



Maintaining dignity
and respect
Working with others
Willing to learn
Committed to good care
Good listener



Contents

Who's this tool for?

This tool has been created to support anyone interested in finding out more about a career in care.

It can be used by job seekers, students, people considering a change of career or care workers wanting to progress in their career. Careers advisors, teachers or job brokers can also use it with people they are supporting.

The tool highlights the range of job opportunities within the care sector and how you can get into and progress a career in care. It includes case studies of people currently working in a range of different roles who talk about how they have progressed their career.

How do I use this tool?

This tool is an interactive PDF document which means it can be used offline and easily e-mailed, downloaded and saved on different devices. How you use it will depend on what device you have. Using it on a laptop or desktop computer enables all the interactive functions. On tablets or phones it will read like an e-book. Read our guide about how to use the tool at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/socialcareguide.

The tool is divided into sections so you can go to the part you're most interested in and move back and forth between sections, or if you prefer you can scroll through it like a book.

There is a lot of information in the tool as it is designed to include the information you need all in one place.

1 Why choose a career in social care?

Adult social care is a growing sector which offers lots of rewarding careers, with many different job roles and opportunities for progression.

A growing sector, a rewarding career

There are about 1.55 million jobs in adult social care in England now. Due to growing demand, we estimate we'll need enough workers to fill an extra 275,000 jobs by 2025.

If you want a career where the work is highly rewarding, where you can progress, have job security, and get an enormous sense of personal achievement from knowing you are helping other people, then adult social care is for you.

Adult social care jobs in England:
1.55 million



What is adult social care?

Adult social care is all about offering personal and practical support to help people live independently.

Who?

You could support lots of different people including adults with disabilities, those with mental or physical health conditions and older people.

What?

The aim of social care is to support people to have the best quality of life they can and help them to maintain their independence, dignity and control.

It can include anything from providing equipment to help someone walk, supporting someone to do social activities in the community, enabling someone to go to work every day and helping with personal care such as getting dressed.

Where?

People can receive social care in their own homes, in community settings like day centres or in places like care homes (sometimes called residential homes) and rented accommodation with support (supported housing).



Busting some myths about social care

You may have heard things that have put you off considering a career in social care. However, often people misunderstand what social care is about. Here, we tackle some of the most common myths about working in social care. Click on each of the facts below to read more about what it's really like to work in social care.

What can you expect from a career in care?

With lots of roles available and opportunities to progress, social care is a great career choice. You can choose where you work and who with. As you progress, you can move between settings and roles or specialise in one area of social care.

When you start in your first job, you should get a good induction that tells you everything you need to know.

If you're new to care, you'll complete the Care Certificate; this is a set of standards that outline everything you need to know to work in social care. You should also receive regular supervision and do training and development.



What's the difference between social care and health care?

Social care is all about providing care and support for people in their community or at home, to help them have the best quality of life possible.

Healthcare is all about treating people when they are ill to support them to get better and stay well.

In social care there are over 19,000 organisations which provide social care but in health the majority of healthcare jobs are employed by the National Health Service (NHS). Many health jobs are based in hospitals or GP surgeries.

You can read more about careers in healthcare at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk

There are also new job roles that involve providing both social and health care. These are called new and emerging social care and health roles.

New and emerging social care and health roles

The social care and health sectors are increasingly working together to support people who need care.

As the NHS is under more pressure, social care is becoming more important as a way of supporting people so they don't need to go into hospital.

This is an exciting time to consider a career in care as there are lots of new roles that involve both social and health care such as care navigator, social prescriber, enhanced care worker.

2 How can I get in to social care?

It doesn't matter about your background or how old you are; if you want to help people, there's a job in social care for you.

Depending on the role, you don't always need qualifications or previous work experience to get a job in social care.

What's really important is having the right values, behaviours and attitudes to work effectively with people who need care and support.

You don't need qualifications to enter the sector. Good employers will support and nurture you.

Nicola Taylor, Head of Care Services

What values are employers looking for?

Values are the beliefs and views that people hold about what is right or wrong and good or bad. They apply to all aspects of life and influence how a person behaves in different situations.

Having the right values is key – everything else can be taught.

Adam Skerritt, Operational Lead

Here are some of the values and behaviours you might need to work in social care.

- Dignity and respect.
- Learning and reflection.
- Working together.
- Commitment to quality care and support.

Here are some examples of how these values might look in your everyday work.

- You spend time listening to people to get to know them.
- You accept and respect people's individuality.
- You're warm, kind and compassionate in your actions.
- You're reliable, trustworthy and committed to delivering good care.

What skills are employers looking for?

Some of the skills you need will be specific to the job you're applying for. However, there are some core skills that all social care workers need. These are English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills.

Lots of employers look for people who are keen to learn and develop. Whatever role you start in you'll need to develop your knowledge and understanding and also learn new skills that will enable you to do the job. Some people have progressed very quickly in their career because they have made the most of all the opportunities available to them.

When applying for jobs, think about what transferable skills you may have from previous jobs or experiences.

Linda Pitt, Registered Manager

When you start in social care, you should complete the Care Certificate as part of your induction. This provides you with the knowledge and skills needed to start working in the sector.



Do a Traineeship

A Traineeship is a programme for 16-23 year olds who aren't in employment but are motivated to work in social care.

It will help you to develop the skills, knowledge and values needed to work in social care, alongside gaining work experience, to help you move into permanent employment or an Apprenticeship.

You can read more about Traineeships, including how to find one, on our website: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/traineeships16-23

Do a course at school, college or training organisation

There are courses you can do which will help you understand more about working in social care, and give you some of the knowledge and skills you need.

Some courses might include work experience which will help you into a role. Some care providers might also run their own pre-employment training programme.

Join a care sector-routeway

The care sector-routeway is a six week programme run by your local Jobcentre Plus.

It's for people who are unemployed and gives you the opportunity to gain a qualification, develop your core skills, do work experience and get a guaranteed job interview at the end. You'll also be supported to search for jobs.

Speak to your local Jobcentre Plus to find out more.

How can I start my career?

There are lots of ways you could get into social care.

Apply for an Apprenticeship

As a social care apprentice you'll gain work experience, achieve a qualification and earn a wage. Apprenticeships usually last between 12 months and two years and are mainly work-based - so you can develop your skills on the job.

There are different levels of Apprenticeships depending on your skills and experience.

You can find out more about Apprenticeships, including live vacancies, on our website:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/socialcareApprenticeships

Apply for an advertised vacancy

Before you apply, have a think about what types of roles you would like to do. Section 6 'Job roles in social care' explains some of the different roles you could do in the sector.

It's always worth looking to see what jobs are advertised. You could visit local care services' websites to look for vacancies, or national recruitment websites such as Fish4Jobs or Indeed.

Volunteer or do work experience

If you're new to adult social care and want to find out if it's the right career for you, it might be useful to do some work experience or volunteering.

Your school, college or jobcentre might be able to help with this or you could contact organisations directly or look on www.do-it.org to find local volunteering opportunities.

How can I 'get in' to social care?

If you're looking for an **initial entry level** role to get in to social care, there are lots of roles you could apply for.

2



What qualifications and training can I do to help me get in to social care?

Most social care qualifications can be done once you start your role as they're specific to the job you're doing and the skills you need to do it; these are known as vocational qualifications.

However there are some qualifications you might want to do to get a taster of what it's like to work in social care:

- Level 1 Award in Preparing to work in the care sector
- Level 2 or 3 Certificate in Preparing to work in the care sector

Your local Jobcentre Plus or college might be able to help you find a pre-employment programme.

When you start a job in care you'll get a thorough induction. For most care worker roles this includes the Care Certificate, which is a set of standards that everyone needs to meet to do their role. The Care Certificate ensures that workers have the same induction - learning the same skills, knowledge and behaviours to provide compassionate, safe and high quality care and support. Your employer should also ensure you have mandatory training relevant to your role such as fire safety, moving and handling and first aid.

If you do not already have a level 2 diploma in care when you start work in a care worker role, then you'll be expected to complete it as soon as possible. Your employer will usually arrange this for you. Workers who aren't directly involved in delivering care will also require learning and development specific to their roles.

3 How can I progress in my career?

What progression opportunities are there in social care?

Wherever you start your career, there are always opportunities to progress.

Progression can be

- **sideways** into a different type of job (which could involve working in a different setting or with a different group of people),
- **move up** into a job with more responsibility which requires new skills, knowledge and qualifications.

Social care is continually changing to meet the needs of an ageing population and people living longer with multiple conditions. There's greater focus on supporting people to live independently, often at home, and reducing the need for hospital treatment.

This means that care organisations are working in new ways, creating lots of new and exciting roles, including jobs that cover both social care and health, and roles that focus on specialist knowledge such as dementia, end of life, learning disability or autism care.

One of the good things about social care is the range of roles available. This means:

- ✓ **there are lots of opportunities to progress**
- ✓ **you're always doing something that interests you**
- ✓ **you can find new challenges**
- ✓ **you'll stay motivated**
- ✓ **you can learn new things.**

How can I progress?

Progressing in your career is partly your responsibility and partly your employers. You'll be more likely to progress in your career if you:

Do qualifications relevant to your role

There are over 50 vocational qualifications at different levels in social care.

Your employer might pay for qualifications or you could apply for a government backed which can help make qualifications and training more affordable.

Apprenticeships are also available for new and existing staff of any age.

The level of the qualification you do might be lower than an academic qualification you already hold, such as an A-Level or an undergraduate degree.

This is because they teach you the practical knowledge and skills you need for your specific role or the role you want to progress into.

Do training

You could attend a day's training session in your workplace or online e-learning to help you progress. This doesn't have to be accredited but can be relevant to the requirements of the job.

There are also other things you could do to help you progress:

- make the most of supervision
- work in an organisation that's committed to training their staff
- ask about opportunities to mentor or shadow other workers
- look for informal learning opportunities, such as free online training
- volunteer to attend events relevant to your role such as conferences or careers fairs
- take on projects or develop new pieces of work or ways of working.

Tips to help you progress

Most workers agree that progression is helped by working for a supportive organisation, making the most of every opportunity that you get and gaining qualifications.

**Adam Skerritt,
Operational Lead**

Take on extra responsibilities where you can – it will really support your progression.



**Sally Gibbons,
Cluster Manager**

Sometimes it makes sense to take a sideways move in order to move forward



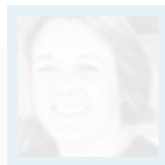
**Chris Hocking,
Locality Manager**

You can be anything in the social care sector if you care about people enough.



**Andrea Wiggins,
New Projects
Director**

Take up opportunities to do something different.



**Deb O'Shea,
Intervenor
Service Manager**

Get yourself known as someone keen to take on new challenges and have a go at new roles



**Emma Stowell,
Care Supervisor**

When applying for jobs look for companies that offer good support.



**Linda Douglas,
Registered
Manager**

I think that progression can be supported by becoming involved in local networks.



**Mike Maden,
Team Manager**

Show you want to go forward and learn new things and are passionate about your job – then you will get noticed.



2

3

Step up in your career

Progress from level two to level three

A lot of roles, such as care assistant or support worker, require you to do a Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care. Even if you already have a higher level academic qualification, this will give you the practical knowledge and skills needed for the job.

Once you have achieved this qualification and gained some experience, there are lots of opportunities to step up into more senior roles.

These usually involve more responsibility – like becoming a senior or lead care worker or supervisor. Or you might choose to specialise in a particular aspect of work by becoming an activity coordinator or re-ablement worker.

What skills and knowledge do I need to step up?

As you step up in your career you'll be expected to take on more responsibility in your role, use your initiative more and have a greater influence on the way your organisation works. This means you'll need to develop your skills and knowledge further.

How much will I get paid for these sorts of roles?

The average salaries for care worker or support worker roles vary depending on what part of the country you work in and the type of organisation you work for.

These figures are approximate and are taken from current roles advertised. The hourly rates range from £7.35 to £10.26 or approximately £16,500 - £20,500 per year.

Personal assistants tend to be paid slightly higher with a range of £7.46 - £14 per hour.

When you progress on to a senior or more specialised role the range is from £8.12 to £13.76 per hour or approximately £18,500 to £24,500 per year.

Hear how others have stepped up

[Click on the names below to find out more](#)



How can I 'step up' in my career?

There are lots of ways you can step up in your career from a level two to a level three role. Click on the job roles below to find out more about the role and what skills and qualifications you need for it.



What qualifications and training can I do to help me step up?

When you're ready to step up into a senior role a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care might be useful.

You might also want to do training or a short course to develop your supervisory skills.

You could also specialise in one area such as dementia, autism, end of life care, moving and assisting, diabetes or stroke care.

What can I do next?

You should speak to your employer first about doing qualifications and training to help you step up. They might organise and pay for this for you.

However, you might want to progress faster and pay for the training yourself using an

Ioana used an advanced learner loan to do a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care to help her step up from a care worker to a floor manager.

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Get on

Progress from level three to level four

If you've progressed to a senior position you're likely to be in a role that requires a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care, such as a senior or lead care worker, supervisor or a specialist position such as an activity coordinator or re-ablement worker.

From these roles you can progress into lead or advanced practitioner roles, roles that coordinate activity across an area or roles that require more leadership and management such as team leaders.

Progressing to more advanced roles requires more responsibility or greater specialist knowledge and skills.

What skills and knowledge do I need to get on?

As you get on in your career, you might be expected to implement policies and procedures, problem solve and find solutions, model best practice and provide leadership. This means you'll need to develop your skills and knowledge further.

There are different qualifications and training you can do to help you 'get on'.

How much will I get paid for these sorts of roles?

The average salaries vary as it depends on what part of the country you work in and the type of organisation you work for. These figures are approximate and are taken from current roles advertised.

The average salaries for senior or more specialised roles range from £8.12 to £13.76 per hour or approximately £18,500 to £24,500 per year.

When you get on into more responsible roles at level 4, such as team leader or supervisor, your salary can range from an average of £20,000 to £28,000 per year.

Hear how others have got on

[Click on the names below to find out more.](#)



How can I 'get on' in my career?

There are lots of ways you can get on in your career from a level three to a level four role. Click on the job roles below to find out more about the role and what skills and qualifications you need for it.



What qualifications and training can I do to help me get on?

When you're ready to get on into a management or leadership role you might want to do training or a short course to develop your management or other skills.

You could also specialise in one area such as dementia, autism, end of life care, moving and assisting, diabetes or stroke care.

What can I do next?

You should speak to your employer first about doing qualifications and training to help you step up. They might organise and pay for this for you.

However, you might want to progress faster and pay for the training yourself using an

Munyaradzi used an advanced learner loan to do a Higher Education Diploma in Science to gain more experience to help him get on into an assistant manager role.

2

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4

5

6

Go further

Progress from level four to levels five and six

If you've progressed to a lead or advanced practitioner role, you're likely to be in a role that requires a Level 4 Diploma in Adult Care or Level 4 Certificate in Principles of Leadership, such as team leader or care coordinator.

From these roles you can progress into a more advanced management or professional role with greater responsibility, leadership and influence.

These roles can be very specialised, involve management, and you could be responsible for ensuring your organisation meets legal requirements.

Going further into these roles can often require a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership in Health and Social Care or a professional qualification or a degree.

Many universities and Further Education colleges offer a wide range of short courses, degree courses, and professional qualifications which can support you to develop your career in advanced professional practice and leadership and management.

What skills and knowledge do I need to go further?

As you go further in your career, you'll be expected to lead your organisation, take responsibility for service delivery, implement legal requirements and develop policy and practice.

Some professional roles such as a social worker, occupational therapist or registered nurse require a degree. Other roles might require you to complete a professional vocational qualification.



How much will I get paid for these sorts of roles?

The average salaries vary as it depends on what part of the country you work in and the type of organisation you work for. They will also vary according to your role and level of responsibility. These figures are approximate and are taken from current roles advertised.

- Registered manager average salaries are around £28,500 (This can increase as you gain more experience or move to manage larger organisations).
- Social worker from £18,500 when first qualified, averaging at £33,000 with management positions between £41,000 - £51,000.
- Registered nurse from £22,000, averaging £25,000 and senior positions up to £48,000.
- Occupational Therapist usually between £29,500 and £36,500.
- Manager – depending on role and service from about £25,500 averaging £37,000 and up to £51,000 for senior management.

Hear how others have gone further
Click on the names below to find out more.



How can I 'go further' in my career?

There are different levels of management and you could become responsible for an organisation as a CEO or director or start running your own care business. There are lots of ways you can go further in your career. Click on the job roles below to find out more about the role and what skills and qualifications you need for it.



What qualifications can I do to help me go further?

When you're ready to go further in your career a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership in Health and Social Care, or a professional qualification such as a degree in social work, nursing or occupational therapy might be useful.

You could also specialise in one area such as dementia, autism, end of life care, moving and assisting, diabetes or stroke care.

What can I do next?

You should speak to your employer first about doing qualifications and training to help you step up. They might organise and pay for this for you.

However, you might want to progress faster and pay for the training yourself using an
or a

Jane used an advanced learner loan to do an Access to Social Work Diploma with the hope of going to University to become a social worker specialising in mental health.

4

What qualifications can I do to progress in social care?

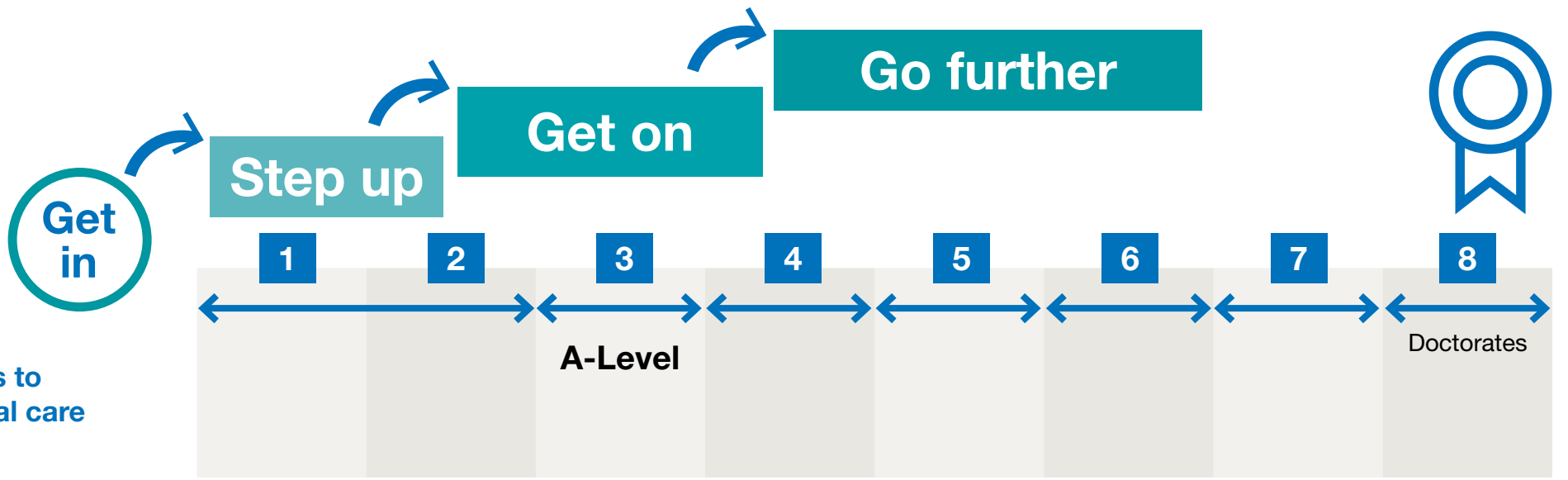
This section shows you the qualifications you can do to progress in your career.

