



Case study

Julie Allen has worked in a social care environment for nine years with Wealden Community Care in East Sussex. As Office Manager Julie's remit is varied and covers office-based activities to personal care in the community. The flexibility of the role also allows Julie to continue to engage with people who use the service, which she finds most rewarding.

Julie Allen
Office Manager,
Wealden Community Care

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I care...

Background

Julie left school at the age of 15 and decided to start a career in insurance in London. She progressed from a junior in the industry to a senior insurance broker role over a number of years. Her personal circumstances changed when she started a family and moved out of London. She wanted to consider a role that would offer greater flexibility and fit around her family's needs. During a local job search, Julie took on the role of community carer at Wealden Community Care, initially taking on two teatime shifts. At the time, she knew very little about working in the industry but liked the flexibility of the role, the potential to retrain in a new industry and the array of available job opportunities.

Career progression

Julie's career in social care has been varied and challenging, yet highly rewarding over the last nine years. From initially starting out as a community carer, Julie's career has gone from strength to strength. She trained as a manual handling assessor and became more office-based. As her children have grown up, she has taken on more work responsibilities that fit around her lifestyle.

At the age of 40, she now has more social care certificates and qualifications than she could have imagined. She has achieved a level 2 health and social care qualification, a certified manual handling assessor role and has completed an Institute of Leadership and Management course. Julie is keen to continue her professional development, so is also progressing a management course at the University of Brighton.

“For me, job satisfaction in this industry is 100%. I don't think I could do anything else now.”



A role in social care

Julie's role as office manager is very broad and allows her the opportunity to get involved in a range of office and community-based activities. She works as part of a team of three during the week and as a community carer during some weekends.

Julie's remit covers everything from training and supervising staff, conducting appraisals and interviews, and creating care packages, to sorting out wages and invoices and attending social services meetings and forums.

Julie particularly enjoys meeting potential clients, carrying out risk assessments and liaising with multi-disciplinary care teams to support service users' safeguarding issues. Wealden Community Care is customer-centric, which also allows Julie to get involved in arranging open days that bring service users and local businesses together for mutual benefit.

During the week, Julie finds the role challenging, yet exciting and thrives on meeting targets. During weekends, Julie is responsible for the out-of-hours service and feels it helps her to stay in touch with people who use the service and assess potential issues.

"Being face to face with the people using our service is one of the most satisfying aspects of my role. It's important to stay in touch to be able to understand the role and to do it well. You have to move with the times."

"Helping someone that is eternally grateful and making a difference to support their independence is so rewarding."

Julie is also a care ambassador, promoting career pathways into social care, targeting school leavers and sixth formers.



Ongoing support

Julie is surrounded by a network of internal and external support systems. For Julie, the training and development opportunities have been second-to-none.

“I would strongly recommend the social care sector for its job satisfaction and the fact that there are endless opportunities to progress your career. People can go into nursing, hospital work or end of life community work. The list goes on.”

“The social care sector equips you with amazing life experience and the appropriate skills to deal with different types of people and listen to their amazing life stories. I love the personal interaction element of the role.”

For the moment, Julie is happy to continue with her current role as she finds it so fulfilling. In the future, there are still so many opportunities on offer and doors open to progress further through training and development. Julie will consider these when she's ready to take on the next challenge.

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