



OPEN
TRAINING
COLLEGE

Standardising Support to Service Users

**BUILDING RESPONSIVE SERVICES
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

Standardising Support to Service Users

St. Michaels House is the largest Dublin-based service providing support for citizens with intellectual disability. Ensuring that staff have the tools and knowledge needed to support people labelled as challenging is an ongoing priority. However, the recent publication of the Positive Behaviour Supports policy has highlighted the need to ensure that all support staff and managers adopt a common set of formalised practices that are aligned with the strategy.

The Open Training College has worked with the organisation's psychology and training departments to develop a set of nationally accredited programmes that address this need.

Positive Behaviour Supports

This QQI Level 5 course is a two-module programme that is used to:

- Promote a shared understanding of positive behaviour supports
- Provide the foundational knowledge required to deliver inclusive, person-centred services to people exhibiting challenging behaviour

Managing A Positive Behaviour Culture

The QQI Level 7 Special Purpose Award examines the positive behaviour methodology in more detail and explores standardised person-centred services as a management issue. It investigates the:

- Regulatory framework
- Issues associated with managing a team charged with implementing a consistent, effective approach capable of achieving positive quality of life outcomes

A Sector-Specific Delivery Methodology

Each programme has been designed to address the pressures and challenges faced by people working in human services. It is based on a blended learning model that combines online learning with expert-led workshops. The eLearning component makes use of the college's open supported learning model which prioritises the learner in the learning experience.

Materials are created in a way that allows people build their study around their work schedule thereby reducing the pressures of combining work with study.

Supports are put in place to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and encourage the development of a learning community that is both mutually supportive and provides a mechanism for linking learning to real world experience. This is something that is at the heart

Standardising Support to Service Users

of the expert-led workshops which are designed to facilitate the application of knowledge in the workplace. Staff from St. Michael's Psychology department lead these sessions which are facilitated by staff from the college who combine expertise in supporting adult learners with extensive first-line experience.

Initial Feedback

These programmes are currently being rolled out but the initial analysis of feedback from the Level 5 course suggests that there have been demonstrable organisational benefits and clear evidence of consistent upskilling among staff. It is not unreasonable to suggest that this will be beneficial for people using the service.