We use 'levels' to describe the difficulty of a qualification. The higher the level, the more difficult the qualification is. Broadly speaking, there are job roles that sit under each level, and therefore qualifications that you need to complete to progress through the levels.

Adult social care qualifications are **vocational** qualifications – this means they enable the learner to gain the knowledge and skills they need for their role. The level description is about the job role requirements not academic ability.

The diagram below shows the kinds of qualifications available at each level and the equivalence for this level.



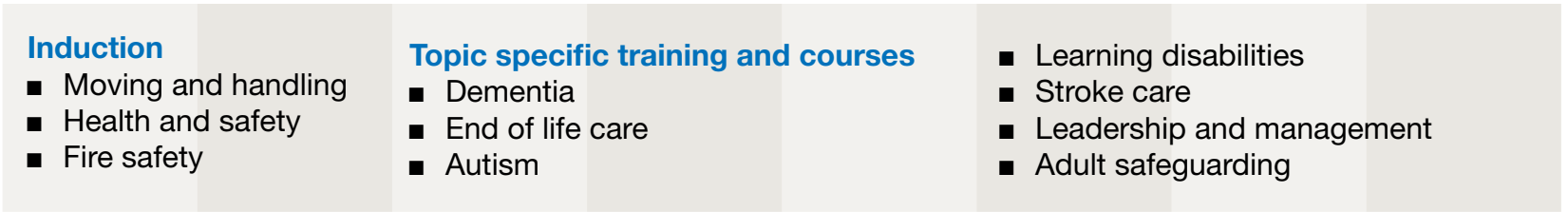


Academic qualifications to support social care and health

Vocational qualifications in social care and health



Other useful training in social care and health



How can I do training and qualifications?

1

Decide what training or qualification you'd like to do

- Use the table on the previous page to see some examples of the training or qualifications you could do.
- Speak to your employer about what opportunities are available.
- Look on Skills for Care's website www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications
- Search online for local learning providers, colleges or Universities, or online courses or elearning.
- Look at the different job roles in social care to see what qualifications you need for the role and how you can progress.

2

Decide how you're going to pay for the training or qualification

- Your employer might pay for the training or qualification for you.
- You might decide to pay for the training yourself so you have the flexibility to do it as and when you want. You could apply for an _____ or a _____

3

Find a learning provider to deliver the training or qualification

- If your employer's paying for your qualification, they might deliver the training in-house or have a learning provider they regularly use.
- You can find high quality learning providers through Skills for Care's endorsed providers search; this means they've been assessed by Skills for Care to ensure their courses are fit for purpose.
- You might also want to speak to your local college or University about what courses they can offer.
- You could search online for elearning courses or do training online, for example with the Open University.

5 How can I pay for qualifications?

Is there any funding to help with my progression?

Usually your employer will pay for the training you need to do your role but there may be times when you decide to do a qualification to help you progress in your career.

For example if you'd like to specialise you may choose to do an end of life care qualification which could lead to a specialist role or more responsibility at work. In this case, you'd need to pay for the qualification yourself.

There are lots of funding options available including government backed

or a

They can help make training more affordable so you can reap the rewards from increasing your skills and knowledge.

They're also designed so you don't have to pay them back until you're earning enough to be able to afford the payments, so are a manageable way to progress in your career.

Your employer can apply for funding to pay for qualifications and training from Skills for Care. Visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDF to find out more.

How have others used an Advanced Learner Loan to progress?

Click on the names below to find out more.



“Your organisation may not fund your training if you aren't on a permanent contract. The Advanced Learner loan can therefore mean that you can pay for the training yourself” **Shirley**

“I'd recommend taking out an Advanced Learner loan if you are sure about the route you want to take to change your career.” **Ioana**

“I'm happy to take out a loan because it's a course I want to do for my future career and I want to be able to repay the government for investing in me” **Munyaradzi**

“Using a loan and paying privately for qualifications gives you more independence to study in the way you want to and get where you want to be faster” **Jane**

“If your company can't pay for programmes you're interested in doing, then I'd advise people to take out an Advanced Learner Loan. I feel these loans are really useful as you don't have to pay them back until you earn over a certain amount and then you pay in instalments and it isn't a lot of money.” **Marevia**

Advanced Learner Loans for level 3-6 qualifications

If you want to progress your career, earn more money or develop your skills and knowledge, an Advanced Learner Loan can help you pay for qualifications and training.

Your college or training provider will set the fee for your qualification and the loan is paid directly to them. You'll pay it back over time.

Can I apply?

To qualify you must be

- Aged 19 or over
- Living in the UK and have lived in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for three years immediately before the course
- Studying with a college or training provider in England approved for public funding
- Enrolling on an eligible course at Level 3 to 6



How to apply

1. Check with your college or training provider that the course is eligible for public funding
2. Ask them for a 'learning and funding information' letter that sets out all the information you need to know about your qualification and how much it will cost.
3. Apply for the loan at www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan
4. You'll hear in two weeks whether your application is successful.

Repaying your loan

When you finish your qualification you need to repay any loans you've borrowed – but not until your income is over the current repayment threshold of £21,000 a year, £1,750 a month or £404 a week.

How much will I repay?

The amount you repay each month is based on your income, not what you borrow. You'll repay 9% of any income you earn over the current repayment threshold of £21,000 a year, £1,750 a month or £404 a week.

If your income changes, either rising or falling, your repayment amounts will change to reflect this. If you stop working, your repayments will stop until you start working again and your income is over the threshold.

Money matters

The development of valuable skills and knowledge is likely to have an impact on your career and progression. Remember this is an investment in yourself from which you could significantly benefit in the long term.

These government backed Advanced Learner Loans remove the financial barriers to training so that individuals have an affordable route to develop themselves.

You only need to borrow the funds you need; this may be less than the total fee charged by your college or training organisation. Before applying for a loan you might want to speak to your employer and ask if they could contribute towards the costs.

Find out more and apply online at www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan

Loans for degree and postgraduate courses

If you decide to study a degree full time you may be able to borrow money to help pay for university or college tuition fees and living costs.

Tuition fee loan

Your university or college sets your tuition fee, and the loan is paid directly to them. You have to pay it back. If you want to study part-time you may be able to get a tuition fee loan if your part-time course has a 'course intensity' of 25% or more. 'Course intensity' measures how much of your course you complete each year compared to an equivalent full-time course. Check course intensity with your university or college.

Maintenance loan for living costs

You can also apply for a loan to cover your living costs. You'll have to give details of your household income. This loan is paid directly into your bank account at the start of term. You will have to pay it back.

Repaying your loan

When you finish your course you need to repay any loans you've borrowed – but not until your income is over the current repayment threshold of £21,000 a year, £1,750 a month or £404 a week.

How much will I repay?

The amount you repay each month is based on your income, not what you borrow. You'll repay 9% of any income you earn over the current repayment threshold of £21,000 a year, £1,750 a month or £404 a week. If your income changes, either rising or falling, your repayment amounts will change to reflect this. If you stop working, your repayments will stop until you start working again and your income is over the threshold.

How to apply

You can apply online at www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance

Postgraduate loans

If you're interested in studying a taught or research postgraduate course that leads to a Master's degree qualification you can apply for a postgraduate loan.

You can apply for a loan of up to £10,000 as a contribution towards your course and living costs. If your course is longer than one year you can get up to £5,000 in your first year and the rest in your second year.

How much will I repay?

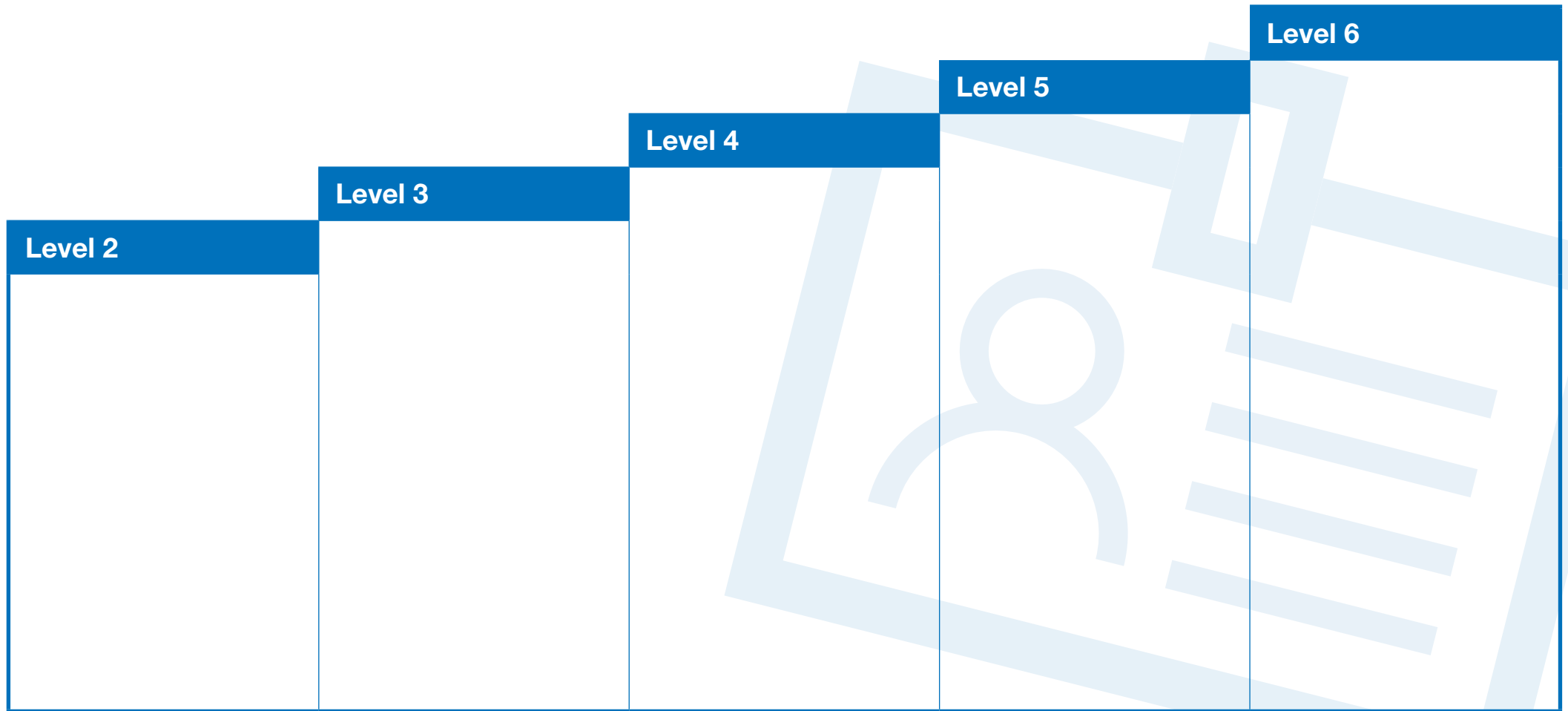
You have to repay any loan you borrow, but not until you've finished or left your course and your income is over £21,000 a year. Repayments will be based on your income, not what you borrow. However, no repayments will be taken before April 2019 and you'll only start making repayments once your income is over the current threshold of £404 a week, £1,750 a month or £21,000 a year. You'll repay 6% of what you earn over the threshold.

How to apply

You can apply online www.gov.uk/postgraduateloan

6 Job roles in social care

There are lots of job roles in social care, working with different people in a range of settings. You can read more about social care job roles in this section.



Care worker/ care assistant



Job description

You'll work with people who need direct care and support, and you'll be responsible for an individual's overall comfort and independence. You could work in a residential or nursing home, in peoples' own homes, or out in the community. You could also be a live-in carer, living with an individual over a specified time period.



Duties can include

- Supporting people who need care and support with all aspects of their day to day living, so they can enjoy the best possible quality of life.
- Creating and maintaining good relationships with people who need care and support and their family and friends - as well as other professionals.
- Supporting people with social and physical activities or mental stimulation.
- Helping with personal care such as support with showering and dressing.
- Supporting people with eating and drinking.
- Monitoring individuals' conditions by taking their temperature, pulse, respiration and weight, and possibly helping with medication.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to treat people with dignity
- good listening and observational skills
- the ability to follow company policies and procedures (i.e. health and safety).



Entry requirements

There are no set entry qualifications, although you may benefit from holding a qualification in a related topic (e.g. GCSE, BTEC, or other vocational qualification). It is possible to enter through a Level 2 Apprenticeship in Health & Social Care. Although no formal experience is required, related voluntary or informal experience (such as caring for relatives) will support your application. You'll be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring check.

Support worker/ intervenor



Job description

There are a range of roles with different job titles which are all about supporting people to live independently (often following illness) and don't involve personal care. You'll usually have a number of individuals that you get to know very well. You may work in a residential home, or out in the local community. You could be working with people with substance misuse issues, a learning disability or a mental health condition. You could move into a senior support worker role and take on additional responsibilities which may include supporting and mentoring other members of staff as well as being responsible for the day to day supervision of the service.



Duties can include

- Supporting individuals with different aspects of everyday living; including housing and finance as well as social activities.
- Supporting people with life skills such as budgeting and cooking.
- Working with the person and their family to design their own care plan.
- Providing emotional support.
- Supporting individuals to improve and maintain their well-being.
- Working in teams with other professionals such as social workers.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to treat people with dignity
- good interpersonal skills
- good listening and observational skills.



Entry requirements

For some roles there are no formal entry level qualifications, but you will need to have strong English and number skills (such as GCSE grades A–C in maths and English). For other roles you will need at least one year's experience of working with individuals with care and support needs and you are usually expected to have a Level 2 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care. Holding or working towards a Level 3 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care is desirable for some roles.

Shared lives carer



Job description

Shared lives carers welcome vulnerable people into their own home and you'll provide any support they need whilst encouraging them to be independent. You could share your home on a long or short term basis, offer weekend respite or provide support (such as social activities) to individuals during the day using your own home as a resource. Another option is staying with the individual in their own home (this is known as 'homeshare').



Duties can include

- Providing a safe, welcoming, comfortable home that can offer a stable and supportive environment.
- Providing care and support in addition to board and lodgings, or to make your home available as a resource.
- Supporting people to meet their emotional, social, health and educational needs.
- Supporting people to develop friendships and relationships, gain confidence and develop skills to become as independent as possible.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to treat people with dignity
- good listening and observational skills
- the ability to provide someone with opportunities to learn
- being responsive and supportive
- patience and understanding.



Entry requirements

Previous experience of supporting people is desirable but not essential as training and support will be given. You do not need any formal qualifications to be a shared lives carer as the personal qualities and values that you have to offer are most important.

Personal assistant



Job description

You'll work directly with one or more individuals to support them in every aspect of their daily living and enable them to live as independently as possible. You'll be employed directly by an individual (known as an individual or direct employer) who are managing and paying for their own care through a direct payment or individual budget. You'll often work from their own home. You can be employed directly by one employer or work for a number of different people.



Duties can include

- Supporting people who need care and support to enjoy the best possible quality of life – this could include cooking, shopping, social and leisure activities, support at work or college and assisting with pets.
- Creating and maintaining good relationships with the person/people you support and their family and friends, as well as other professionals.
- Helping people with personal care such as showering and dressing (although not all PA roles involve personal care).
- Supporting people with eating and drinking.
- Supporting healthcare tasks such as medication and catheter management.
- Managing and co-ordinating a team of PAs (if in a senior PA role)



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to treat people with dignity
- good interpersonal skills
- working on your own initiative
- digital and computer skills
- flexibility and time management.



Entry requirements

There are no set entry qualifications, and the skills, experience and values required will largely depend on the needs of the individual employer. Individual employers are seeking a personal assistant who they can trust and who has the right values and attitudes.

Senior care worker



Job description

You'll do the same job as a care worker, but often with the additional duties of supervising and supporting a team of care workers. Some senior care workers take on responsibilities for particular areas of work within the service such as end of life care, moving and handling, dementia care or health and safety.



Duties can include

- Supporting people who need care and support with all aspects of their day to day living, so they can enjoy the best possible quality of life.
- Creating and maintaining good relationships with people who need care & support and their family and friends, as well as other professionals.
- Developing an individual's care plan that outlines the support they need.
- Helping people with personal care such as showering and dressing.
- Supporting people with eating and drinking.
- Supporting people with social and physical activities or mental stimulation.
- Carrying out healthcare tasks such as administering medication and taking temperatures.
- Supervising and supporting a team of care workers, including managing rotas and doing supervisions and appraisals.
- Deliver training sessions on specialist topics such as end of life care or moving and handling.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to treat people with dignity
- supervisory or team leading skills
- good presentation skills
- the ability to deal with conflict
- the ability to follow company policies and procedures (i.e. health and safety).



Entry requirements

You'll be required to have a background in social care and it may be desirable to have a Level 2 or 3 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care. It's a requirement that you are qualified to an appropriate level, and this is usually Level 3. Some senior care workers may have nursing qualifications.

Enhanced care worker/ enhanced personal assistant



Job description

You'll be working in a care worker role but given additional clinical training to enable you to undertake basic healthcare tasks, working alongside registered nurses. You may want to consider this position if you're interested in a medical career.



Duties can include

- Supporting people who need care and support with all aspects of their day to day living, so they can enjoy the best possible quality of life.
- Carrying out healthcare tasks such as taking blood samples, administering medication and simple wound care.
- Creating and maintaining good relationships with people who need care & support and their family and friends as well as other professionals.
- Helping people with personal care such as showering and dressing.
- Supporting people with eating and drinking.
- Supporting people with social and physical activities or mental stimulation.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- good listening and observational skills
- the ability to follow company policies and procedures (i.e. health and safety)
- the ability to work with other professionals
- good number skills.



