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Family Man Overview

Section 1:

Family Man Overview

Course overview

Family Man is a family relationships course for male prisoners. It has been developed to help them recognise the benefits of being part of a family and to learn the skills that will enable them to sustain and develop existing relationships with people who they care about from prison.

Family Man has been designed for a learner group of sixteen students. Divided into four distinct parts, there are two induction sessions, 38 lessons, and four sessions to support the preparation and delivery of a Family Man Family Day. As there is a definite progression of learning for the students, all lessons must be delivered in chronological order.

Each lesson provides 150 minutes of material with all activities structured to aid the delivery of the following units from the National Open College Network Qualifications in Progression:

- Family Relationships, Level 1 (FR)
- Developing Personal Developments Skills, Level 1 (PD)
- Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills, Level 1 (GT)

These units are accredited through the Qualifications and Credit Framework.

The course requires a manager to oversee and support a delivery team of two tutors and one family support worker (FSW).

All prospective course candidates must meet the FM selection criterion. Following security clearance each cleared candidate receives a 45 minute interview. Once accepted on Family Man, the student must be kept on "hold" for the duration of the course, which is delivered over seven consecutive weeks (see course schedule for more details).

Involvement of supporters

Family Man accommodates the involvement of a student's adult relative or significant other, known throughout the courses as a 'supporter'. The FSW is responsible for managing contact between the student and their supporter, and delivering a Supporters Only session, which takes place outside the prison.

The student and his supporter both complete activities preparing them to work face-to-face in a session called 'What Next'. In the prison, and with guidance from the Family Man team, the supporter assists the student to write a *Family Action Plan*. This assessed document records how the student intends to continue his personal development and develop his family ties. Both parties also receive advice from representatives from services and interventions operating within and outside the prison to identify post-course opportunities for personal development and the maintenance of family ties.

Copies of all completed Family Action Plan are submitted to the Offender Management Unit. The student, his supporter and Offender Manager also receive copies of the plan.

On completion of course assessment, students are given an opportunity to apply learning with their families during a Family Man Family Day. This highly structured event is managed by the FSW.

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Family Man Induction

There are two induction sessions.

Induction 1 introduces the members of the group to each other. Icebreakers are used to enable participants to exchange basic information on subjects related to the course themes: maintaining family ties from prison, personal development and working effectively as a group. The session provides detailed information on what Family Man involves, which includes showing a short film in which past graduates summarise course benefits.

Induction 2 outlines how Family Man provides opportunities for students to apply family relationships learning whilst in prison. They are introduced to the role of a Family Man supporter and asked to consider who they would like to nominate as their supporter. They receive information on what is involved in working with a supporter and the benefits. Students watch a short film showing supporters talking about the benefits of Family Man from their perspective. They also play a game, experiencing first-hand how games are used throughout Family Man to establish a supportive group of learners and to reinforce learning.

Part 1: Learn and Practice

Lessons 1 – 16

Students are introduced to new information and new ways of working. They learn and practice how to work as a group and to communicate learning to each other.

The first 16 lessons help students to learn how to work co-operatively to achieve two group objectives: to complete the course and to learn the skills to help them maintain family ties from prison.

Since the great majority of students will be studying family relationships for the first time, Part 1 helps them to familiarise themselves with language and ideas associated with the subject. Students practise articulating what they have learnt by writing the first of four Family Man letters to their supporter.

The inclusion of the Developing Personal Development Skills unit helps students to identify their strengths and weaknesses when working as a member of a group. This approach allows them to assess their contribution to the group and to consider how their strengths and weaknesses are aiding or hindering their own ambition to maintain family ties through Family Man.

The inclusion of Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills as a unit provides students with a myriad of opportunities to practice different ways of working as a member of a group. Students are repeatedly directed to the unit's learning outcomes, which allows them to acknowledge progress made, and helps them improve their individual performances as group members. Activities help students to practice different behaviours and to experience the benefits of working co-operatively.

