

Supported volunteers whose first language is not English

House managers used CIS-Assessment to support the supervision process, build effective relationships with volunteers and generate a clear picture of safety to practice.

Highlights

- Dramatically reduced time spent marking worksheets
- **Induction is quicker and more thorough**
- Improved manager and volunteer relationships
- **Facilitated discussions about real life situations**
- Used CIS-Assessment to improve practice in-house
- **Identified words needing translation**

“Before using CIS-Assessment it was really difficult to assess our volunteers’ competence.”

The delivery of all the standards and assessments was previously carried out by one person and it became clear that the staff could complete the worksheets and their understanding could be measured, but this did not give a clear picture of the individual’s competence or safety to practice.

What challenges did the old method present?

The previous method presented a lot of challenges as it was difficult to assess competence.

Our volunteers come from all over the world and at times there were language barriers which caused them difficulty when filling out our worksheets. Using CIS-Assessment prompted them to translate certain words if they didn’t understand something.

How do you induct your staff now?

We still deliver induction sessions to volunteers when they first arrive but the assessment itself is completed by the house managers. This is a much better practice as it allows more people to be involved in the learning.

House managers shared that **they really enjoy these sessions** with the volunteers as it allows them to spend time with individuals, get to know their staff better and get to know the way they work and think. This **helps them to allocate jobs and roles more successfully.**

About Pennine Camphill Community

Pennine Camphill Community is a specialist college for young adults with learning difficulties from the age of 16-24, based in the outskirts of Wakefield.

We teach social, independent living and employability skills through our practical and creative approach to learning in our workshops, our residences, on our farm and estate.

Pennine is also a community in which everybody’s contribution is valued and appreciated. Our volunteers, who come from around the world as well as locally, live and work alongside our students and they enjoy many a festival and celebration together.



What other benefits have you achieved by using CIS-Assessment?

When I attended one of Alex's workshops in October 2013, it was clear that with this system, house managers can assess the **volunteers** that they supervise.

This improved the House Manager and volunteer relationship because they spent time each week to go through the assessments and have discussions about real life situations. Therefore each volunteer could move to the next standard at their own pace.

As our volunteers come with different language skills it also **supports them to translate words** they may not understand during the assessment and during the discussion with the house manager, clarify what they mean when they completed various standards.



How does CIS-Assessment save you time and money?

All in all we are extremely happy with the system, it has dramatically reduced the time spent going through completed worksheets and trying to assess competence through paperwork.

It also saves us time with refreshers as volunteers complete the assessments in their own time.

How do the assessments support you with staff supervision and observations?

We also started using the system for **improving practice**. If there are issues with one of the staff members, for example about communication or health and safety, we simply ask them to complete an assessment online and discuss their results during supervisions. This underpins knowledge, **competence and good practice** and creates an essential trail of evidence should we need to refer back to it at any point in the future.



How has using CIS-Assessment improved the outcomes for the people you are supporting?

"Induction is quicker and more thorough"

Staff competence can be assessed in a more efficient way and staff can be **given more responsibilities quicker which improves the quality of support**.



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