Entry requirements

There are no set entry qualifications, although you may benefit from holding a qualification, such as a BTEC or GCSE, in a related topic. It's possible to get into this role through a Level 2 Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care. Although no formal experience is required, related voluntary or informal experience (such as caring for relatives) will support your application. You'll need to have strong literacy and numeracy skills and will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring check.

Activity worker or co-ordinator



Job description

You'll design and oversee social activities for people who need care and support, or assist them to develop their own. You'll also be responsible for creating individual activity plans for people. Although the role is predominantly based in residential settings, you could also work in an individual's home or out in the wider community. You could move into a more senior activity role and take on additional responsibilities such as mentoring and supporting other staff.



Duties can include

- Talking with people about the types of activities they'd like to do.
- Developing and providing activities that are tailored to the needs and abilities of individuals, as well as group activities that will bring individuals together.
- Finding the balance between arranging activities that individuals like doing and activities that will expose them to new experiences.
- Booking external suppliers to provide entertainment and activities.
- Organising trips out in the local community, considering transport arrangements and accessibility.
- Assisting people to take part in activities, ensuring that all necessary materials are available.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to motivate others
- good organisational skills
- time management and the ability to schedule and plan ahead
- digital skills to research and book activities online.



Entry requirements

You'll usually have experience of working in a residential, community or voluntary setting and experience of organising activities. Qualifications demonstrating strong English and number skills (such as GCSE grades A–C in maths and English) are usually required. A Level 3 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care is also a desirable qualification for this role, as well as awards and certificate in activity provision.

Rehabilitation worker



Job description

The role of these workers is to support individuals to live as independently as possible, often following an illness or accident. You'll support individuals with many aspects of everyday living, including physical, emotional and social care. This work is predominantly support and enabling, rather than personal care.



Duties can include

- Carrying out specialist assessments within the community to identify what care and support people need.
- Identifying what care options are available for individuals, dependent on what they need.
- Working with other professionals such as social workers and housing departments to ensure consistent and co-ordinated support.
- Supporting people to gain confidence and realise their potential.
- Teaching people daily life skills such as making a cup of tea, or reading braille.
- Organising activities such as sports, drama and educational activities.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- good listening and observational skills
- flexibility and time management
- the ability to organise own workload
- digital skills to do online research
- good writing skills to complete assessments.



Entry requirements

For some roles there are no formal entry level qualifications, but entrants need to have strong English and number skills (such as GCSE grades A–C in maths and English). For other roles it's necessary to have at least one year's experience of working with individuals with care and support needs. Holding or working towards a Level 3 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care is desirable.

Reablement worker / enabler



Job description

Reablement is usually provided to people who have just been discharged from hospital or are entering the care system following an illness or accident. Reablement workers will help people with daily living activities, and sometimes provide personal care - usually for up to six weeks - to encourage individuals to develop the confidence and skills to carry out these activities themselves and continue to live at home.



Duties can include

- Working with individuals to promote their own independence and choice.
- Developing an individual's care plan that outlines the support they need.
- Working closely with other professionals to ensure the individual gets the care they need, such as occupational therapists and social workers.
- Supporting people with equipment and assistive technology to help them live independently.
- Providing learning and guidance to individuals (and their carers) to help them do daily living activities themselves.
- Providing support with health related tasks such as administering medication.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to treat people with dignity
- flexibility and time management
- patience
- good problem solving skills
- digital skills to help people with assistive technology.



Entry requirements

For some roles there are no formal entry level qualifications, but entrants need to have strong English and number skills (such as GCSE grades A–C in Maths and English). For other roles it's necessary to have at least one year's experience of working with individuals with care and support needs. Holding or working towards a Level 3 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care is desirable.

Advocacy worker



Job description

Advocacy seeks to ensure that people, particularly those who are most vulnerable, have their voice heard on issues that are important to them, and have their views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives. In this role you will empower individuals to express their views, wishes and choices and remain as involved as possible in all decisions which affect them. For example, you might provide advocacy for someone with dementia. As part of your role you might support them to make decisions about getting carers in their own home or moving into residential care.



Duties can include

- Determining the nature of the issue(s) that the individual is experiencing.
- Exploring options to help people make decisions about their own lives.
- Assisting people to secure their rights to the help they need.
- Supporting an individual to develop a plan that will help them
- Enabling individuals to represent themselves, where possible, or speaking up on their behalf.
- Providing practical support to help individuals, such as accompanying them to appointments.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to understand complex policies and legislation
- good listening and observational skills
- assessment skills
- research skills, including the ability to do online research.



Entry requirements

There are no formal qualification requirements for this role although you will benefit from having relevant life experience, as well as knowledge of local government and other public services. A degree in social sciences or a legal background is useful and some employers may require a social care qualification. You may have experience in counselling or gained experience in advocacy or welfare rights.

Housing support officer



Job description

You'll provide housing related support and advice to individuals to enable them to live independently and maintain their tenancy. You may be working in sheltered accommodation, supported living services, a hostel for the homeless or supported housing. You could be working as a residential warden, ensuring a safe and secure environment for all residents and acting as the first point of contact for care staff and contractors.



Duties can include

- Supporting individuals with many aspects of everyday living including personal finance, cooking and shopping.
- Carrying out health and safety assessments.
- Supporting individuals to access wider support networks in the community.
- Helping individuals to identify what care and support they need.
- Doing administrative tasks to support your workplace, such as tenancy agreements or marketing.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- good interpersonal skills
- the ability to work on your own initiative
- digital skills to research networks in the local community
- the ability to understand housing legislation.



Entry requirements

For some roles there are no formal entry level qualifications, but you will need to have strong English and number skills (such as GCSE grades A – C in maths and English). For other roles you will need at least one year's experience of working with individuals with care and support needs. Having a degree or working towards a Level 3 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care is often required or desirable.

Social work and occupational therapy support workers

Social workers and occupational therapists often have support workers to help them. These roles can have a range of job titles such as social care assistant, community care officer, case officer or support worker.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to form good working relationships
- the ability to work calmly under pressure
- good planning and organisational skills
- problem solving skills.



Job description

Social workers and occupational therapists often have support workers to help them. These roles can have a range of job titles such as social care assistant, community care officer, case officer or support worker.



Duties can include

- Assessing what care an individual needs, including their abilities and goals.
- Writing a care plan that outlines what care an individual needs.
- Monitoring and evaluating care plans.
- Visiting people in their home and building positive relationships with them.
- Working alongside health and community colleagues to support people to remain in their own homes and get the care they need.



Entry requirements

There are no formal qualification requirements for these roles although many employers will ask for a minimum of 5 GCSEs (or equivalent qualification) at grades A – C. Previous experience of working in a social care or health setting and a good level of English and maths are desirable.

Complementary therapy support worker



Job description

In this role you'll provide complementary therapies such as reflexology, massage and aromatherapy to individuals who may be experiencing emotional distress, pain or psychological issues. You could work in a hospital, health centre, hospice or in someone's own home.



Duties can include

- Building trusting and respectful relationships with people with care and support needs.
- Carrying out assessments to identify the treatments that individuals would most benefit from.
- Delivering complementary therapies such as massage, hypnotherapy and Reiki.
- Evaluating the therapies carried out and amending treatment plans where needed.
- Working with other social care and health professionals to ensure people get the care and support they need.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- excellent listening skills
- the ability to put people at ease
- the ability to cope with emotional situations.



Entry requirements

Each therapy will have its own entry requirements and employers may expect therapists to be registered with either the General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies or the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC). You may also need some previous experience of working in social care or health.

Social prescriber



Job description

Social prescribing is a way of connecting people with non-medical support in the community to help them improve their wellbeing, tackle social isolation and prevent illness. People will be referred to you from GPs, social workers and other professionals, and you may be based in a GP surgery, health centre or community organisation.



Duties can include

- Carrying out assessments of what care and support people need, such as physical activities, learning new skills, making new friends, finding employment and housing support.
- Identifying local care and support services, such as community groups, and helping people to communicate with them.
- Monitoring and reviewing the progress people make.
- Building positive and effective relationships with referral partners, such as community and voluntary groups.
- Acting as an advocate and champion for the social prescribing service across local stakeholders, the public, and professionals.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- excellent listening skills
- digital skills to research local groups online
- the ability to gain people's trust and put them at ease
- good assessment skills.



Entry requirements

There are no formal qualification requirements for this role although most employers will require you to have previous experience of working with adults with a care and support need. Knowledge and experience of issues relating to employment, debt, social isolation, mental health, housing, physical activity and diet are also desirable.

Team leader or supervisor



Job description

You'll lead and supervise a team of care workers, ensuring they provide high quality care and support. You'll also work with your manager to ensure that standards and processes are followed and maintained.



Duties can include

- Managing and supporting workers so they can perform their roles safely and to the best of their ability.
- Supporting your manager to run your workplace according to standards and legislation.
- Acting as a positive role model to colleagues.
- Developing care plans that outline what care and support individuals need.
- Leading team meetings and doing inductions, supervisions and appraisals.
- Working in partnership with other professionals to ensure individuals get the support they need.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- good listening and observational skills
- the ability to manage a team
- reading skills to understand company policies and procedures
- presentation skills.



Entry requirements

You'll be required to have a background in social care and probably have a Level 3 Diploma or Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care. It's a requirement that you're qualified to an appropriate level, and this is usually Level 3.

Counsellor



Job description

As a counsellor you may work with people who are coming to terms with bereavement, living with a long-term condition or experiencing problems with drug or alcohol addiction. In this role you'll help people to overcome their challenges and to make appropriate changes to their life.



Duties can include

- Building relationships of trust and respect.
- Giving people the opportunity to work through their feelings in complete confidence, actively listening, and asking questions to enable them to reflect on their experiences.
- Encouraging and empowering individuals to cope with challenges and make positive changes to their lives.
- Referring people to other sources of help.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- excellent listening and observational skills
- strong communication skills
- the ability to develop relationships of trust and respect
- resilience and the ability to manage sensitive situations
- understanding of client confidentiality.



Entry requirements

To become a counsellor you need to fulfil the requirements of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). Further information can be found at:

www.bacp.co.uk/crs/Training/careersincounselling.php.

A degree in a related subject such as nursing, psychology or social work may support you in your career, as will previous counselling experience.

Care co-ordinator / care navigator / community navigator



Job description

There's no universal definition for care co-ordinators or navigators, but it's likely that you'll take an active role in helping people to remain in their own homes and get the support they need. You may be responsible for co-ordinating a person's care across all areas of health and social care as well as housing and employment support, and provide an individualised support, information and signposting service.



Duties can include

- Working with people with a range of needs, dealing with issues such as social isolation and preventing unnecessary admission to hospital or a care home.
- Visiting people on behalf of a GP or other professional to assess their needs.
- Co-ordinating care from across different services, including communicating with other professionals and community groups.
- Assisting individuals to access support and benefits where appropriate.
- Arranging equipment or assistive technology such as pendant alarms, calendar clocks, hand rails and key-safes.
- Developing and maintaining knowledge of and links with local services, networks and community groups.
- Reflecting on and evaluating experiences of individuals using locally available support.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- planning and organisational skills
- good team working skills
- digital skills, especially using a computer and assistive technology.



Entry requirements

Qualification requirements for these roles vary with some expecting professional qualifications, degrees or a minimum of a level 4 qualification. You'll benefit from having some experience of working in a social care, health or advice setting as well as an up-to-date knowledge of policy and practice in social care and health. You'll need to have strong English and number skills.

Management roles



Job description

There are a range of management roles available in social care – these include supervisory, first line manager (service manager/co-ordinator, residential unit manager) and middle manager (assistant director, project manager, department head) positions. You could progress to a senior management position such as chief executive or service director.



Duties can include

- Overseeing the day-to-day running of a service.
- Leading the service in a way that promotes choice, independence and control for all individuals.
- Developing and maintaining a positive workplace culture.
- Leading, managing, mentoring and supporting staff so they can perform their roles safely and to the best of their ability.
- Managing budgets and contracts.
- Working in partnership with other health and social care professionals.
- Leading on the growth and development of the service.
- Leading on specific projects or clinical areas.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- leadership skills
- project management
- the ability to manage own learning
- advanced number skills.



Entry requirements

Entry requirements will depend on the role, but the majority of roles require relevant experience in a health or social care setting as well as a social care or management qualification at level 3 or above.

Registered manager



Job description

As a Registered manager you will be responsible for the day-to-day running of a care service – this could be a residential home, a domiciliary care agency or a supported living service.



Duties can include

- Running the service in a way that supports the rights of individuals to live the lives they choose
- Developing and maintaining a positive workplace culture.
- Ensuring the service meets all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Leading, managing, mentoring and supporting staff so they can perform their roles safely and to the best of their ability
- Managing budgets and contracts.
- Working in partnership with other health and social care professionals.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- leadership skills
- project management
- the ability to manage own learning
- advanced number skills.



Entry requirements

You'll be required to have a background in social care management and to have achieved a qualification at level 4 or above in care, nursing, social work or management. If you don't already hold a relevant qualification you will need to undertake the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care once you start in post.

Commissioner



Job description

As a commissioner you'll arrange services for people to meet care and support needs. You could commission NHS-funded services such as therapy, or work with particular client groups such as older people or people with a mental health condition. You could work for a local authority, a Clinical Commissioning Group or another NHS service. There a range of roles within commissioning teams – including quality assurance and compliance.



Duties can include

- Sourcing services that achieve the best possible outcomes for the local community.
- Gathering and researching information on best practice, national policy and legislation and local market intelligence.
- Contributing to market shaping and facilitation to increase choice and control.
- Planning, co-ordinating and undertaking quality inspection visits.
- Undertaking contract reviews and monitoring spend.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- excellent listening and observational skills
- project management
- the ability to manage own learning.



Entry requirements

Entry requirements will depend on the role. For commissioning assistant/ support roles a level 3 qualification would be expected. Higher level roles such as commissioning officers or managers usually require a level 5 qualification. Most roles will require relevant experience in a health or social care settings.

For senior positions you'll be required to have previous experience in a similar role.

Owner



Job description

You will own a service such as a residential home or domiciliary care service. You may want to have significant input into the day-to-day running of the service or prefer to appoint a manager to lead on all aspects of operational practice.



Duties can include

- Completing the CQC registration process and ensuring the service meets all legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Having overall responsibility for staff leadership, management, administration and resourcing.
- Marketing your service to potential clients.
- Leading on the growth and development of the service.
- Managing finances and budgeting.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- Leadership skills
- financial management
- project management.



Entry requirements

There are no specific entry requirements although it is likely you will have experience of working in the health and social care sector.

Shared lives co-ordinator



Job description

Shared lives schemes are designed to support adults with care and support needs who find it difficult to live on their own. The schemes match people with an approved shared lives carer, who shares their family and community life and provides care and support. As a scheme co-ordinator you will assess, review and monitor shared lives carers, as well as matching people who need care and support to carers.



Duties can include

- Matching carers with people who need care and support.
- Promoting the service and its benefits to potential clients.
- Recruiting and providing ongoing support to carers so they can provide high quality care.
- Assessing and screening potential shared lives carers and volunteers.
- Supporting and monitoring individual placements.
- Ensuring that the scheme meets all legislative requirements.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- the ability to motivate others
- strong planning and organisational skills
- good assessment skills
- supervisory skills.



Entry requirements

There are no formal qualification requirements for this role although you will benefit from having previous experience in an administration or health and social care role.

Nursing associate



Job description

Nursing associates work with registered nurses to help them provide care and support. When you start you'll do a two year training programme to develop the skills and knowledge you need. Many people who work in this role will eventually progress to become a fully qualified nurse.



Duties can include

- Carrying out a range of clinical tasks.
- Doing physiological assessments and observations to detect early signs and deterioration.
- Supporting registered nurses to assess, plan and evaluate individual care plans.
- Working in partnership with wider healthcare teams and other professionals.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- excellent listening and observational skills
- assessment skills
- good number skills.



Entry requirements

You must undertake a two year development programme to become a nursing associate. To be accepted on to the programme you must be already working in a health or social care role, have good English and number skills at level 2, be able to demonstrate the ability to study at level 5 and also demonstrate the appropriate values and attitudes to work in health and social care.

Social worker



Job description

Social workers work with individuals and families to help them through difficult times. Improve outcomes in their lives. You could support older people, those with learning difficulties, physical and sensory disabilities and mental health conditions. You'll usually work as part of a team, and take responsibility for a number of cases.



Duties can include

- Assessing the needs of individuals and building a relationship with them.
- Offering information and counselling.
- Organising care plans to help people live independently in their local communities and adjust to changes in their lives.
- Intervening where vulnerable people need safeguarding.
- Assessing and managing risk.
- Keeping records and writing reports.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- excellent listening and observational skills
- assessment skills
- the ability to lead a team
- personal resilience
- good people skills.



Entry requirements

To qualify as a social worker you will need to do a degree in social work that's approved by the Health and Care Professionals Council. Entry requirements for the degree can include A-levels or a Level 3 entry to degree programme (including a Level 3 Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care). Some experience of working with people in a social care setting is essential.

There are post graduate qualifications and also some fast track graduate entry schemes available. Once qualified you will need to register with the Health and Care Professions Council.

Specialist social worker roles



Job description

There are a range of specialist roles which you can progress into as a qualified social worker. Many of them will be management roles such as a team leader or manager. However there are also a range of specialist advanced practitioner or advanced social work professional roles. These include things like senior mental health practitioners, safeguarding and reviewing specialists.



Duties can include

- Using highly developed specialist knowledge of social work practice to take the lead on complex cases.
- Researching and sharing up to date social work evidence-based practice with colleagues to support the evaluation and improvement of services.
- Mentoring, developing and supporting less experienced staff.
- Preparing and delivering care proceedings to conferences and court hearings.
- Chairing reviews.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- a confident manner when dealing with emergency situations
- exceptional negotiating and interpersonal skills
- excellent assessment skills
- care management skills
- effective multi-agency working.



Entry requirements

You need to be a qualified social worker with significant senior level frontline experience and relevant post qualification training.

Registered nurse



Job description

To become a registered nurse you should be fully trained and have an official certificate. As a registered nurse in adult social care you could work in a nursing home or out in the community. You could work with people who have long-term conditions or who have physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities or individuals with mental health conditions.



