

# M.A.D. Adventures

(Mainstream's Accreditation Dream)

## How we do our work is as important as the work we do

### Domain 7: Communication and Information Management

Domain 7 is one of the most wide ranging domains that we have to tackle as it includes a variety of different methods of communication. It reviews how we communicate with the media, how we manage our computer technology and how we support people who do not use speech to communicate. All this in only 11 standards!

The A-TEAM has worked through the first few standards which deal mostly with how we recognize and support the various communication styles of the people we support. After plenty of discussion, and a few emails to FOCUS, a few common themes have begun to emerge.

First of all, it is important to point out that Mainstream staff do an exceptional job when it comes to supporting people, many of whom have unique communication styles. As is often the case, we are very good at what we do, but we need to be able to show it to others. Most of the time, the knowledge that staff have gained from working with people is not documented and therefore it would be difficult for new staff to know how to effectively communicate with someone. It's the 649 rule again!

FOCUS wants us to document the various communication methods of people using services. They don't need us to write down the meaning of every gesture someone makes but they do want us to keep track of how each person communicates, be it verbally, sign language, communication boards or other means. We need to come up with an effective way of doing that.

The second theme that emerged was that we need to get better at showing what has been done to support people to develop their communication skills. For example, if attempts were made to use visuals to help someone express themselves, were those attempts, and their success rates, documented? How will new staff know what has been tried and what hasn't?

These were just some of the questions raised during the last accreditation meeting. Over the next few weeks, we will try to come up with the best way to answer these questions so that we can provide the highest level of service to the people we support.

*Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy, and mutual valuing.*

*Rollo May*

### FOCUS on SUPPORTIVE INDEPENDENT LIVING

Celebrating success is an important part of our person-centered planning process but it is also an important part of our accreditation process. Great things have been happening across the agency, and everyone and every program should be proud of what has been accomplished.

This issue of M.A.D. Adventures is focusing on Supportive Independent Living. SIL has undergone some significant changes over the past few months, many of which were done to meet accreditation standards. Change is never easy and doing so much so quickly can feel overwhelming. Yet the SIL team has been phenomenal and everyone should be proud of what they've accomplished. They have completed Quality of Life for all of the people they support and have already held several ILP (Individual Lifestyle Plan) meetings. They have updated their client binders, completed med exams, and updated their contact note and financial tracking systems. A great new system for organizing finances and medication has also been put into place. Congratulations SIL, you've done an amazing job!

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## Mission Possible Update

It has already been four weeks since we posted our Mission:Possible posters across the agency. When they first went up, we had met 70/158 standards. Well, four weeks later, after lots of hard work, form developing and policy writing, we now meet 83/158 standards! What a productive month!!

Here is a summary of what has been accomplished in the last few weeks. We have written a Code of Ethics policy to accompany the Code of Ethics that we developed, with your help, before Christmas. Your A-TEAM representative will be presenting the Code of Ethics in your upcoming staff meetings.

We also worked very hard on Domain 15: When Support is Provided in a Person's Home and Domain 16: When Support is Provided to Adults During the Day. When we first did the Gap Analysis on these two domains, we only met two standards out of a total of 17. Thanks to all of the hard work that has been done across the agency on the person-centered planning process, we now meet 15 out of 17 standards in Domains 15 & 16. That's phenomenal!

The two standards remaining will hopefully be done by the end of March. First of all, we need to ensure that we have updated photographs of each person using services. The reason for this is so that, in the case of a missing person, we have a picture that can help in the search. A picture will complement the emergency data that we already have for each person and ensure that we are equipped to handle such an emergency.

The other standard that we have to meet in Domain 16 is to create a document that informs the people using services of their rights and responsibilities. The A-TEAM felt that the best way to develop such a document is to have the people using services develop it themselves. So, Julie's Rights Class will be helping to create that document over the next few weeks. Once complete, it will be presented to everyone and given out to anyone who begins using our services. Ideally, this rights and responsibilities

document would be reviewed regularly with people using services so that it becomes a part of our rights culture at Mainstream.

Domain 1: Ethical Practices, Rights and Responsibilities is another domain that we have been working on. Policies have all been updated to meet FOCUS requirements and our next challenge is to ensure that current practices match these policies. Domain 1 focuses on issues of consent, confidentiality and privacy. It turns out that different programs have different practices when it comes to obtaining a person's consent before sharing information or taking pictures. Ideally, we need to come up with a consistent way of obtaining a person's consent, documenting this consent and reviewing it on a regular basis. As this is an agency-wide challenge, this discussion will most likely happen at the Management level. Once a decision is made, we will meet several more standards in Domain 1.

In our first Quarterly Report, which was released last December, our goal was to meet 30 more standards before the next Quarterly Meeting at the end of March. Since December, we have almost met 15 more standards and we still have a month to go. We're right on track! Thank you to everyone for your hard work and dedication.

