

## Care Workforce Pathway

### Role mapping in practice

In our [‘Adopting the Care Workforce Pathway – The how-to guide’](#), we outline the role mapping process and steps care providers may wish to take.

We understand that role mapping may take place in different ways and factors, such as organisation size and capacity, may shape that further.

To support this, we are sharing some real-world examples from Pathway adopters about how they approached the task.

Every organisation is different – use these examples as inspiration, not instruction.

## Decide who to involve in role mapping and how

Organisations may find it helpful to involve a mix of people from across the service when mapping roles. The table below shows the people involved and how they contributed at five different Pathway adopters.

Who was involved?	How were they involved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning and Development Lead</li> <li>▪ Care workers</li> </ul>	<p>L&amp; D Lead led the mapping process and held one-to-one career conversations with employees using the Pathway as a reference point.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Head of Learning</li> <li>▪ All colleagues at all levels from the start</li> </ul>	<p>Participated in focus groups and co-creation sessions to shape role definitions and provide feedback.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leadership team</li> </ul>	<p>Conducted initial mapping of roles and compared Pathway expectations with their competency framework.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Line managers and staff from different teams</li> </ul>	<p>Took part in a pilot programme, assessing current skills against Pathway role descriptions and engaging in career conversations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Head of People Development</li> <li>▪ Operational managers</li> </ul>	<p>Joined a hackathon-style focus group to review job descriptions line by line against skills assessments and agree changes.</p>

## Decide which role(s) to map

Organisations may choose to start out by mapping the role they have the most of, the one hardest to recruit to, or may choose to map them all.

Pathway Adopters have shared that they:

- Started with 'new to care' and 'support worker' roles.

“What started with mapping new to care and care or support workers quickly became a deeper project of cultural alignment.”

- Mapped all roles initially, focused on care/support worker roles first to align with their competency framework and training priorities.
- Mapped all roles but started mapping against skills assessments first before job descriptions to address qualification funding issues and prioritise development.

“We had a lot of colleagues that were wanting to enrol on qualifications.”

## Decide on an approach to the task

Before you start mapping roles, think about the best way for your organisation to do it and be willing to adapt. There's no single right method. Pathway adopters have shared some of the ways they approached the task:

<p><b>They organised a hackathon-style session</b> a time-bound problem-solving workshop</p>	<p>"We literally spent three hours, went through, and we did our job description review as a hackathon."</p>
<p><b>Side-by-side comparison</b></p>	<p>"We just took them one at a time. We sat down, we had the skills assessment for the role that we were looking at and the job description side-by-side."</p>
<p><b>They stopped treating it like a matching game</b></p>	<p>"The Pathway uses role categories, not precise job roles. Once we accepted that, we gave ourselves permission to step back and make informed judgments. We focused on "good enough" alignment rather than perfect matches and that made all the difference."</p>
<p><b>Line-by-line review</b></p>	<p>"The first thing we looked at was the behaviours in each of the roles... Then we took the skills assessment and our job description, and we just went line by line. Does this apply to us? Yes. Are we happy with the wording or do we need to tweak it?"</p>
<p><b>Adopted Pathway behaviours</b> almost word-for-word</p>	<p>"We really liked the way that the behaviours were set out... so we adopted them pretty much word-for-word."</p>
<p><b>Used AI</b></p>	<p>"We put our JD into AI along with the role category description and asked it to find alignment and gaps."</p>

## What did role mapping lead to?

Role mapping isn't just a paperwork exercise; it often leads to real change. Pathway adopters have reported using their role mapping findings to:

- Make career progression clearer by adapting the skills assessment format and creating an organisation-specific career passport that shows a visual representation of career routes.
- Identify that their specialist work didn't fit existing role categories and there was a need for recognition for advanced skills and responsibilities. This influenced the creation of an enhanced care worker category and development of a new role.
- Increase clarity around roles, structures, and career progression.

“The Pathway has helped us to develop unique positions.”

“Although the organisation had always had clear roles, they hadn't been formally documented. The Pathway provided a framework to define expectations for each role.”

- Strengthen a leadership development pathway by linking qualifications to mapped roles/competencies.
- Embed skills assessments into qualification applications and succession planning/promotion processes.
- Identify the need for a deputy manager step to bridge a gap in progression.

“One of the big changes for us was to acknowledge that actually that was too big a jump.”

- Build a capability framework that makes it really clear, from the job advert through to interview, probation, and throughout someone's career; this is what the role is, and these are the skills, knowledge, and behaviours you need.
- Replace job descriptions with role purpose documents to fit a values-led approach.

“These are live, reflective documents that speak to what someone wants to achieve in their role, not just what they do.”

- Identify gaps and put a plan in place to include additional learning support to fill these, for example by offering coaching and wellbeing training as part of senior care workers' learning.

Tool	Description	Access
<b>Skills assessments</b>	A tool for staff to use to reflect on strengths and areas for development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">New to care - skills assessment</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Care or support worker - skills assessment</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Supervisor or leader - skills assessment</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Practice leader - skills assessment</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Deputy manager - skills assessment</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Registered manager - skills assessment</a></li> </ul>
<b>Care Workforce Pathway role category characteristics</b>	A summary of role categories to support you to support mapping.	<a href="http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Workforce-Pathway/Care-Workforce-Pathway-role-category-characteristics.pdf">www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Workforce-Pathway/Care-Workforce-Pathway-role-category-characteristics.pdf</a>
<b>Care Workforce Pathway role mapping reflective question prompts</b>	A tool to support planning the approach to role mapping.	<a href="http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Workforce-Pathway/Care-Workforce-Pathway-role-mapping-reflective-question-prompts.docx">www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Workforce-Pathway/Care-Workforce-Pathway-role-mapping-reflective-question-prompts.docx</a>