Duties can include

- Performing a range of clinical tasks such as taking blood samples and dressing wounds.
- Recording individuals' medical information.
- Assessing, planning and evaluating individuals' care.
- Working in partnership with families and other professionals to plan care and support.
- Providing emotional, psychological, and spiritual support.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- flexibility and the ability to prioritise your workload
- decision making and critical thinking
- a desire to learn and manage your own development
- resilience and the ability to manage your own stress.



Entry requirements

To work as a registered nurse you must have either a Diploma or a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree in Nursing. Entry requirements for the degree can include A-levels or an entry to degree programme (including a Level 3 Apprenticeship in Health & Social Care). Some experience of working in a social care or health setting will also be beneficial.

Occupational therapist



Job description

Occupational therapists work with people with physical, mental or social disabilities to help them do everyday activities. You could be supporting individuals with physical rehabilitation, equipment for daily living, or self-care.



Duties can include

- Working with people to identify their goals and how they can achieve them.
- Helping people to adjust to their disability.
- Teaching someone who is recovering from a stroke how to do things themselves.
- Supporting people to live the life they want, regardless of illness or disability.
- Advising housing departments on mobility issues.
- Helping individuals to cope with memory or sensory loss or mobility impairment.
- Providing specialist equipment to help people live independently, such as hand rails, wheelchair and hoists.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- planning and organisational skills
- excellent communication skills
- the ability to form good working relationships
- digital skills, especially being able to use a computer.



Entry requirements

You'll need a degree in occupational therapy that's approved by the Health and Care Professions Council. If you already hold a degree, you could do a postgraduate diploma to become an occupational therapist.

You could also start as an occupational therapy support worker and complete an in-service degree.

When qualified, you'll need to register with the Health and Care Professions Council.

Specialist co-ordinator, such as an end of life care or dementia care coordinator



Job description

There are a range of posts that have been created to support a coordinated approach to specific services such as end of life or dementia care. The roles may have different job titles such as coordinator, project lead or facilitator and may be based in a local authority, health or voluntary sector setting.



Duties can include

- Working in partnership with a range of organisations - including statutory and volunteer organisations - to coordinate care services.
- Championing the needs of people who need care and support.
- Raising the profile of the services available.
- Implementing specific projects and running services.
- Working alongside clinical or specialist professionals.



What skills do I need?

Everyone working in social care needs English, number, digital and employability skills including team work and problem solving skills. You can find out more about the core skills needed to work in social care at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/coreskills.

There are also some specific skills needed to work in this role. These include

- excellent communication skills
- negotiating skills
- the ability to work on own initiative
- coordination and organisational skills
- the ability to work in partnership with others across a range of sectors.
- the ability to motivate others.



Entry requirements

Usually you would be expected to have a degree or equivalent and may have other professional qualifications. You would be expected to have considerable experience in the specialism.

Support roles in social care

There are also lots of support roles in social care; these are also known as ancillary roles.



Administrator or receptionist



Job description

You could be working as an administrator for a domiciliary care company or as a receptionist for a nursing home. In this role you will be supporting the day-to-day administration, including dealing with customer enquiries and budgeting.



Duties can include

- Dealing with telephone and e-mail enquiries.
- Doing reception duties such as greeting and welcoming visitors.
- Engaging with people who need care and support to help them find the right care services.
- Managing the diary of management staff.
- Arranging and supporting meetings, including preparing agendas and writing minutes.



What skills do I need?

- Administrative skills, including the ability to use a computer.
- English skills, including reading and writing.
- Communication skills.
- Some awareness of issues faced by people who need care and support.



Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements although you may benefit from holding a qualification in a related topic or having previous experience in an administration or social care role. It's possible to enter through a Level 2 Apprenticeship in Business Administration. You may be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring check.



Pay range

The salary for an administration worker ranges from £8.50 - £10 an hour, or £17,000 - £26,000pa for administrators and £15,000 - £21,000pa for receptionists.

Assistive technology worker



Job description

Assistive technology helps people with care and support needs to live more independently. There are a range of roles available in social care, including telecare co-ordinator, assistive technology assessor, telecare engineer, equipment technician and mobile responder. You could work for an assisted living service within a local authority, a housing provider or a specialist assistive technology company.



Duties can include

- Promoting the benefits of assistive technology and the positive difference it can make to people's lives.
- Identifying people's needs and finding out what assistive technology is available to them.
- Working with people who need care and support to find the right assistive technology for them.
- Brokering the provision of equipment.
- Demonstrating equipment and giving technical advice.
- Installing and maintaining equipment.
- Evaluating and assessing assistive technology to ensure it continues to meet people's needs.



What skills do I need?

- Good understanding of the application of assistive technology
- Analytical skills
- Customer service
- Digital and IT skills.



Entry requirements

Entry requirements will depend on the role, but a lot will require relevant experience in a similar role and/or an assistive technology qualification such as the BTEC Professional Certificate in Health Care and Assistive Technology. Experience of working or volunteering in a social care or health setting may be desirable.



Pay range

The salary for an assistive technology worker ranges from £16,500 to £30,000pa.

Coach / trainer / assessor



Job description

In this role you'll design and deliver learning and development sessions. As an assessor you will support and assess colleagues who are doing accredited qualifications such as the Diploma in Health and Social Care and the Care Certificate.



Duties can include

- Identifying the different learning styles of employees and planning and delivering courses accordingly.
- Developing engaging and appropriate course materials.
- Motivating and inspiring learners.
- Mentoring, coaching and supporting workers.
- Keeping up-to-date with best practice in the social care sector and identifying opportunities to increase own knowledge.
- Preparing, reviewing and agreeing assessment plans.



What skills do I need?

- A good knowledge of the health and social care sectors.
- Excellent presentation and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to motivate staff.
- Planning and organisational skills.



Entry requirements

You'll need to have previous experience in a training or teaching role and will usually be expected to hold a related qualification such as an Award in Education and Training or an Assessor Award. Some employers will also require a qualification in health or social care.



Pay range

The salary for a coach, trainer or assessor will depend on your role, the size of the organisation and level of responsibility. Starting salaries are usually around £20,000 - 25,000pa with some workers earning up to £38,000.

Cook



Job description

You'll usually be working in a nursing or residential home or possibly in a day centre and your role will be to prepare, cook and serve meals, ensuring that all special requirements are catered for.



Duties can include

- Developing, in consultation with residents and staff, healthy balanced menus.
- Being aware of the religious/cultural and dietary requirements of individuals and catering for these accordingly.
- Monitoring kitchen stocks and replenishing as required.
- Ensuring that high standards of hygiene and cleanliness are maintained.



What skills do I need?

- The ability to treat people with dignity.
- Good listening and observational skills.
- Some awareness of issues faced by people with a care and support need.
- Good verbal and written communication skills.
- Number skills.



Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements although you will benefit from having previous experience in the catering industry. Some employers may require a Food Hygiene Certificate. You may be asked to undergo a Disclosure and Barring check.



Pay range

The salary for a cook can range from £7.20 - £9.50 per hour. Rates increase if you have more responsibility for example as a deputy chef. As a head chef you can expect to earn between £28,000 and £32,000pa.

Driver



Job description

As a driver in social care you will provide transport for people. You could work for a day centre, transporting individuals to and from the centre. You could also become a community transport officer, driving people to and from appointments in the community.



Duties can include

- Transporting individuals to and from day centres, hospital appointments and outings.
- Developing relationships of trust and respect.
- Planning routes that include different pickups and drop offs.
- Supporting individuals to get on and off the vehicle, ensuring people's dignity is upheld at all times.
- Performing basic vehicle checks and ensuring the vehicle is clean.



What skills do I need?

- Some awareness of issues faced by people who need care and support, for example older or disabled people.
- Good verbal communication skills.
- The ability to treat people with dignity.
- Good listening and observational skills.



Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements although you will benefit from having previous experience in social care or health. You'll need a full driving licence and possibly a category D licence, depending on the vehicle you'll be using. You may be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring check.



Pay range

The salary for a driver can range from £7.80 - £8.50 per hour or £15,500 - £18,000pa for full time roles.

Employment advisor or inclusion worker



Job description

You will specialise in assisting people who need care and support to find and maintain employment.



Duties can include

- Assessing the skills and abilities of individuals and identifying their employment goals.
- Assisting individuals to overcome barriers to employment.
- Assessing and advising on the support which individuals may need to work such as special equipment or help with personal care – these are called reasonable adjustments.
- Researching the local job markets and developing relationships in the community to identify employment opportunities.
- Matching individuals with vacancies.
- Supporting with CV development and interview preparation.



What skills do I need?

- Good interpersonal skills.
- Good listening and observational skills.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Assessment skills.
- Research skills, including the ability to research online.
- Ability to organise own workload.
- Planning and organisational skills.



Entry requirements

There are no formal qualification requirements for this role although a degree or qualification may be useful. You'll need good English and number skills (such as GCSE grades A–C in maths and English). You'll benefit from having relevant life experience as well as knowledge of the benefits and services available for the long-term unemployed and/or people with disabilities.



Pay range

The salary for an employment advisor will vary depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility but usually range from £20,000 - £28,000pa.

Finance worker



Job description

You'll be working with senior management to ensure the smooth financial operation of the company.



Duties can include

- Preparing annual budgets and end of year accounts.
- Preparing invoices.
- Purchase and sales tasks.
- Developing and maintaining financial and reporting systems.
- Managing company bank account(s).
- Managing payroll.



What skills do I need?

- A good knowledge of financial procedures and processes.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Planning and organisational skills.
- Attention to detail.
- Excellent number skills.



Entry requirements

You'll usually need to hold a related qualification – this will depend on the level of the role you're applying for, but could include an AAT qualification or Apprenticeship. For the majority of roles you will need to have previous experience in a financial or accountancy position.



Pay range

The salary for a finance work will vary depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility. Finance officer roles can range between £29,000 - £32,000pa and more senior roles, such as head of finance, between £35,000 - £39,000pa. This could be far higher in large organisations.

Housekeeper



Job description

You'll usually be working in a nursing or residential home or sheltered housing complex and your role will be to make the environment as comfortable as possible for residents by ensuring it is safe, tidy and clean.



Duties can include

- Ensuring that the environment is welcoming and comfortable for residents at all times.
- Making beds and doing laundry.
- Maintaining records of housekeeping stocks.
- General upkeep of communal areas and bedrooms.



What skills do I need?

- Good verbal communication skills.
- The ability to treat people with dignity.
- Some awareness of issues faced by people with a care and support need.
- Some knowledge of health and safety in the workplace.
- Good number skills.



Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements although you will benefit from having previous experience in a housekeeping role and/or holding a qualification in housekeeping, cleaning or food hygiene. You may be asked to undergo a Disclosure and Barring check.



Pay range

The salary for a housekeeper can range from £7.50 - £9.00 per hour and will depend on the requirements of the role, the size of the organisation and level of responsibilities.

Human resources



Job description

You'll deliver a comprehensive HR service to the business, leading on all workforce related areas such as recruitment, staff benefits and performance management.



Duties can include

- Planning and delivering recruitment campaigns including advertising, shortlisting and interviewing.
- Providing support and guidance to managers on HR-related issues.
- Ensuring you have enough of the right staff for the organisation.
- Managing new starter processes such as DBS checks and induction.
- Reviewing, developing and implementing HR policies, procedures and strategies.



What skills do I need?

- A good knowledge of HR policies and employment law.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Excellent listening and observational skills.
- Ability to uphold confidentiality.
- Planning and organisational skills.



Entry requirements

You'll usually need to hold a related qualification – this will depend on the level of the role you're applying for, but could include a degree or Apprenticeship. For the majority of roles you will need to have previous experience in an HR position.



Pay range

The average salary for a HR worker varies depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility. HR assistant and administrator roles can range from £15,000 - £22,458pa, HR co-ordinator roles from £23,000 - £25,000pa, HR advisor roles from £28,000pa and HR manager roles from £35,000 - £42,000pa.

Informatics and data worker



Job description

Ynformatics is the process of collecting, analysing and sharing data. This information is used by employers to develop and maintain their businesses. There are a range of roles available within this field, including information assistant, data analyst and data quality manager. You could progress to a senior position such as head of information management.



Duties can include

- Collecting and managing data.
- Analysing data.
- Ensuring data is stored safely.
- Providing information and guidance to managers to enable them to make business decisions.
- Intelligence reporting.



What skills do I need?

- A good knowledge of information governance.
- Analytical skills.
- Excellent writing skills.
- Planning and organisational skills.
- Attention to detail.



Entry requirements

You'll usually need to hold a related qualification - this will depend on the level of the role you're applying for, but could include a degree or Apprenticeship. For the majority of roles you will need to have previous experience in a similar position.



Pay range

The salary for a informatics and data worker varies depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility. Information assistant roles can range from £17,000 - £22,500pa, data analyst roles from £20,000 - £40,000pa, data quality manager from £39,000 - £48,000pa and head of information from £40,000 - £70,000pa.

Maintenance worker



Job description

You'll usually be working in a nursing or residential home or sheltered housing complex and your role will be to carry out practical on-site maintenance jobs and property upkeep duties.



Entry requirements

You'll need to have previous experience in a similar role. Some employers may require a qualification in a relevant subject. You may be asked to undergo a Disclosure and Barring check.



Duties can include

- Gardening.
- Painting and decorating.
- Electrical repairs.
- Plumbing.
- Maintaining up-to-date information on fixtures and fittings.
- Carrying out health and safety inspections.



Pay range

The salary for a maintenance worker varies from £8 - £10.50 per hour and will depend on the requirements of the role.



What skills do I need?

- A skills in carpentry, plumbing, decorating or electrical repairs.
- Some awareness of issues faced by people who need care and support.
- Knowledge of health and safety legislation.
- Good verbal communication skills.

Marketing officer



Job description

You'll be responsible for raising the profile of the organisation you work for, making it more attractive to potential clients and employees.



Duties can include

- Planning and delivering innovative and engaging marketing and PR campaigns.
- Developing and evaluating marketing plans and strategies – both internal and external.
- Managing the production and distribution of marketing materials.
- Developing and maintaining the company website and branding.
- Identifying and following up promotional opportunities.
- Communicating with target audiences and managing customer relationships.
- Liaising with designers, printers and suppliers.



What skills do I need?

- A good knowledge of the social care market.
- A good knowledge of marketing strategies including the use of social media.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Planning and organisational skills.



Entry requirements

You'll usually be required to hold a related qualification – this will depend on the level of the role you're applying for, but could include a degree or Apprenticeship. For the majority of roles you'll need to have previous experience in a marketing position.



Pay range

The average salary for a marketing worker varies depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility. Marketing assistant roles can range from £18,000 - £22,000pa and more senior roles between £34,000 - £37,000pa. This could be far higher in large organisations.

Training officer or learning and development manager



Job description

You'll be responsible for ensuring that all employees receive the learning and development they require to be able to do their role correctly and safely.



Duties can include

- Carrying out a training needs analysis to ensure that all employees have the skills and knowledge to perform their roles effectively.
- Designing and delivering bespoke training packages that are tailored to the needs of employees and the individuals they support.
- Commissioning externally delivered training programmes.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of learning and development programmes.
- Developing and maintaining training records.
- Managing training attendance.
- Keeping up-to-date with best practice in the social care sector and identifying opportunities to increase own knowledge.



What skills do I need?

- A good knowledge of the health and social care sectors including the statutory and legal requirements of care providers.
- Excellent presentation and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to motivate staff.
- Planning and organisational skills.



Entry requirements

You'll need to have previous experience in a training or teaching role and will usually be expected to hold a related qualification such as an Award in Education and Training or an Assessor Award. Some employers will also require a qualification in health or social care.



Pay range

The salary for a training officer varies depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility. Starting salaries are usually around £24,000pa, coordinators from about £28,000pa and senior managers from £35,000 - £48,000pa.

Welfare rights officer



Job description

This is a specialised role focussing on matters related to legislation. You will advise people who need care and support on issues such as housing benefit, disability living allowances, employment benefit and rent support.



Duties can include

- Assessing an individual's situation.
- Building and maintaining relationships with people based on mutual respect, dignity and honesty.
- Empowering people to express their views, wishes and choices.
- Ensuring that individuals are able to remain as involved as possible in all decisions which affect their lives.
- Researching information and providing advice to help people understand their rights to the care services they need.
- Enabling individuals to represent themselves, where possible, or speaking up on their behalf.



What skills do I need?

- The ability to understand complex policies and legislation.
- Good listening and observational skills.
- Assessment skills.
- Research skills, including online research.
- Planning and organisational skills.



Entry requirements

There are no formal qualification requirements for this role although you will benefit from having relevant life experience as well as knowledge of local government and other public services. A degree in social sciences or a legal background is useful and some employers may require a social care qualification. You may have experience in counselling skills or gained experience in advocacy or welfare rights as a community volunteer.



Pay range

The salary for a welfare rights officer varies depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility but usually range from £21,000 - £29,000pa.

Volunteer co-ordinator



Job description

You'll be responsible for the development, management and co-ordination of volunteers across an organisation.



Duties can include

- Attracting and recruiting volunteers.
- Responding to requests for volunteer assistance, and matching individuals with the right volunteers.
- Designing and delivering induction programmes for volunteers.
- Identifying the development needs of volunteers and supporting them to access appropriate learning and development opportunities.
- Developing innovative volunteering activities.
- Arranging events to celebrate and reward achievements.
- Promoting and championing the role of volunteers so that they are respected and valued for their contribution.



What skills do I need?

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- The ability to motivate others.
- An awareness and sensitivity to the needs of volunteers.
- Ability to work on own initiative.
- Strong planning and organisational skills.



Entry requirements

There are no formal qualification requirements for this role although you will benefit from having previous experience in an administration or health and social care role, as well as some knowledge of delivering volunteer programmes.



Pay range

The salary for a volunteer coordinator varies depending on the role, size of the organisation and level of responsibility, but usually range from £16,000 - £29,000pa.

My social care career: Adam Skerritt



Adam works as an operational lead with Stockport CP, responsible for leading the day to day operational practice of the children and young people's services. He started his career as a casual support worker and has worked his way up through a number of different roles, including team leader and service manager.

Read the next pages to find out how he has progressed through his career.

Operational lead (children and young people), Stockport CP

- Leads day to day operations
- Manages a team of staff
- Identifies areas for improvement
- Trains and coaches his team

Registered with CQC and became interim service manager

Applied for a team leader role

- Took on extra management responsibilities

Became a support worker with Rochdale Council

- Did a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care

Had a range of different roles before working in social care

Meet Adam

Operational lead, Stockport CP



What is an operational lead in social care?



Adam works as an operational lead with Stockport CP. He is responsible for leading the day to day operational practice of the children and young people's services, which includes

- managing a team of staff
- identifying areas for improvement and implementing change
- training and coaching his team.

