Careers in Social Care

Social care is all about helping people. Social Care workers work in a variety of settings including people’s own homes, residential homes, day services, community settings or may be office based.

They work with a variety of different service users including older people, adults who have a learning disability and people with mental health needs. They also have a role to play in helping service user’s friends and families.

Social Care is a diverse career with many options for changing the type of work that you do and lots of opportunities for training and progression.

The case studies in this flyer are intended to give you some examples of careers that are available. They are all based on the careers of our Care Ambassadors.

If you would like more information about working in social care have a look at our web site www.kent.gov.uk/careambassador

or contact us on:

care.ambassador@kent.gov.uk

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Case Studies

Name: Debbie Ford  
Job Title: Registered Manager  
Employer: Kent County Council

How did you come to be working in Social Care?  
Originally I applied for a job as a Domestic assistant in a care home as the hours suited my family commitments. However was taken on as a Care Assistant.

What is your working pattern? (i.e. full time, part time, term time only etc)  
I work full time. Start and finish time is flexible depending on what is in the diary for the day

How long have you been working in this role?  
I have been working as a Care Assistant for 3 years.

Could you briefly describe a “typical” day?  
A typical day would be to spend time with my clients and their families with the intention of finding ways to maximise their quality of life and offering the necessary support. This may include housing problems, packages of care, respite care, accessing educational programmes, rehabilitation programmes or arranging 24 hour care placements.

What is the best thing about your job?  
Working with people whether it is staff, service users or their families or other professionals.

My ambition for the future:  
To eventually move into training full time, I like to see other people learn and progress.

How would people get into this sort of work?  
The majority of Registered Managers start as carer’s and work their way up by becoming shift leaders or team leaders and gaining qualifications. It can be helpful to complete Health and Social Care courses at school or college although many care positions do not require a qualification to start with. – being open to training once you have secured a job is essential as most care positions require you to undertake an NVQ and internal training.

The Facts and Figures  
Salary: Salary depends on the organisation that you work for. A Registered Manager in the local authority would earn between £33,500 and £39,000.

Hours: Full time hours are 37 hours per week

Annual Leave: 30 days per year

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Name: Georgina Allen  
Job Title: Centre Care Worker  
Employer: Saf hands Community Carers

How did you come to be working in Social Care?  
I had moved house and taking on a mortgage I needed a job immediately. I chose care work because I wanted to help care for people like my mother who had dementia and diabetes.

What is your working pattern?  
44 hours per week – 7.00am – 2.00pm/5.30pm – 9.30pm each day

How long have you been working in this role?  
6 Years.

Could you briefly describe a “typical” day?  
I work with people who have all kinds of different disabilities; some need minimal help while others require more intensive care and support. The Domiciliary care package includes personal care, meal preparation, shopping and domestic help being provided in people’s own homes. These are all areas that enable the service users to stay in their home for as long as possible. Our aim is to promote the service users independence.

What is the best thing about your job?  
Sewing the improvement in people’s lives as I give a very high standard of care: not only physically, but emotionally supporting them and enabling them to stay in familiar surroundings which contributes to their whole well-being.

My ambition for the future:  
I would like to be involved in training new and younger carers and become an NVQ assessor.

How would people get into this sort of work?  
Often no qualifications are needed as in house training is provided from a structured induction to specialist courses such as moving and handling and first aid. Sometimes there is Government funding to do qualifications such as NVQ 2 in care, or employers may sponsor you through qualifications.

The Facts and Figures  
Salary: Salary depends on the organisation that you work for but on average a domiciliary carer in the private sector would earn around £16,000.

Hours: 44 Hours per week.

Annual Leave: 4 weeks

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Name: Pauline Dineen  
Job Title: Care Manager  
Employer: Medway Council

How did you come to be working in Social Care?  
From my work as a nurse, I developed an interest in social care and the wider picture outside of ‘the organisation’.

What is your working pattern? (i.e. full time, part time, term time only etc)  
Full Time

How long have you been working in this role?  
5 Years

Could you briefly describe a “typical” day?  
A typical day would be to spend time with my clients and their families or other professionals. I start my day by reading the communication book and diary and answering the phone while the duty officer administers medication. I also have a short meeting with the Duty Officer to check I am up to speed with any issues. I deal with emails, talk to Care Managers and Service Managers; oversee audits that have been completed such as Medication, Fire, Health and Safety. I may spend some time in supervision with a group of staff, manage staff meetings, deliver training including care planning and dementia awareness and deal with other work that comes from my line manager. There is not a typical day which is why I like the role.

What is the best thing about your job?  
Knowing that you have helped someone.

My ambition for the future:  
To complete the Registered Managers NVQ award.

How would people get into this sort of work?  
To eventually move into training full time, I like to see other people learn and progress.

The Facts and Figures  
Salary: Salary depends on the organisation that you work for but on average a domiciliary carer in the private sector would earn around £16,000.

Hours: – 5pm Monday to Friday

Annual Leave: –

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Name: Lucy Tucker  
Job Title: Home Care Co-ordinator  
Employer: Chameleon Care

How did you come to be working in Social Care?  
When I left university I was unable to find a job relating to my degree (Archaeology) so took a job as a support worker with people with learning disabilities. I have done other jobs between that and my current job but basically realised that I get huge satisfaction from being able to help people on a daily basis and so returned to care work.

What is your working pattern?  
Full Time

How long have you been working in this role?  
6 months

Could you briefly describe a “typical” day?  
I might start with a visit to clients homes in the morning to assist them with personal care, breakfast etc. I then go to the office where I work on the rota, deal with any issues or problems from clients, carers and care managers. I visit new clients to assess their needs, monitor staff and complete client reviews to see how their service is going. I am on-call once every couple of weeks to deal with emergencies out of hours. I can also be the Moving and Handling, Health and Safety and dealing with Dementia Trainer, so I might be working on my PowerPoint presentations or presenting a course for staff.

What is the best thing about your job?  
You never know what you are going to do each day and every client is different: each day is a challenge, but you feel great knowing that you have helped someone.

My ambition for the future:  
To complete the Registered Managers NVQ award.

How would people get into this sort of work?  
It is really helpful to get some experience through volunteering with local care groups or residential homes to see if you like this sort of work. It is also a good idea to see if you can do some work experience in this area.

The Facts and Figures  
Salary: Salary will depend on the organisation that you work for and can be anything between £33,500 and £39,000.

Hours: 44 Hours per week.

Annual Leave: 4 weeks