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Part 2: Prepare and Apply

Lessons 17 – 26

Students identify their own areas for improvement. They learn how to make changes to their current situation and how to communicate their intentions to others. They apply learning with their supporters and other people who can provide advice and guidance to them.

In Family Man Part 2 the emphasis shifts from teaching a general approach to family relationships to helping students to think about how they might apply learning to support the maintenance of their own family ties from prison.

In lessons 17 – 24 students complete exercises that will prepare them to write a plan of action in relation to their own and their family's needs. Activities supporting Developing Personal Development Skills assessment help students to focus on their current situation and their met and unmet needs. Students also prepare to work with their supporter, which includes writing a second Family Man letter to summarise learning to date and feelings on how they have progressed throughout the course.

Activities that reinforce group and teamwork learning outcomes help prepare students to change the way they view their current situation; the practical application of the 'Cycle of Change' model reinforces this theme, helping to make learning instantly applicable and relevant.

The Family Man 'What Next' Day follows lesson 24. Divided into two sessions students apply improved communication skills directly with their supporter and with representatives from prison departments and external organisations that provide advice and guidance and support services.

In the second session the student and his supporter discuss his Family Action Plan, agreeing a SMART goal to help him continue his personal development following the course.

Family Man Part 2 concludes with the submission of the completed Family Action Plan, the final piece of assessment for the FR and PD units. Students also write a third letter summarising their thoughts about the course to date and the What Next Day.

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Part 3: Demonstrate learning

Lessons 27 – 36

Students demonstrate their learning and ability to work as a group to each other, their peers and prison staff.

In Family Man Part 3 students rehearse and give a 45 minute presentation to an audience of their peers and prison staff. They are assessed throughout the process for Group and Teamwork Communication Skills. The presentation is an essential component of the course, demonstrating the group's ability to realise a complex task within a set time limit.

In lesson 29 students are allocated roles and responsibilities. Over the next seven lessons they write, devise and rehearse material which includes an overview of the course and what it involves for learners, role-plays, improvisations and student-led audience participation exercises.

Students are assessed on how they realise their responsibilities, manage their time and cope with the different challenges and demands of working as a member of a group under pressure. The presentation deadline, lesson **34**, provides them with a goal to work towards.

The Family Man presentation provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate learning and outline the benefits of family relationships education to their peers. For prison staff observing the event enables them to witness the attitudinal and behavioural changes of the students.

Following the presentation, students reflect on their personal development and the group's progress since the start of the course. They write their final Family Man letter to their supporter.

Part 4: Family Man Family Day

Sessions 1 - 4

Students are given an opportunity to apply and demonstrate learning at the Family Man Family Day. Four sessions are dedicated to the preparation and realisation of this event. Students agree a new set of ground rules and plan suitable activities for family members of all ages. They are allocated new roles and responsibilities and over two sessions rehearse a presentation, which includes an adaptation of 'The Selfish Giant' and short pieces summarising their experience of Family Man. Following the Family Day, students re-assemble to reflect on what they have achieved and complete a course evaluation.

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Family Relationships, Level 1, NOCN Qualifications in Progression

Learning outcome 1 The learner will recognise the changing nature of families

Students consider what a family is by discussing each other's experience of being a family member. They learn vocabulary to describe different family forms, which they then use in different contexts to recognise and understand the changing nature of family structures.

Students take part in a role-play that requires them to play different family members who experience a change to their family structure through an particular event or circumstance. They decide ground rules to help cohabitation between the family members. This work provides the basis for establishing course ground rules for the Family Man group.

Students also trace family relationships over several generations using family trees to identify how time and circumstance alter family structures. They discuss the benefits of passing on knowledge about their origins to younger relatives. Students also take part in a role-play in which they learn how to prepare and perform a timed interview. These interviews reveal how being brought up in a particular family structure influences the way people live their lives. Students produce portfolio evidence to demonstrate learning and understanding on the changing nature of families.