He is passionate about ensuring his team provide high quality care, and likes that as a manager, he is able to steer and implement changes where improvements are needed – so he can really make a difference.

He also enjoys being able to support his team to develop their skills and knowledge so they can perform to the best of their ability. He completed a course about helping people to learn, which supports him to deliver training sessions and coach colleagues.

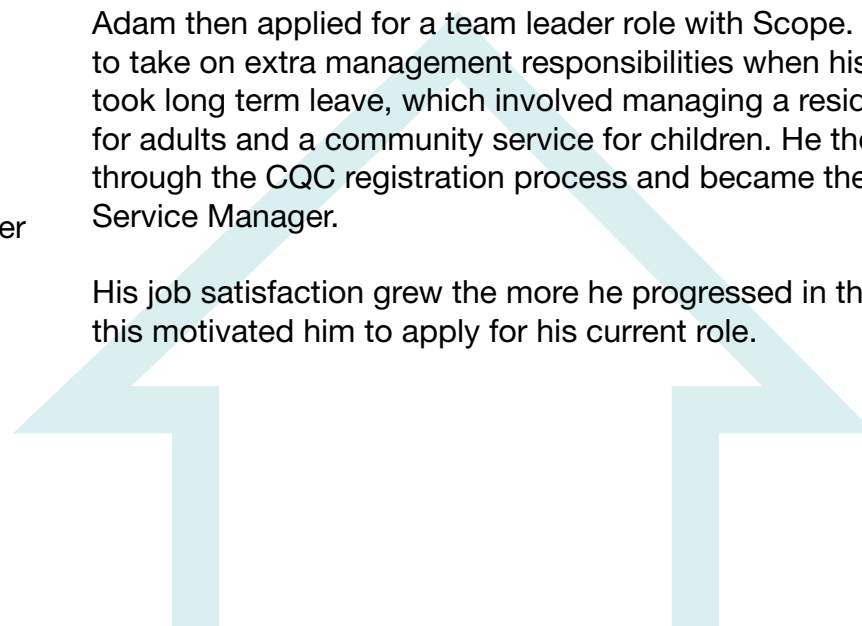
How did he get here?

Adam worked in a range of different roles before working in social care, and held no formal qualifications.

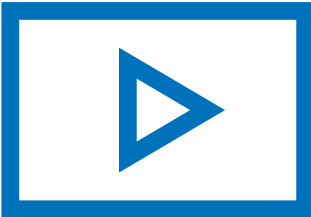
He applied to become a support worker with Rochdale Council after talking to a friend who worked in the sector. They talked about the sense of achievement they felt from working in social care which inspired him to apply for the role. In this role he completed a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care, and developed an interest in driving change through legislation, policies and procedures.

Adam then applied for a team leader role with Scope. He was able to take on extra management responsibilities when his manager took long term leave, which involved managing a residential service for adults and a community service for children. He then went through the CQC registration process and became the Interim Service Manager.

His job satisfaction grew the more he progressed in the sector, and this motivated him to apply for his current role.



Where can it take him?



Adam is very motivated and sets himself goals for each role that he aims to achieve. He also does lots of learning himself through reading, watching videos and listening to TED talks outside of work.

In the future he would be interested in a training or quality assurance role, or to be involved with developing policies to improve quality of care. He is currently completing a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care.

What would he say to others interested in a career in care?

Adam says that having the right values is vital when you're looking for a career in social care – your skills and knowledge can be learnt.

He advises that you find an organisation with a good support structure and regular supervisions as this allows you to communicate regularly with your manager. When he wanted to progress into a management role, he kept a log of all the times he took on extra responsibilities and used these as evidence in his application and interview.

He also suggests researching wider issues in the social care sector. There is lots of information available from Skills for Care, SCIE and the CQC.

'The people you support make such an impression on you. The people who I have had the pleasure of meeting and getting to know during my time in social care have truly enriched my life and taught me so much.'

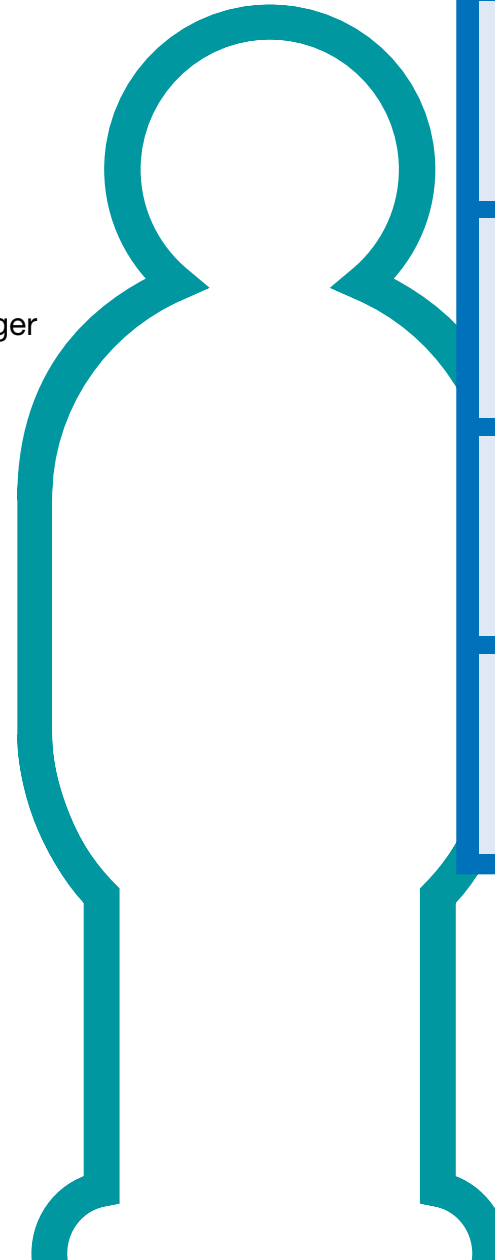
 **It's never boring – every day is different.** 

My social care career: Aiste Trimakaite



Aiste trained as a social worker in Lithuania, and now works as an assistant manager in a mental health residential care home. She has lots of different experiences of working in social care and hopes to become a registered manager or a CQC inspector in the future.

Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.



Worked as a support worker role and was quickly promoted to assistant manager

Moved to the UK and registered with the Health and Care Professions Council

Worked with an organisation that supported homeless people

Did a social work degree in Lithuania

Meet Aiste

Assistant manager



What is a team leader in social care?



Aiste works as an assistant manager in a mental health residential care home. Her role includes:

- assessing people who need care and support
- dealing with forensic mental health referrals
- developing care plans
- updating policies and procedures
- training new staff.

She loves the interaction with the people she supports and enjoys seeing them happy.

Aiste is still involved in supporting people with their personal care needs as she feels this makes her better informed to develop their care plan. She feels that the best managers are those who start in front line care roles and develop their skills and knowledge to progress.

How did she get here?

Aiste loves being around people and helping others and decided to do a social work degree after school in Lithuania. During this course, she did placements in a range of services and volunteered with a support line for women. After her degree she worked with an organisation that supports homeless people.

Aiste then decided to gain international experience and moved to the UK in 2011. She registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC*) so she could practice as a social worker.

She decided to work in a support role to gain experience in the UK health and social care sector, as well as an understanding

of legislation. As a support worker Aiste completed her Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care to develop her knowledge and skills. Although she already has a social work degree, she found this qualification useful to develop her understanding and practice specific to her role and organisation.

Within six months she was promoted to assistant manager and is currently studying for her Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care. She feels that she has been able to progress due to her personal motivation and the support network she has at work; her manager is an important role model.

*On 2 December 2019, the regulation of social workers in England transferred to Social Work England

Where can it take her?



Aiste hopes to develop a new residential supported living service and become a registered manager. In the future she is interested in becoming an inspector for CQC; this involves ensuring social care providers are providing high quality care.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Aiste would encourage anyone who is a 'people person', loving and caring to consider working in social care.

There are lots of opportunities to progress as well as a range of different types of work you could do in social care. But you have to be interested in helping others.

My social care career: Andrea Wiggins



Andrea works as a new projects director with the Avenues Group, setting up bespoke services for people with learning disabilities when they leave hospital or assessment and treatment units. Her first job was working at a riding school where people with learning difficulties came from the local hospital for lessons. Since then she has had a wide range of roles.

Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.

New projects director, Avenues Group



- Working with commissioners
- Managing budgets and preparing costings
- Designing new services including housing

Worked in quality assurance roles and went part time to do a degree in Managing Community and Voluntary Organisations

Moved into different roles with different services, including participation coordinator

Became a support worker and progressed into management roles

Started working with people with learning disabilities at a local riding school

Meet Andrea

New projects director, Avenues Group



What is a new projects director in social care?



Andrea works as a new projects director with the Avenues Group. This is a relatively new role that has arisen due to the Transforming Care agenda. In other organisations, similar roles may be service development director or business development director. The role involves setting up bespoke services for people with learning disabilities and/ or autism or whose behaviour challenges services.

Her role involves:

- liaising with commissioners to ensure individuals can access the right social care and health services
- managing budgets and preparing costings for new services
- designing and commissioning new services including housing
- representing her organisation at national level to influence policy

Andrea enjoys the variety in her work – a combination of working at strategic and national policy levels as well as working closely with operational teams who provide care and support.

How did she get here?

Andrea's first job was working with people with learning disabilities at her local riding school. At 17 she started in a support worker role where she enjoyed the camaraderie and social aspects of being in a team of people of a similar age, and the opportunity to work flexibly and overtime to earn extra money.

Andrea was keen to develop herself and has always kept an eye out for opportunities to do so. In her first role she took advantage of any training available and quickly progressed into a management role at the age of 21. At the age of 24 she became a registered manager with a care provider for young adults with behaviour that challenges services.

Andrea had become passionate about making sure people had the best possible experience from social care services and when she saw an advert for a role as a participation coordinator she was interested in being able to use her skills and experience from services in a different way. In this role, she worked alongside a number of providers of services for people with support needs finding ways to engage them in the development and management of their services. Although she took a drop in pay, this role enabled her to develop her skills and explore from a different angle what high quality support looked like.

This experience led to roles in quality assurance where Andrea worked on implementing positive behaviour support across an organisation. During this time she gained a Diploma from the Tizard Centre. By taking opportunities to apply her skills and experience in different types of roles, Andrea has been able to progress in her social care career.

Andrea recognises that, alongside always wanting things to be better for people who need services, training and qualifications have been important in her career journey. She reduced her working hours to gain a degree in Managing Community and Voluntary Organisations.

Where can it take her?



Although now an experienced senior manager, Andrea is hoping to do a formal leadership qualification as she hopes to progress further in a leadership role.

She firmly believes that if anyone wants to progress, they should take up available training opportunities and gain qualifications to develop their skills and knowledge—‘this particularly helps if you’re changing jobs and your new employer doesn’t know much about you’. She also thinks it’s important to be honest with yourself about what makes you tick so you can pursue the right opportunities. In Andrea’s case it is service development and user experience.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Andrea says it is really important to work for an organisation that shares the same values as you. She says ‘I think it’s essential to work for an organisation that sees the world in a similar way as I do. That way I know I can trust my judgement when making decisions at work.

The Avenues Group likes to support people to progress and is proud when support workers develop to become managers, so if progression is something you want from a job, look out for an organisation that supports people to do this

My social care career: Chris Hocking



Chris works as a locality manager with Welcome Independent Living. They support people to live independently in the community - including younger and older adults with a range of disabilities. Chris was promoted from a care worker to a locality manager with management responsibilities and is planning to go to university to train as a nurse.

Read the next pages to find out how he has progressed through his career.



Promoted to locality manager

Completed his Level 2 and 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care

Became a care worker when his friends parents owned a care home

Studied sports science at university and did volunteering such as Camp America

Meet Chris

Locality manager



What is an operational lead in social care?



Chris works as a locality manager for a homecare organisation. His role is similar to a management one and includes:

- managing a team of 30 care workers, including dealing with issues and carrying out supervisions
- being responsible for 60 clients who receive care and support

- managing day to day operations of the service
- communicating information from frontline care workers to management and office staff
- organising staff rotas.

Chris loves the variety in his job; some days he could be providing direct care and others he could be working in the office.

He says the most satisfying part of his job is that he's making a difference to people's lives; decisions such as finding the right equipment and providing the correct level of care can really impact on the quality of someone's life.

How did he get here?

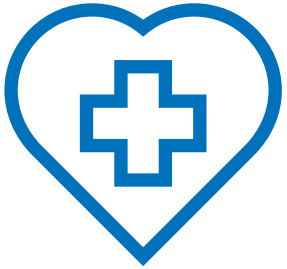
Chris studied sports science at university and decided then that he wanted a career helping people. After university he volunteered working with different groups, such as young people through Camp America.

He had a negative perception of care work and had never considered it as a career. However, a friend's parents set up their own care organisation and Chris decided to give it a go. Three years later he's still there.

He started off as a care worker, proving support in people's homes, and progressed to a senior care worker. To help him develop, he did online courses in his own time, and his employer paid for him to complete his Level 2 and 3 Diplomas in Health and Social Care. He found them useful in understanding the fundamentals of care work.

Within 18 months, Chris was promoted to locality manager and has also taken on extra training responsibilities. He feels his values and attitudes showed his commitment to the organisation and their culture, and this helped him progress.

Where can it take him?



Chris is going to university to train as a nurse, and hopes to continue working in social care. Working with fantastic nursing staff in his care role motivated him to do this, and his experience supported his university application.

He would like to progress into a role where he can influence legislation and practice to ensure the best possible care can be provided.

What would he say to others interested in a career in care?

Chris says to anyone considering a career in social care to 'make sure you're happy with what you're doing'.

He advises social care workers to keep developing themselves as eventually this will be rewarded. He can't imagine many other sectors with so much opportunity - if you care about helping people, there is a role for you.

Make sure you're happy with what you're doing

My social care career: Clara Burfutt



Clara works as a positive behaviour support assistant which involves working with people who may display behaviour that challenges to make sure they receive the best care possible. She has worked in a variety of social care roles and has undertaken a range of training to help her progress into this role.

Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.



Did specialist training relevant to her role

Started working as a support worker

- Did a Level 3 and 5 Diploma in Health and Social Care

When Clara first had children she started her own child-minding agency

Worked with lots of different people as a care assistant, including people with dementia and physical disabilities

Meet Clara

Positive behaviour support assistant, Frontier Support Services



What is a positive behaviour support assistant in social care?



Clara works as a positive behaviour support assistant for Frontier Support Services who support adults with learning disabilities, autism, Asperger's, epilepsy and mental health conditions.

Her role includes:

- assessing the people she supports and developing care plans and risk assessments

- developing Positive Behaviour support plans
- carrying out initial assessments for new clients
- delivering training about mental health conditions and behaviour that challenges
- helping staff overcome challenges in their roles
- providing organisational support
- working with other care professionals

Clara enjoys working with colleagues to ensure they can provide good quality care to the people they support. Something else Clara enjoys is building relationships with clients and acting as an advocate for them when needed. Seeing improvements in the lives of the people she supports gives her great job satisfaction.

How did she get here?

Clara felt she had the right values to work in social care and started work in the sector as a care assistant, working with adults with physical disabilities. She has also worked in other care roles supporting older people with dementia and in domiciliary care. Her initial interest was in nursing, however she enjoys working in social care so much that she's decided to stay in the sector.

After having children herself, Clara ran a child-minding agency.

She then decided to move back into social care and found a role as a support worker with Frontier Support Services. She has since progressed to team leader and then into her current role.

Clara's employer has supported her to complete qualifications at levels 3 and 5, as well as qualifications specific to her current role (including Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector).

She was offered a place on a social work degree but decided to stay in her current role as she enjoys her responsibilities and her organisation provides her with a range of development opportunities.

Where can it take her?



Clara is hoping to complete a degree-level qualification in positive behavioural support to help her develop her skills and knowledge. She would like to progress further in a role that supports people with behaviour that challenges.

She's proud of everything she's achieved as she came into the social care sector with no formal experience or qualifications.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Clara says 'don't come into care if it's just the money you're interested in – come in because you know you have something to offer and can really make a difference.'

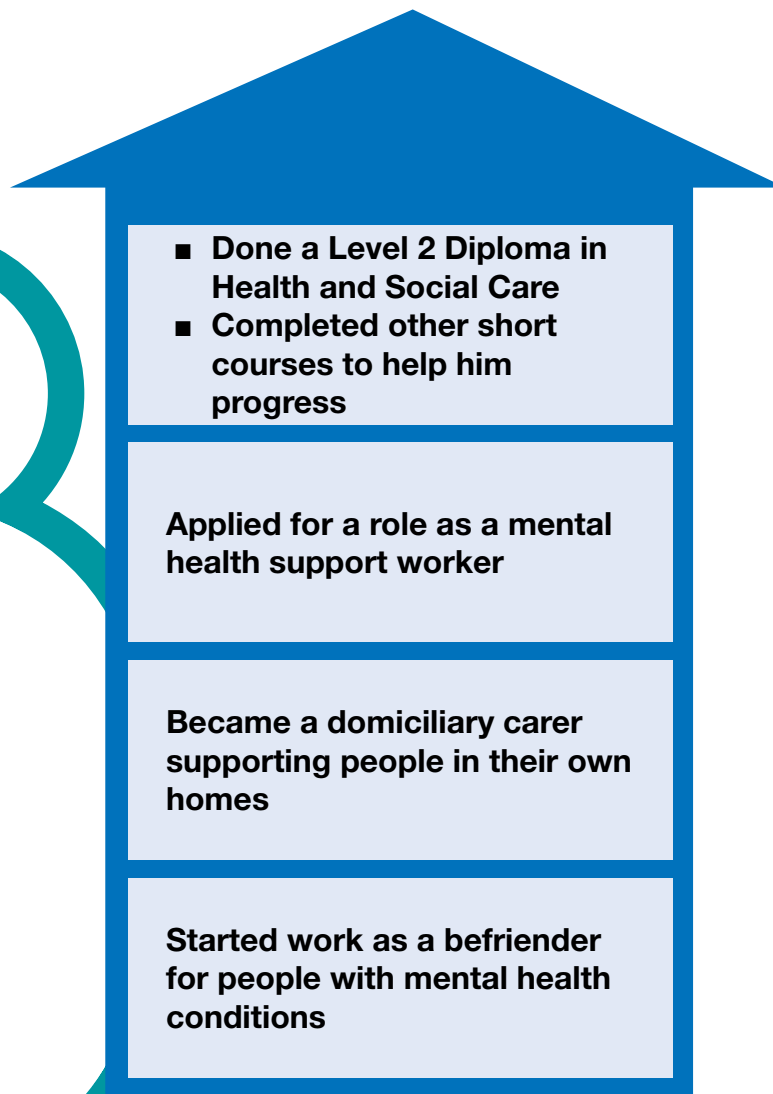
It's essential that you always respect the people you work with and show empathy

My social care career: Darren Sewell



Darren works as a support worker in a residential service for people with mental health conditions. He is interested in a career in social work and thinks this role can help him achieve this.

