **Identify any situations that could arise that you might need to refer to another member of staff.**
 - **Describe what you would do if a customer was requiring information about medicines, symptoms or healthcare.**
 - **Describe how you would answer requests about your department's services.**
 - **Describe what you would do if either you or your customer cannot understand each other, for both a face to face or a telephone situation.**
 - **Describe what you would do if a product or service was unavailable.**
 - **Describe what you would do if a customer wanted to complain.**

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K1 The importance of SOPs, what they contain and why it is important that they should be followed at all times.

- What procedures are in place in your organisation and department which relate to customer service and customer relations?
- What are the key points covered in these procedures?

- Why is it important that you follow these procedures?
- What could happen if you did not follow these procedures?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K2 The importance of retaining customer loyalty and confidence to the organisation and how you contribute towards it.

- Who are your "internal" customers?

- Who are your "external" customers?

- What is the difference between "internal" and "external" customers?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K2 The importance of retaining customer loyalty and confidence to the organisation and how you contribute towards it.

- What is customer loyalty?

- Why is it important to retain customer loyalty to your organisation?

- What is your role in retaining customer loyalty to your organisation?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K2 The importance of retaining customer loyalty and confidence to the organisation and how you contribute towards it.

- What is customer confidence?

- Why is it important to retain customer confidence to your organisation?

- What is your role in retaining customer confidence to your organisation?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K3 The organisation's policy on customer service and customer relationships and how this applies to your job.

- How does your organisation's policy on customer service and customer relationship apply to your job?

- What are your role and responsibilities relating to customer service and customer relationships?

- What are the roles and responsibilities of other members of your team relating to customer service and customer relationships?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K4 The organisation's procedure for handling complaints.

- What procedures are in place in your organisation for handling complaints?
- What are the key points covered in these procedures?

- Why is it important that you follow these procedures?
- What could happen if you did not follow these procedures?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K5 The importance of establishing your customer's requirements clearly and accurately.

- Why is it important to establish the requirements of your customers clearly and accurately?
- What could happen if you did not establish the requirements of your customers clearly and accurately?

- What can you do to ensure that you establish the requirements of your customers clearly and accurately?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K5 The importance of establishing your customer's requirements clearly and accurately.

- What difficult situations might you encounter when dealing with customers?
- What can you do to ensure that you establish the requirements of your customers in these difficult situations?

- What special needs might your customers have?
- What can you do to ensure that you establish the requirements of your customers with special needs?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K6 Why verbal and non verbal signals are important when communicating with customers.

- What is meant by communication?

- Why is it important that you communicate effectively with your customers?

- What methods can you use to communicate effectively with your customers?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K6 Why verbal and non verbal signals are important when communicating with customers.

- What is verbal communication?

- In what situations would you use verbal communication with your customers?

- What are the barriers to effective verbal communication with your customers?
- How could you try to overcome those barriers?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K6 Why verbal and non verbal signals are important when communicating with customers.

- What is non-verbal communication?

- What is positive body language?

- Why is it important to use positive body language when communicating with your customers?

- Why is it important to be aware of the non-verbal signals of your customers when communicating with them?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K7 How to give clear and accurate information and check the customer's understanding.

- What types of information do you provide for your customers?

- Why is it important that you provide accurate information to your customers?

- Why is it important that your customers understand the information that you provide?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K7 How to give clear and accurate information and check the customer's understanding.

- How can you check that your customers understand the information that you provide?

- What you would do if your customer can not understand the information that you provide?

- What you would do if you could not understand your customer when communicating with them?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K8 Knowledge of relevant products for which information is required.

- Which of the products that you provide require you to give additional information to your customers?
- For each of these products, what additional information is required?

- Why is it important that you give this information to your customers?
- What could happen if you did not give this information to your customers?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K9 Where to get assistance if you can't provide information and advice yourself.

- What are your role and responsibilities in providing information and advice to your customers?

- What are the roles and responsibilities of other members of your team in providing information and advice to your customers?

- Where would you get assistance if you were unable to provide information and advice to a customer yourself?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K10 What source of information to use, what information is given to the customer, what type of information/advice must be applied by the pharmacist.

- What information sources do you use when providing information to your customers?

- What types of information and advice do you give to your customers?

- What types of information and advice must be given by the pharmacist?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K11 How to assess complaints and what action to take.

- What should you do if a customer wanted to make a complaint?

- How would you assess what action needed to be taken in response to a complaint?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K12 When you should refer complaints to a higher authority.

- In which situations would you deal with a complaint yourself?

- In which situations would you refer the complaint to someone else?
- For each of these situations, to whom would you refer?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

Questions

K13 How to manage conflict and/or customers who are angry.

- What conflict situations have you encountered when dealing with your customers?
- How did you handle those situations?
- What would you do differently if you were to encounter those situations again?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K13 How to manage conflict and/or customers who are angry.

- Under what circumstances would you attempt to resolve a conflict situation with a customer?
- What action would you take in these circumstances?

- Under what circumstances would you refer a conflict situation with a customer to someone else?
- For each of these situations, to whom would you refer?

Unit 201 Assist with the provision of a pharmacy customer service

(continued)

K13 How to manage conflict and/or customers who are angry.

- Under what circumstances would you attempt to deal with an angry or aggressive customer yourself?
- What action would you take in these circumstances?

- Under what circumstances would you refer an angry or aggressive customer to someone else?
- For each of these situations, to whom would you refer?