Learning outcome 2 The learner will understand the different roles within the family

Students learn the definition of the word role by playing a warm-up game that helps them use the word appropriately when describing different family roles. Students identify their existing family roles and define the differences between each of these roles. They discuss how people's expectations can define a particular family role and consider the influence of social conditioning, beliefs and traditions on defining these roles.

Students are introduced to and experience a range of acting techniques to help them perform a scene from the course film *Blinda*. They discuss a scene which shows the protagonist, a prisoner, grappling with other people's expectations of how he should fulfil his role as a father to his young son.

Students also produce a 'Family Circle' diagram to identify the roles of people they have identified as their family members. This exercise contributes to portfolio evidence demonstrating learning and understanding.

Learning outcome 3 The learner will understand some of the causes and effects of problems in family life

Students identify common family problems and discuss their possible causes and effects on the family. *Blinda* is used to help them discuss family problems generated by a prison sentence. Students consider the relationship between stress and family problems by categorizing a selection of life events into different levels of stress. Games and drama exercises enable students to experience how problems can arise from poor face-to-face communication. These activities enable them to reassess how they use their body language and apply listening skills with relatives during visits. Portfolio evidence is produced by students to demonstrate learning and understanding.

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Learning outcome 4 The learner will understand their personal responsibilities within the family to family members

This learning outcome is addressed by looking at how prisoners can realise their responsibilities as a family member while in custody. Students define their understanding and use of the word 'responsibility' before reviewing a scene from *Blinda*. They discuss and assess the main character's personal responsibilities to his partner and son. Students then consider the dictionary definition of the word 'responsible' before creating an idealised 'family man' called Archie. They present role plays describing Archie's responsibilities to different family members. This exercise reveals expectations and difficulties associated with the subject.

Students consider how to fulfil their domestic responsibilities from prison. Drama exercises provide opportunities to practice giving responsible advice to different relatives over the telephone. These exercises reinforce the benefits of planning telephone calls when dealing with family problems from prison. Students complete portfolio exercises identifying the benefits of behaving responsibly towards family members in different situations.

Learning outcome 5 The learner will recognise that family members have changing needs

Students are introduced to the concept of needs by playing a game which prompts discussion on the needs of old people. They clarify their understanding of the word 'need' before being introduced to Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*. Students consider the needs of the opposite sex by identifying the needs of a female character called 'Serena' from birth to old age. This exercise illustrates how people's needs change during their lifetime.

Time-lines are used to help students imagine the changing needs of four family members affected by a prison sentence over a ten year period. They write and perform monologues for these characters enabling them to imagine and articulate feelings associated with met and unmet needs. This activity produces evidence to meet the learning outcome.

Learning outcome 6 The learner will develop their own strategies for future direction and personal development as a member of the family unit

In Part 2 of Family Man students complete personal development assessments that prepare them for producing evidence to meet this outcome. Before considering how they can develop as a member of a family unit students first identify their current situation and met and unmet needs. They assess their coping strategies to deal with problems and identify which areas of their life they want to change. This includes identifying the needs of two people they care about. Students decide on a SMART personal goal to help them to develop relations with family members. This goal is used as the basis to complete a Family Man Family Action Plan (life plan), which outlines the student's future plans in relation to their own and their families needs.

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Developing Personal Development Skills, level 1NOCN Qualifications in Progression

Learning outcome 1 The learner will acknowledge and recognise their strengths and weaknesses

This outcome is met by using Family Man to enable the learner to identify some of his personal strengths and weaknesses while participating on the course.

Students first consider the definition of the word 'strength'. This helps them to identify their individual strengths as they progress through the course. They are encouraged throughout Family Man to identify their different strengths both as an individual learner and a member of the group. They are also required to acknowledge each other's strengths by giving and receiving compliments on a regular basis, particularly in Family Man Part 3 when preparing for and realising their presentation.

The course ground rules, set by the group, are used to help each student to acknowledge his personal weaknesses. Students are directed to investigate ways of self-improvement by identifying the strengths they want to develop while on Family Man and the support needed to achieve this.