[Read the next pages to find out how he has progressed through his career.](#)



- Done a Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care
- Completed other short courses to help him progress

Applied for a role as a mental health support worker

Became a domiciliary carer supporting people in their own homes

Started work as a befriender for people with mental health conditions

Meet Darren

Mental health support worker, Look Ahead



What is a mental health support worker in social care?



Darren works as a mental health support worker in a residential care service. The service supports seven people with their care and support needs, and Darren works with two in particular. His responsibilities include:

- managing and administering medication
- overseeing budgets and finances

- supporting people with their housing choices and benefits
- helping people attend hospital appointments

He particularly enjoys organising events and activities for the people he supports. For example he recently organised an event in celebration of Black History Month.

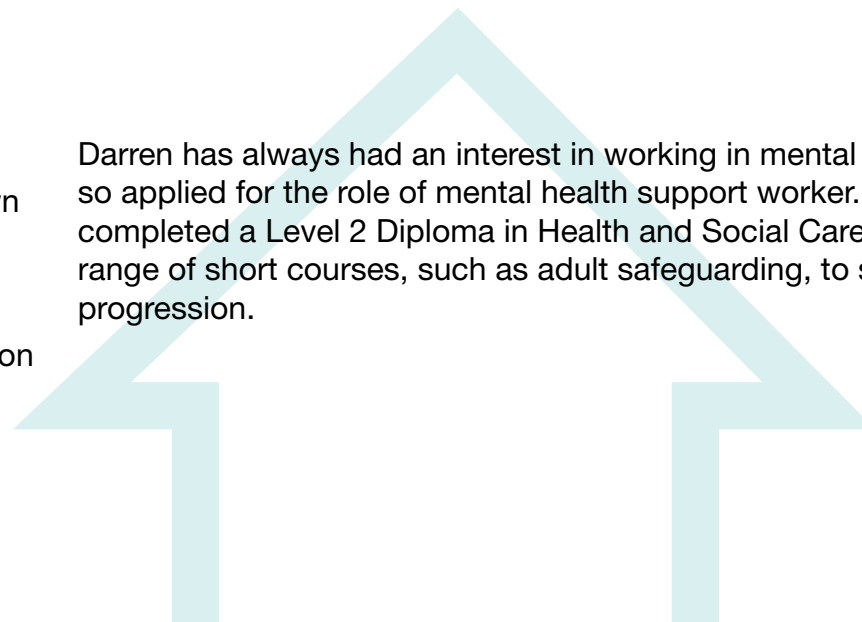
Darren is proud that he can make a difference to people's lives.

How did he get here?

Darren started working in the social care sector as a befriender. In this role he visited people with mental health conditions in their own homes and provided companionship and support.

He felt that social care was his 'calling' and wanted to gain more hands-on experience in the sector. Darren then applied for a position as a domiciliary carer. This involved providing care and support in people's own homes, including personal care, social activities and domestic tasks.

Darren has always had an interest in working in mental health and so applied for the role of mental health support worker. He has completed a Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care and a range of short courses, such as adult safeguarding, to support his progression.



Where can it take him?



Darren takes advantage of all the training his organisation offers and sees every day as part of the learning process.

He is interested in a career in social work, and his long term ambition is a career in forensic mental health.

What would he say to others interested in a career in care?

Darren would recommend a career in social care because you can make such a big difference to the people you're supporting.

He advises that anyone thinking about working in social care needs to have the right values and personality – it would be difficult to do a care job if you're not the right type of person.

Often you're the only person they can rely and sometimes the only person they may see that week, so your role is extremely important

My social care career: Emma Stowell



Emma is a care supervisor for Bluebird Care, supporting vulnerable adults to live independently and safely in the comfort of their own home.

She started with Bluebird Care as a care assistant and progressed to her current role through her eagerness to learn, her friendly, helpful personality, her desire to exceed expectations and her willingness to take on extra responsibilities.

Emma is currently completing a Level 5 Health and Social Care qualification and upon completion will be promoted to the position of customer services manager.

[Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.](#)

Care Supervisor, Bluebird Care



- Meeting new customers and assessing their needs
- Developing care plans
- Inducting new care assistants
- Performing customer reviews

Started part-time as a field-care supervisor and progressed to full time

Started working as a care assistant with Bluebird Care
■ Took on additional responsibilities

Started working for a care agency

Studied health and social care at college and did a range of placements

Meet Emma

Care Supervisor, Bluebird Care



What is a care supervisor in social care?



Emma works as a care supervisor with Bluebird Care. Her role involves:

- meeting new customers and assessing their care needs
- developing care plans and setting up packages of care
- introducing care assistants to new customers
- performing regular customer reviews to ensure the service is running as it should
- delivering on-the-spot training to care assistants as required.

In addition to the responsibilities above, Emma works with a colleague to deliver a 'Home from Hospital' rapid response service. This service provides 2 weeks of 24hour support for people that have been in hospital and would like to return home.

Emma also leads the Bluebird Care Wandsworth Respite Service in partnership with The Alzheimer's Society and Wandsworth Carers Centre, providing respite for carers who care for a family member or friend without any other means of support.

She enjoys the relationship she has with the people she supports and their families.

How did she get here?

Emma studied health and social care at college and gained a Level 3 qualification. She undertook a variety of placements before deciding her passion lay in supporting older vulnerable people. After college, she joined a care agency as a care assistant and loved it. She found the work rewarding and went home with a smile on her face nearly every day.

Emma joined Bluebird Care as a care assistant. She was then promoted to part-time field care supervisor. This meant that she continued delivering care and, in addition, took on additional responsibilities such as spot checking, medication checks and meeting with customers to ensure they were happy with the care they were receiving.



After a year, she was invited to work in the office learning their administrative procedures and supporting the co-ordination team. This gave Emma the opportunity to learn a range of new skills and she began to realise what went into keeping a care business running well!

As the organisation grew, Emma had proved herself ready for promotion and was made care supervisor in a full-time position.

Where can it take her?



Throughout her career Emma has understood the importance of continuing to learn new things and she has undertaken a range of short courses to support her including dementia care and Parkinson's disease.

Emma is currently doing a level 5 qualification and is being developed for promotion to customer services manager. She supports the current customer services managers and provides cover for them as required. This has helped her gain relevant experience, ready to take her place with them.

Emma's ambition for the future is to carry on doing what she feels passionately about and perhaps one day becoming a care manager, something her level 5 Diploma will support her with.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Emma says 'not everyone can work in care; you need to be the right type of person.' She suggests approaching your work as if you were caring for your own family as this will mean you always provide the best care you can.

If, like Emma, you would like career progression, her advice is 'if there's an opportunity – always take it and look for ways to shine. Always do your best.' She explains that a bad experience in social care can be just as valuable as a good one, as it will help you learn, understand more about your own abilities and help you decide which role is really right for you.

If you're keen to progress and develop, she suggests looking for an employer that offers good support and ongoing training.

Not everyone can work in care; you need to be the right type of person

My social care career: Luke Britton



Luke works as a senior care assistant at a residential home and assessment unit that provides care to older people – including those living with dementia. Caring for his grandparents made him realise he wanted a career in this sector. He started a degree in mental health nursing but decided his skills were better suited to social care.

Read the next pages to find out how he has progressed through his career.

Senior care assistant, Holme View Resource Centre



- Provides care and support to people with dementia
- Delegating tasks to a team of staff
- Overseeing staff training

Progressed into a senior care role

- Did a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care

Worked in a range of care roles

He went to college and gained a Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care

- Did work experience

Luke was first interested in social care when he cared his grandparents

Meet Luke

Senior care assistant, Holme View Resource Centre



What is a senior care assistant in social care?



Luke works as a senior care assistant at a residential care home that provides care to older people – including those living with dementia. His role includes:

- working within a team to provide person-centred care
- delegating tasks and supporting others to ensure shifts run smoothly

- supporting managers in covering staff rotas
- overseeing staff training
- helping managers to ensure staff have DBS checks
- booking training and providing mentoring for new staff.

Luke particularly enjoys meeting new people and getting to know the people he's supporting. He gets great job satisfaction from seeing the positive changes he and the team make to people's lives.

How did he get here?

Luke became interested in social care when he helped care for his grandparents, and decided this was what he wanted to do as a career.

He went to college to complete a level 2 qualification in health and social care, and volunteered with one of Bradford Council's dementia units to gain experience. He was encouraged to apply for a role as a domestic assistant and later progressed into a care worker role, providing care and support for service users within the unit.

He later successfully applied for a senior carer role at Holme View Resource Centre. Luke left for 6 months to start a degree in mental

health nursing, but soon decided that it wasn't for him as he thought his skills were best suited to a social care environment rather than a medical one. Luke had to re-apply for his senior carer position and was successful.

In this role he has completed a level 3 Diploma In Health and Social Care at college as well as a Level 3 Award in Dementia and a qualification in Dementia Care Mapping at Bradford University. He is hoping to complete the council's 'Young Leader's Experience' which will give him the opportunity of working alongside one of the service directors to gain some insight into their role.

Where can it take him?



Luke hopes to complete a degree in social work and to focus his studies on social work with older adults.

In the future, to help him prepare for his degree, he is hoping to complete some training alongside colleagues in the Social Work department (something that will be supported by his employer).

What would he say to others interested in a career in care?

Luke would recommend working in social care as it's a very rewarding career and there are lots of opportunities to progress. He says 'you can get a lot from the job' and enjoys going home at the end of the day knowing he's making a difference.

There are lots of different people you could support and it's important to find where your skills and interests lie before applying for roles.

Volunteering is a good way of finding out whether care is right for you

My social care career: Jasmine



Jasmine works as head of adult services for a large social care provider that supports people with learning disabilities. She started her career as a support worker and has had a number of roles including project manager and business development manager.

Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.



Progressed into management roles including project manager and business development manager

Joined her current employer as an assessment and funding negotiator

Funded herself to complete a BA (hons) in Early Years Education

Left school before completing A-Levels and had a range of part-time roles before starting as a agency worker in a care home

Meet Jasmine

Head of adult services



What is a head of adult services in social care?



Jasmine works as a head of adult services for a large social care provider that supports people with learning disabilities.

Her role includes:

- overseeing a large team of support workers and managers
- ensuring high quality care is provided for the 120 people her team supports

- line managing two area managers and three specialist roles
- developing new services
- assessing people's needs to ensure they have the right care package
- dealing with any concerns regarding care and people's rights.

Jasmine feels it's really important to make sure people are supported with dignity and are involved in decisions about their own care.

How did she get here?

Jasmine left school before completing her A-levels. After a series of part-time roles she started as an agency worker in a care home for older people.

She went on to work in children's and mental health services, and studied part-time to complete a foundation degree in child development - followed by a BA (Hons) in Early Years Education. She funded this qualification herself to support her own professional development.

Jasmine later started working as an assessment and funding negotiator with her current employer. In this role she assessed the needs of people who needed care and support, developed their care plans and negotiated funding with the local authority.

She then took on a project manager role which involved managing changes such as setting up new services.

Jasmine moved on to become a business development manager and her employer supported her to do a business and leadership degree with the Open University. This enabled her to progress into her current role.

She loves working as part of a team that makes a difference to people's lives, and finds it very humbling to work with people with learning disabilities.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

On her first day in a job years ago, Jasmine was told "if you last a day, you will stay for years", and she feels that was true for her.

When working in social care she suggests that you should take every learning opportunity you get. Studying at the Open University took years, but doing it part-time meant it could be fit around her work and family commitments - and it was definitely worth doing.

She also suggests taking on every responsibility you're offered, even if there's no extra salary. It's a great way to get experience and others appreciate it.

Her career has taught her you can move upwards into management, or you can go sideways - there's a breadth of experiences available.

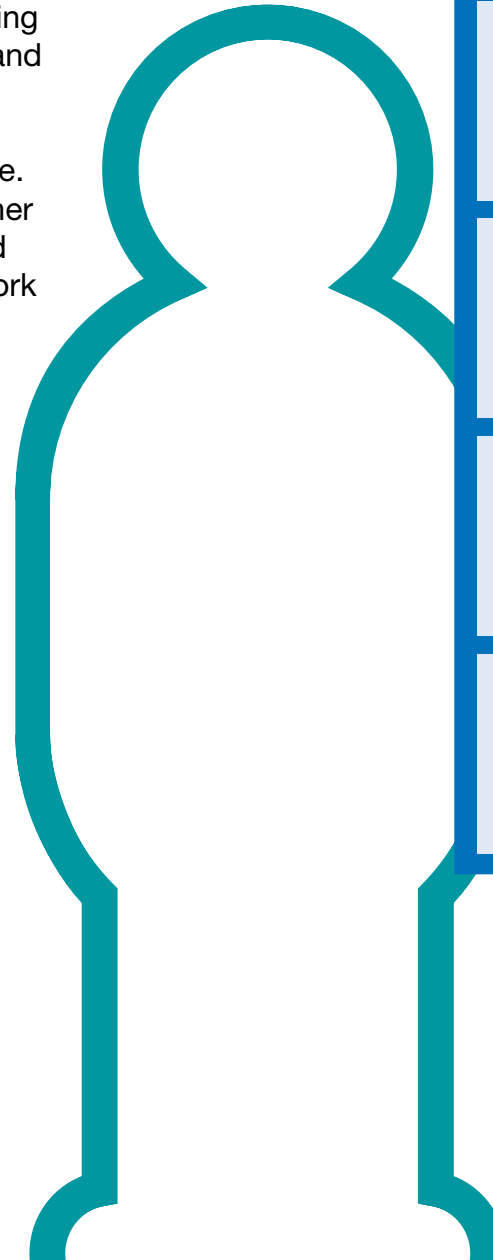
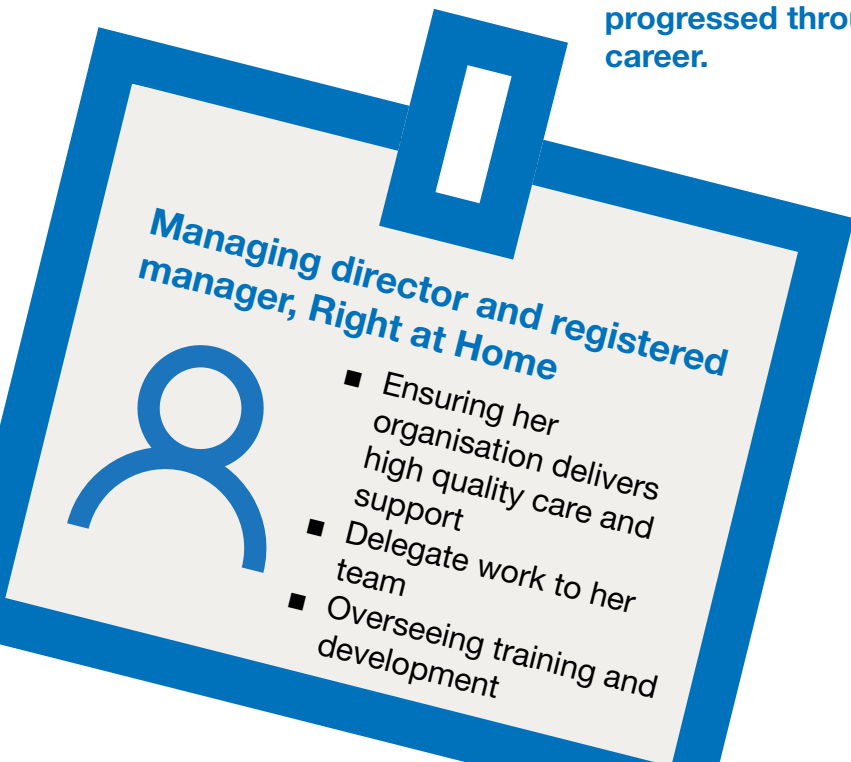
If you last a day, you will stay for years

My social care career: Michelle Apostol



Michelle works as a managing director for Right at Home and is responsible for ensuring her organisation and their staff deliver high quality care. She first started caring for her family in the Philippines and later moved to the UK to work as a senior care worker in a residential home.

Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.



Moved to current employer and became a registered manager

Became an assistant manager

- Shadowed manager
- Level 5 qualification

Moved to the UK and became a senior care worker

- Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care

Cared for family members in Philippines

- Qualification in care giving

Meet Michelle

Managing director and registered manager, Right at Home



What is a managing director in social care?



Michelle works as a managing director for a homecare provider, and is also a registered manager.

Her role includes:

- ensuring the organisation and its staff are delivering high quality care
- delegating work

- ensuring all staff understand and work to the vision of the organisation
- overseeing the training and development of staff

Michelle finds it a very fulfilling role. She is keen to make her staff feel valued and fulfilled at work and is particularly focused on ensuring her staff have the right training and progression opportunities to be able to carry out their roles and progress.

She loves hearing from the people they support about the difference her team is making.

How did she get here?

Michelle has a varied background in social care.

She grew up in a rural community in the Philippines where there was a caring culture, and supported family members, including her aunt who has Down's syndrome.

Her family had a background of working in social care and health roles, however Michelle initially completed a degree in journalism. She soon realised this wasn't the career she wanted and applied for a qualification in care giving.

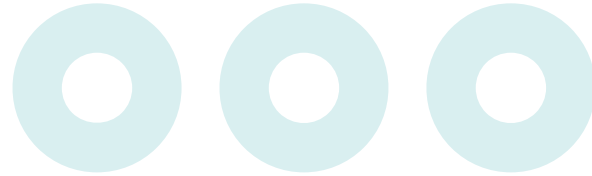
After her sister moved to the UK to take up a nursing role, Michelle also moved over and became a senior care worker in a residential care home for older people. In this role she did a level 2 qualification that was funded by her employer. She also decided to pay for a course with the Open University; a professional certificate in health and social care.

She applied for a position as an assistant manager and they accepted this qualification as part of her application. She took the opportunity to shadow the manager and took on this role when the manager left. This employer was part of a local Workforce Development Fund partnership (facilitated by Skills for Care), and she was able to access funding to complete a level 5

qualification and attend specialist training including end of life care, dementia care, medication and diabetes.

Michelle then moved to work for a domiciliary care provider as she felt she could offer a more personalised service. She was also keen to find a company that had the same values as she did, and somewhere she could grow from the beginning and recruit staff who could deliver the standard of care she wanted.

Right at Home approached Michelle and offered her the chance to become a registered manager. Michelle later took over as a franchise owner, and has supported the franchise as their managing director since.



Where can it take her?



Michelle is keen to continue to develop her service and her staff to provide high quality care and support.

Although Michelle isn't looking for a different role at the moment, there may be opportunities to explore services offering support to different people.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Michelle advises that you check if a career in social care is suitable before applying for a role; check the job description and be clear about what the work entails so you don't get any surprises when you first start.

To progress in your career you need to show interest in ongoing learning and development, and take every opportunity that comes your way; she says you can progress in care quickly if you're the right kind of person.

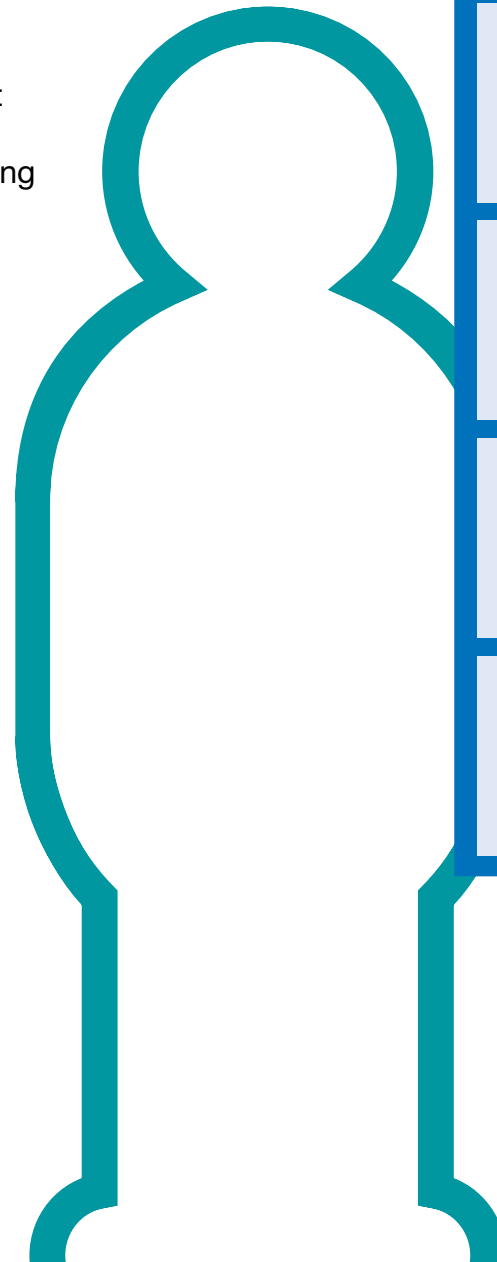
Don't take any notice of the media; they only talk about the bad practice and don't tell the stories of all the good care. There is far more good, dignified care work being done than the bad things they report on.

My social care career: Mike Maden



Mike works as a team manager with Future Directions CIC who support people with learning disabilities. He began working as a support worker with no previous experience in social care, and has since progressed into a management role.

Read the next pages to find out how he has progressed through his career.



Progressed into a management role

Took on extra management responsibilities and did a Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care

Became a support worker with people with learning disabilities

- Worked overtime in different services

Had a range of different roles before working in social care including factory work and outdoor pursuits

Meet Mike

Team manager, Future Directions CIC



What is a team manager in social care?



Mike is a team manager responsible for managing three residential care homes. His role includes:

- managing staff rotas
- organising activities for residents, including planning holidays and events
- assessing and writing risk assessments
- completing care plans ensuring people receive the right care and support

- carrying out supervisions and appraisals with his team
- working with other healthcare professionals including social workers
- running meetings with residents and their families.

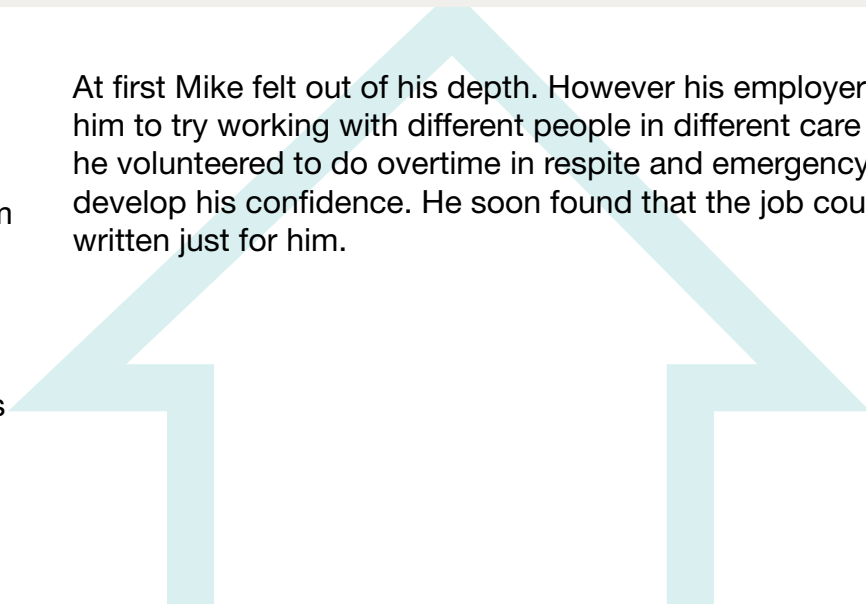
Mike still makes sure he has one to one time with the people that he was originally a support worker for. The ongoing relationship is important as he is getting feedback from them and checking they are happy. Mike loves seeing the difference he can make to people's lives.

How did he get here?

Mike had previously worked in temporary roles in factories and warehouses, but a job with an outdoor pursuits company made him realise he enjoyed working with people.

He wanted a stable career that would give him job satisfaction and security so he applied for a role as a support worker, working with people with learning disabilities. He felt this role would combine his enjoyment of working with people and his skills teaching people sport and outdoor activities.

At first Mike felt out of his depth. However his employer encouraged him to try working with different people in different care homes, and he volunteered to do overtime in respite and emergency services to develop his confidence. He soon found that the job could have been written just for him.



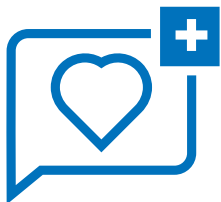
Mike started with no formal social care qualifications. He quickly completed the Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care, re-took his Maths and English GCSEs and then completed the level 3 Diploma. He is currently completing the level 5 Diploma. This was funded by his employer through Skills for Care's Workforce Development Fund.

In supervision Mike mentioned that he would be interested in becoming a team manager. He was given extra management

responsibilities, including managing a service, and progressed into a deputy manager role.

After 16 months in this deputy role he was appointed as a team manager and is currently responsible for three homes. Mike feels that his willingness to learn and move out of his comfort zone has really helped his career progression, and he has picked up ideas from working in different settings that he can take back to his homes.

Where can it take him?



As a support worker Mike was keen to learn new things and try new ideas to improve the care he provided. As a manager he is keen to continue this and is committed to developing motivated workers in his own team.

What would he say to others interested in a career in care?

If you're thinking about working in social care, Mike suggests ringing companies and asking them questions – arrange a meeting and make sure it's right for you. Good companies will allow you to come in and spend time in the home to make sure you know what to expect.

Mike suggests giving yourself a few months to adjust if you're new to care and finding a good role model or mentor who can help you. He says 'if you're unsure of anything just ask, there's no such thing as a silly question.'

He says 'if you want to progress you have to prove you are motivated and look for new activities and show you want to go forward and learn new things and are passionate about your job – then you will get noticed.'

You get back what you put in and if you work hard you get success and job satisfaction back.

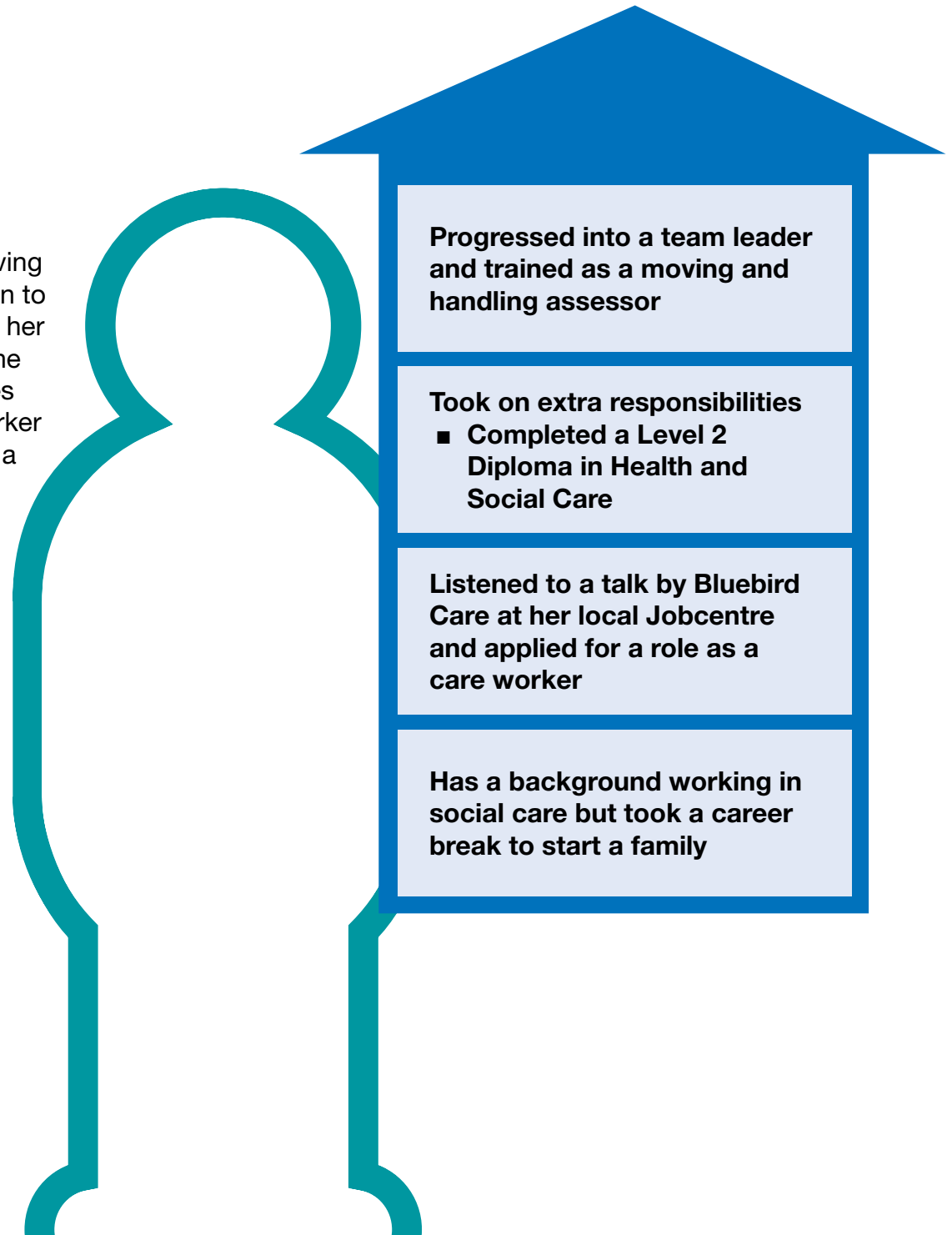
 **It's never boring – every day is different.**

My social care career: Nicola Pullen



Nicola has a background working in social care. She had a career break after having children, and chose to return to the social care sector when her youngest started school. She took on extra responsibilities in her initial role as care worker and progressed to become a team leader and trainer.

[Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.](#)



Meet Nicola

Team leader and moving and handling trainer, Bluebird Care Croydon



What is a team leader in social care?



Nicola is a team leader with Bluebird Care Croydon. Her role involves:

- supporting a team of staff
- carrying out spot checks and supervisions
- auditing daily diary sheets
- administrative tasks
- buddying new staff.

Nicola loves her job; there's never a day when she doesn't want to go into work and she's never bored – there's always something interesting to do or to learn. She enjoys the variety in her role; one day she could be delivering training and the next supporting someone with an activity.

She particularly enjoys building strong relationships with the people she supports and making a difference to their lives. She also enjoys supporting members of her team and seeing them grow in confidence.

How did she get here?

Nicola previously worked in social care before starting with Bluebird Care. She took a career break to start a family, and when her youngest child started school, decided to look for a role in the sector.

She heard that Bluebird Care was giving a presentation at her local Jobcentre. She looked on their website and was impressed with the roles they had and the training available. Nicola attended the presentation and applied for a job there soon afterwards.

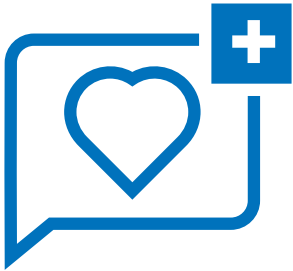
In her care worker role, Nicola gradually took on additional responsibilities, such as working for the weekend on-call service.

She completed relevant training such as first aid, safeguarding and a Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care, all of which were paid for by her employer.

Nicola then progressed to become a team leader. She was initially nervous about taking this step; however her manager was very supportive, enabling her to increase in confidence. She will shortly be starting a level 3 diploma to further support her in this role.

Nicola has completed a Moving and Handling - Train the Trainer course and now delivers moving and handling training to all new members of staff.

Where can it take her?



Nicola believes that there are many opportunities in social care and if you're dedicated and want to make a difference, you can progress and see your salary rise.

In the future Nicola would like to progress into a care co-ordinator role, taking on more responsibilities for a team and the people she supports.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Nicola would recommend working in care to others because you can make a real difference to people's lives. In some cases you may be the only person someone sees that week.

She advises anyone thinking of a career in care that, because clients will be relying on you, you need to be consistent in terms of your availability. Also that you must have compassion – and must really want to support people in their everyday lives.

 **You can make a real difference to people's lives** 

My social care career: Nicola Taylor



Nicola first started working as a nursery nurse but after witnessing the care and compassion provided to a family member after a stroke, decided to come and work in the sector. She started working as a domiciliary care worker in a small family-owned business, and has since progressed through a number of managerial roles to become a Head of Care Services.

Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.

Head of Care Services, Abbeyfield The Dales



- Managing a team of registered managers
- Ensuring the organisation meets CQC standards
- Dealing with complaints and compliments

Moved to a company which was being set up from scratch

- Level 7 Diploma in Management

Progressed into management roles including area coordinator and junior manager

Became a domiciliary care worker

- Did training and progressed into a senior role

Has a background working as a nursery nurse and nanny

- Decided to work in social care

Meet Nicola

Head of Care Services, Abbeyfield The Dales



What is a head of care services in social care?



Nicola works as Head of Care Services with Abbeyfield. She is part of a development team, overseeing the building of a new care service to support people with dementia.

She says:

“I am really excited to be currently involved in the design and planning of a new facility to support 30 people with dementia in a specialist dementia suite and 49 extra care apartments for those in need of

extra care to remain as independent as they can. I work closely with the architects and various trades people, and will soon be recruiting the wide range of staff needed: carers, admin and reception, maintenance, domestic and catering.”

Her role also involves:

- managing a team of registered managers who run their own care services
- supporting the Chief Executive Officer and working with the general manager and area housing manager
- working with CQC and local authorities to ensure that all services are compliant and meet regulatory standards
- dealing with compliments and complaints in relation to the care and operational services
- developing a training strategy and training resources for the organisation.

Nicola really enjoys managing a team and is very motivated to develop team members in their roles.

How did she get here?

Nicola has had a variety of roles in social care.

She first started as a nursery nurse and a nanny, but realised that her heart wasn't in it and decided to go back to college to improve her qualifications, with the view of going to university to study podiatry.

However, when a family member had a stroke, Nicola was inspired by the great care they received and decided to try a career in social care.

Her first role was as a domiciliary care worker for a privately owned family business. She grasped every opportunity

for training and from here she progressed to a senior care worker role. She soon realised this was a job she loved doing, and got great job satisfaction from supporting her team to provide good care.

Nicola then became an area co-ordinator and worked with the local hospital to provide discharge services. She co-ordinated a team of carers who visited individuals in their own homes when they came out of hospital.

Nicola then became a care co-ordinator, from where she progressed to a junior manager role. Her next step was operations manager

where she was responsible for a team of area coordinators and care workers. She trained to become an assessor so could support staff to complete qualifications.

Nicola then moved to a company which was being set up from scratch and assisted the owners to develop key business ideas and opportunities. She had lots of opportunities to develop including completing a CMI Level 5 Management and Leadership Award and a Level 7 Diploma in Management. Within this organisation she again progressed through a number of roles, including regional manager, until she got to where she is currently.

Where can it take her?



Nicola has lots of opportunities to get involved in new things, including the development of a new care service.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Nicola suggests making sure that you find an employer who will support and develop you. She says ‘you don’t need qualifications to enter the sector. Good employers will support and nurture you. There are so many opportunities if you want to progress your career.

There is so much job satisfaction from seeing the difference that small actions can have on people’s lives. Nicola would encourage people to think about giving care work a go. There’s a myth that it’s a dead end job and that you spend your time drinking tea with old ladies – it’s so much more than that!

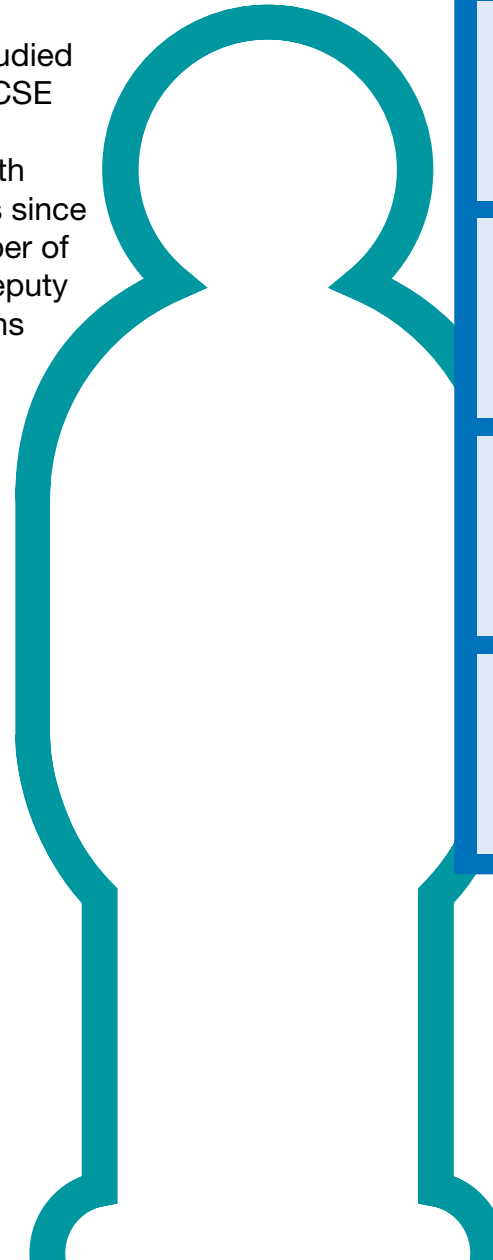
You don’t need qualifications to enter the sector. Good employers will support and nurture you

My social care career: Sophie Layton



Sophie has always enjoyed working with people and studied health and social care at GCSE and A-Level. She found a role working with people with learning disabilities and has since progressed through a number of senior roles to become a deputy manager for Smitham Downs Road which is a care home run by the Care Management Group

Read the next pages to find out how she has progressed through her career.