Since the overall aim of Family Man is to assist students to maintain and improve their relationships with people they care about learners will consider how their personal strengths and weaknesses affect their existing relationships. They also identify personal strengths that could be useful to them in future training or work situations and acknowledge weaknesses that may frustrate opportunities available to them and the support needed to prevent this.

Learning outcome 2 The learner will acknowledge and recognise their skills and investigate ways of self-improvement

Participation in Family Man provides students with a practical opportunity to acknowledge a great number of their skills. All activities and portfolio exercises are designed to enable students to investigate different ways to improve themselves.

Questioning how students manage their time on Family Man is used to help them recognise that time management is a skill that directly impacts on how they realise their other skills. Students participate in a range of activities that help them to improve this skill. Ground rules are also used to help them identify their skills. Targets are repeatedly set to help improve the student's adherence to the ground rules.

This approach helps students to investigate ways to improve their contribution to Family Man. It also enables them to identify the skills they have used throughout the course and how these skills can be applied to develop family relationships and support positive outcomes in life, work and training situations.

Learning outcome 3 The learner will acknowledge and assess their current life situation and relationships

Family Man prepares students to write their own Family Action Plan which sets out how they intend to develop ties from prison with their family or other people they care about. Students complete a questionnaire that requires them to acknowledge and assess their current situation and relationships in some detail. They then write a short summary describing their current situation and relationships. Students are aware that the sensitive information they provide has a purpose in that it will help them to discuss their current situation with their supporter and to write their Family Action Plan.

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Learning outcome 4 The learner will develop the ability to make positive decisions

The students develop their ability to make positive decisions throughout Family Man.

The criteria associated with this outcome, *Demonstrate the ability to make a considered choice in a positive manager*, is referred to throughout Family Man Part 2. For example students review their ground rules, considering progress made adhering to them. They think about the choices available to them to either break or adhere to each rule and the consequences of their actions to the group, to themselves and their supporters. The use of games also helps students consider their role in making the realisation of each game a success or failure.

Students are encouraged to think deeply about what they want to change about their current situation to support their personal development and improve their family ties. They are introduced to the 'Cycle of Change', applying this model to their own experience on Family Man. This reinforces learning on the importance of considering the consequences of their actions before making a decision.

Students provide two practical examples for assessment to demonstrate an ability to make a positive decision. In the first exercise they identify two candidates considered for the role of Family Man supporter and explain their reasons for their selection of their chosen candidate.

The second exercise relates to work completed on coping strategies where students identify their strategies to deal with problems. Each student imagines himself coping with a problem during a visit involving people he cares about. He chooses two coping strategies to deal with the situation. Before making his positive decision on which strategy to use the student imagines the consequences produced by each coping strategy for himself and the other people involved in the situation.

Learning outcome 5 The learner will set personal objectives and make action plans for self-improvement

Once a prisoner has made the decision to start Family Man they have set a personal objective and set in motion a plan to improve themselves.

Family Man provides many different opportunities for students to practise realising a series of achievable short term goals such as finishing an exercise, written or practical, or completing a single lesson. Throughout the course students learn to plan their time to complete practical or written activities and manage their own behaviour to achieve their personal objectives.

From the start of the course students work towards completing the Family Man Family Action Plan, also used to meet NOCN, Family Relationships, level 1 assessment criterion 6.1: *Produce a life plan for the future in relations to their own and their family's needs.*

In Family Man part 2 students are given an 'Action Plan' outlining, diagrammatically, the steps they will take to achieve the goal of completing their Family Action Plan. Students are required to complete six exercises to prepare them for writing their Family Action Plan. This approach enables them to identify the changes they want to make to support self-improvement. It includes identifying their met and unmet needs, assessing areas of their life they have problems with and how to work with a supporter and/or others to realise their ambition for self-improvement.

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The Family Action Plan requires each student to set a SMART goal to support his self-improvement. With assistance from their Family Man supporter and Family Man staff the student sets four realistic objectives on his Family Action Plan to enable him to achieve his goal.

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