Moved into a deputy manager role with her current employer

- Did a Level 4 Diploma in Health and Social Care

Applied for a lead care role

Started working as a care worker

- Took on additional responsibilities

Studied health and social care at school

Meet Sophie

Deputy manager, Smitham Downs Road



What is a deputy manager in social care?



Sophie works as a deputy manager at Smitham Downs Road, a residential care home providing care and support for people with learning disabilities.

As deputy manager she supports the registered manager with the day-to-day running of the home.

She supports the management of 16 members of staff, and is responsible for ensuring they provide good quality care and encourage people to live as independently as possible.

She enjoys supporting people and seeing how happy they are when they achieve something.

The thing she's most proud of achieving in her career was when she supported an individual who had previously been sectioned to get to the point where he was able to live independently in his own flat.

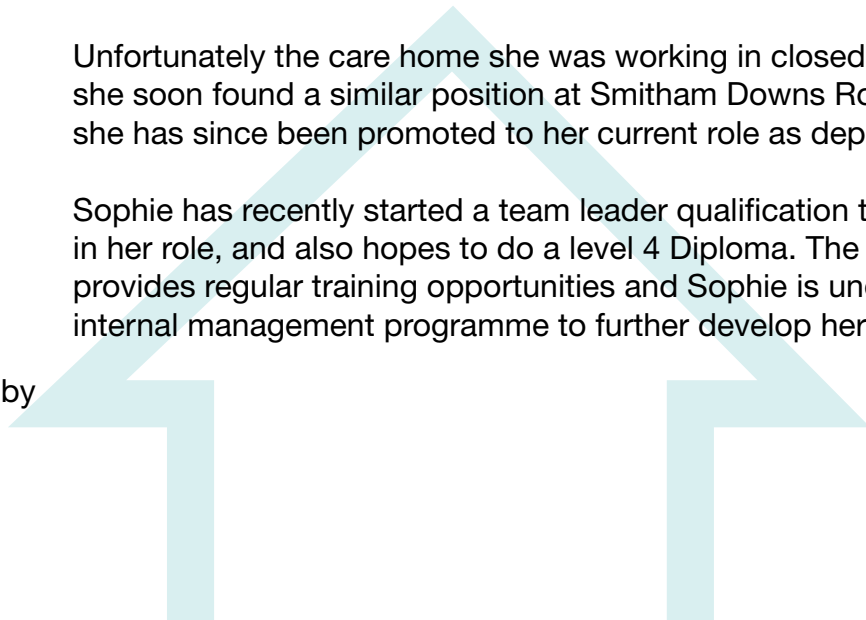
How did she get here?

Sophie studied health and social care at school (both GCSE and A-Levels). She found that she enjoyed working with people so decided to apply for a role in social care through a recruitment agency.

She worked initially as a care worker and started to take on additional responsibilities. After a short while she was approached by the company regional director about taking on a lead carer role.

Unfortunately the care home she was working in closed down but she soon found a similar position at Smitham Downs Road, where she has since been promoted to her current role as deputy manager.

Sophie has recently started a team leader qualification to support her in her role, and also hopes to do a level 4 Diploma. The organisation provides regular training opportunities and Sophie is undertaking an internal management programme to further develop her skills.



Where can it take her?



Sophie originally thought she would move into the healthcare sector, but enjoys her job so much she's decided to stay in social care.

She hopes to develop her management skills and progress to become a registered manager - and maybe open her own home in the future.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

If you get satisfaction from supporting people to achieve things then there's no better job you could be doing. Sophie says care work is so rewarding when you see people developing their independence and confidence.

She also says there are so many opportunities in care that you'll never be out of a job.

Care work is so rewarding when you see people developing their independence and confidence

Meet Shirley

Shared Lives Administrator



Shirley works as an administrator for an organisation that arranges shared lives opportunities. Shared lives schemes match people who need care and support with shared lives carers who welcome vulnerable people into their own home or stay with individuals in their own home and care for them there.

She used an advanced learner loan to pay for a Level 2 and 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care. These qualifications have developed her skills and knowledge, and she now feels confident to apply for a wider range of jobs than before.

What is a shared lives administrator in social care?

Shirley acts as a point of contact for all the shared lives carers in her scheme, and does the administration work to support the organisation. She also spends one day a week as a support worker helping people in the local community. She finds that still doing direct care helps her to understand more when she's supporting the other shared lives carers.

How did she get here?

Shirley has a diploma in management and has a background in administrative jobs and training other staff.

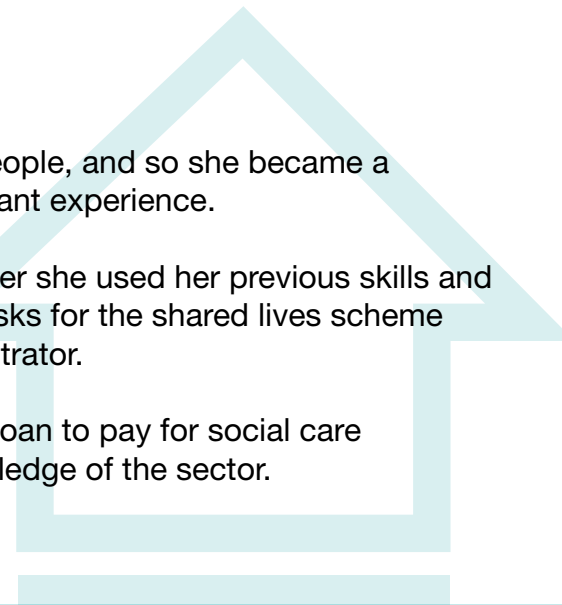
She first came across shared lives schemes when she wanted a job that was flexible enough to enable her to care for her mother. Luckily at the time she also had spare rooms in her house and thought becoming a shared lives carer would be ideal.

Shirley applied for the role of a shared lives carer but it took a while

to be matched with appropriate people, and so she became a support worker to gain some relevant experience.

During this time as a support worker she used her previous skills and experience to do administrative tasks for the shared lives scheme and took on the role as an administrator.

Shirley used an advanced learner loan to pay for social care qualifications to improve her knowledge of the sector.



What did she use an advanced learner loan for?

Shirley chose to work as a temporary contract worker as it gives her the freedom to choose what work she does and when she works to fit around her caring responsibilities - these kind of workers are often called 'bank staff'.

However, the organisation she works for doesn't pay for the training of bank staff so she decided to pay for her own training using an advanced learner loan.

Shirley used the loan to pay for a Level 2 and 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care as these would be most useful to develop her knowledge and skills about caring for people.

Although Shirley already had a degree, these qualifications were useful as they were specific to her social care role and involved assessment in the workplace. She found it helpful to reflect on what she's learned and be able to apply it when working in practice, for example raising issues about relevant legislation in team meetings.

These qualifications and experience has opened up lots of new opportunities for her in terms of the choice of work she can do - one recent job search came back with over 1400 vacancies for care workers in London.

What would she say to others interested in working in social care?

Shirley would recommend care work to anyone who has any kind of compassion.

I've never had a job where I'm greeted so enthusiastically, people wait at their window for me and knowing my visit is an important part of someone's day [is so rewarding]

She says:

"I've advised family members to go into care work as you get the security of knowing you can always find work. Care work is sometimes not as well paid as other kinds of work... but wherever you are there'll [always] be a demand for care workers."

Shirley also recommends that anyone who has a spare room at home considers joining a shared lives scheme, especially if you want to be a self-employed worker. It can be a good opportunity to do a rewarding career and earn money whilst at home. The wages vary depending on the level of care you give but you can be well paid from it.

Meet Ioana Chicu

Floor Manager of a care home



Ioana works as a floor manager at a small care home that looks after people with dementia.

She moved to England from Romania five years ago and has used an advanced learner loan to do a level 3 and 5 qualification to help her progress in her career in social care.

What is an assistant manager in social care?

Ioana works as a floor manager and is responsible for helping the care manager run the care home. Her role includes being in charge of the staff on her shift, organising rotas, doing weekly health and safety checks, assessing people who'd like to come and live in the home and communicating with GPs and other professionals to make sure people get the care and support they need.

How did she get here?

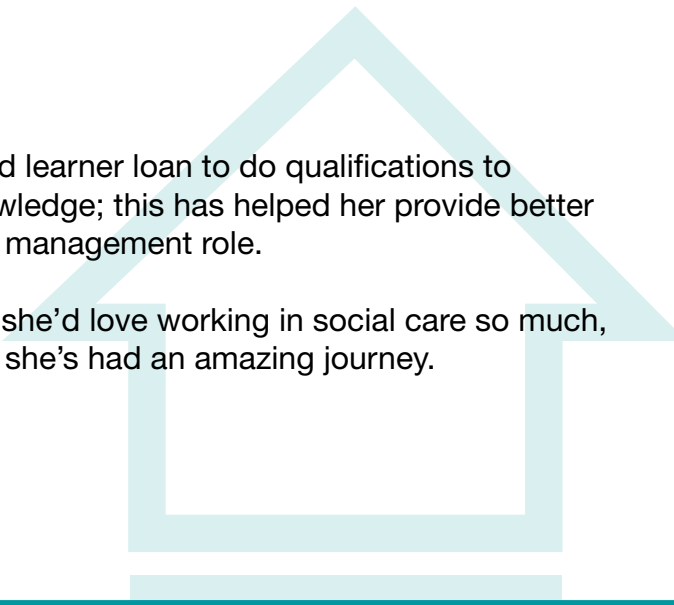
Ioana moved to England from Romania five years ago and initially worked as a bartender. Her mother had worked in social care and encouraged her to consider a career in the sector.

The stability of a career in social care attracted her to the sector; knowing there's always work and she'd get a constant income made social care more attractive than bar work.

Ioana started working as a care worker but is a quick learner and eager to develop so progressed into a senior position quickly.

She also used an advanced learner loan to do qualifications to develop her skills and knowledge; this has helped her provide better care and progress into her management role.

At first Ioana didn't realise she'd love working in social care so much, but 16 months in she says she's had an amazing journey.



What did she use an advanced learner loan for?

Ioana was keen to progress in her career as quickly as possible. Instead of waiting to be offered opportunities by her employer, she decided to take out an advanced learner loan to pay for qualifications herself.

Taking out a loan has given her the independence and greater flexibility to complete qualifications more quickly. Because she had previously studied psychology and was a confident learner, her learning provider put her onto a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care with a focus on supporting people with dementia.

Doing this qualification has really helped her understand dementia better and be able to communicate with residents more confidently. Gaining qualifications means you know the job role better and regardless of how long you've worked, you don't know all the

legislation and come across situations that maybe you have not dealt with before.

Ioana studied in her own time and got lots of support from her assessor so she completed the diploma in less than five months. She feels having this diploma really helped her progress to supervisor after only having worked in care for six months.

Now she has a management position, she'd like to apply for a loan to complete a level 5 diploma and is encouraging colleagues to consider learner loans. She feels that paying privately for qualifications gives you more independence to study in the way you want to and get where you want to be faster.

Ioana would like to use this level 5 diploma to progress into a deputy manager role and then become a registered manager.

What would she say to others interested in working in social care?

Ioana believes you have to have a lot of patience and be a caring person to be in this role but also you need to see the workplace as your own home; she thinks of where she works as a second home and believes this makes a huge difference.

Do it - I love the job and the people, and even if I have a difficult day, a resident's smile makes my day, knowing I've made a change for someone

If you want to progress in your career you should ask to take on more responsibility and she recommends the choice and flexibility that taking out an advanced learner loan gives as part of being able to progress.

Meet Munyaradzi

Assistant Manager



Munyaradzi works as an assistant manager of a care home and is shortly to start a new role as a home manager.

When starting work the only qualifications he held were O-Levels so he decided to use an advanced learner to develop his knowledge and skills about working in social care.

What is an assistant manager in social care?

Munyaradzi is responsible for supporting the management of the care home. His role includes assessing people who need care and support to see what care and support they need, and communicating with their relatives to keep them up to date with any changes. He's also responsible for managing the process when people go into and come out of hospital. Munyaradzi particularly enjoys interacting with people and hearing their stories; spending time with people can play a large part in making them feel valued.

How did he get here?

Munyaradzi had a brother with a disability who he cared for for a number of years. Taking on this carer role had a big impact on him, enabling him to realise his passion for helping people. Therefore, when he moved to England 15 years ago, he started to look for jobs in social care.

Although he initially found it difficult to find work, he was offered a job as a care worker in a care home.

Here, he excelled in his role and the organisation offered to develop him to become an assistant manager.

In this role, he felt he wanted to gain more experience and took out an advanced learner loan to do a Higher Education Diploma in Science.



What did he use an advanced learner loan for?

When starting work the only qualifications he held were O-Levels so he decided to use an advanced learner loan to develop his knowledge and skills about working in social care.

He used the loan to pay for a Higher Education Diploma in Science, which he's currently a few months away from finishing.

The qualification includes a lot from the social sciences, such as psychology and sociology, which will be particularly helpful in his management role.

Without the loan he wouldn't have been able to do this qualification, and he was happy to take out a loan rather than have his qualification paid for as wants to be able to repay the government for investing in him.

Munyaradzi would like to open his own care home within the next five years and sees completing this qualification as a way of supporting him to do this.

What would he say to others interested in working in social care?

Munyaradzi feels that social care is a challenging and very dynamic sector that needs people who are passionate about supporting others. He believes that if you get the right people with the right attitudes then you can provide the best care possible.

Social care is a challenging and dynamic sector that needs people who are passionate about supporting others



Meet Jane

Support worker at a homeless charity



Jane works as a support worker at a night shelter for people who are homeless.

She'd like to become a social worker and is using an advanced learner loan to do an Access to Social Work Diploma and hopes to progress to University.

What is a support worker in social care?

Jane works with homeless people who might also have mental health conditions or drug and alcohol addictions, to identify and work through their issues.

She previously worked in catering but after supporting a family member, decided she wanted to work in social care.

Her daughter's boyfriend was in care and had 42 placements in the space of two years, and felt that he had a lack of support throughout this time.

When he left care he was left with no money and nowhere to live. Jane helped him by been an advocare and worked with his youth officer to ensure he stayed on 'the straight and narrow.'

What did she use an advanced learner loan for?

Jane applied for an advanced learner loan to pay for an Access to Social Work Diploma; with the added bonus that if she progresses to University, the Government will write off her debt from this loan.

When she's completed the course she'd like to go to University to study social work. She'd like to specialise in mental health and work in a team that supports people who are leaving care.

She'd recommend taking out an advanced learner loan as long as you're totally sure about the route you want to take in your career.

Jane would definately recommend a career in social care as it offers a lot of options and different pathways, but you need to be a compassionate person with good communication skills.

 A career in social care offers a lot of options and different pathways 

Meet Marevia Lawrence

Deputy Manager, Rose Manor care home



What is a deputy manager in social care?



Marevia works as deputy manager in a residential care home for women with dementia and other mental health conditions. She started work in care 13 years ago on a Traineeship that was supported by her local Jobcentre. Since then she has had a range of roles working for the same company.

Marevia works as a deputy manager at Rose Manor care home. She helps the registered manager with the day to day running of the care home.

Her roles involves:

- supervising a team of ten staff
- delegate tasks within the team
- organising staff rotas
- checking and counting medication
- working with other professionals such as doctors.

How did she get here?

Marevia always loved taking care of people and had the right values to work in social care. She saw a Traineeship at her local JobCentre and was happy to do the six weeks training without pay (although the JobCentre did help with travel and uniform costs).

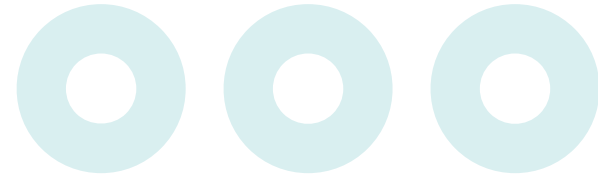
She impressed the company so much that they offered her a permanent role within three weeks. From there she progressed into her first senior care worker role. With this she moved to a new care home supporting 18 male residents with mental health conditions.

Within a few years Marevia had progressed to senior team leader and worked closely with her manager, often acting like a deputy manager. From here, she was offered her current role.

Learning has been very important to Marevia's progression and she has made the most out of all training opportunities. Although her employer paid for her to complete relevant social care NVQ's (now called diplomas), she decided to pay for additional courses to help her develop, including administering and ordering medication, mental capacity assessment training and safeguarding courses.

She says “if your company can’t pay for training you’re interested in, then you can take out an Advanced Learner Loan. They’re really useful as you don’t have to pay them back until you earn over a certain amount and then you can pay in instalments.”

Marevia understands that some people might be scared by the idea of debt but they can really help you educate yourself. There are five people in her team who are doing level 3 and 5 qualifications using loans.



Where can it take her?

Marevia hope to progress soon to become a registered manager. Her long term aim is to open her own care home.

What would she say to others interested in a career in care?

Marevia says “care is a great career to get into but you have to care for people and really enjoy doing it. Knowing that you’re helping others is really satisfying. Supporting a person with a mental health condition and ensuring they get the best care possible is so rewarding.”

She advises it’s easy to progress if you are interested in progressing. If there is something you want to do for your personal development, don’t wait to be asked, ask your manager or do it yourself.

It’s easy to progress if you are interested in progressing.

[Find out more about careers in care](#)



This work was funded as part of Ambition London, Learning and Work Institute's flagship programme supporting employers and individuals to meet their skills needs, making use of Advanced Learner Loans to support their learning.

Funded by the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, this high-profile project will help to close the London skills gap.