

# Job roles in adult social care



There are lots of  
job roles available  
in adult social care,  
including direct  
care roles and  
supportive roles.

This booklet talks about a few of them,  
which should provide you with an overview  
of the type of work you could do in the  
sector – and what skills and experience  
you need to get the job!

Different roles in adult social care require different qualifications and experience, but the same values and personality traits are needed in every role in adult social care.

To work in care is to make a positive difference to someone's life. You will need to have good communication and listening skills, and feel passionate about supporting other people to live a more independent and fulfilling life.

For further information about working in adult social care, including job roles and qualifications, please visit:

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

### Some phrases which may be new to you:

- **Service user/people who use services/people who need care and support:** This is someone who uses a service and needs care and support. They may be elderly, or have a physical or mental health disability.
- **Domiciliary care:** This is care which is provided in a service users own home.
- **Ancillary roles:** These roles are not specific to working in care – but they play an important part in the running of a successful care service.
- **Individual employers:** These are service users who directly employ staff themselves, for care and support from their own home.

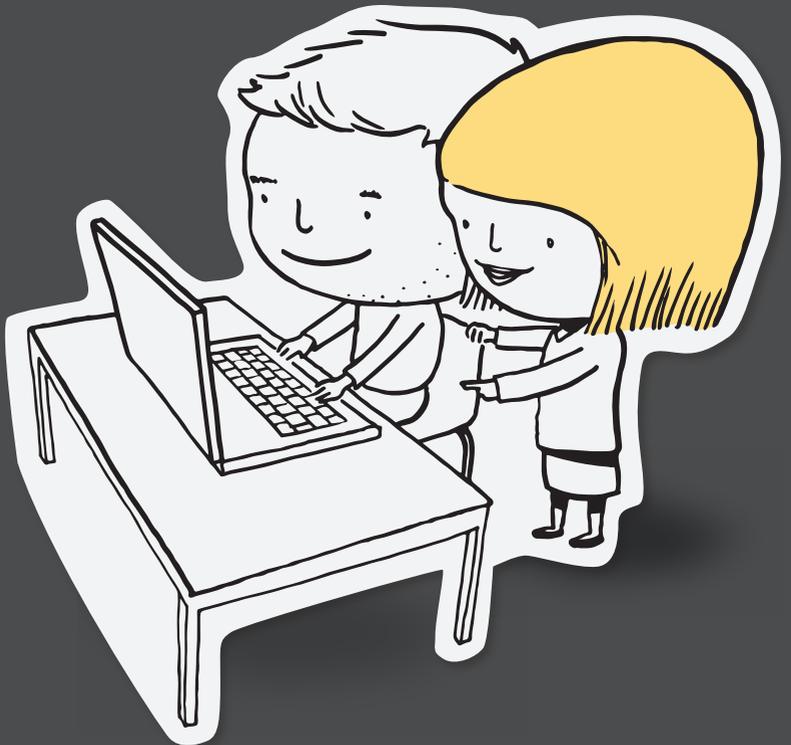


# Qualifications

## **Before you start work in adult social care**

Most of the current qualifications for working in social care are taken when learners are already working in their role, as frequently they have to demonstrate their knowledge and competence on the job.

However there are a number of qualifications which are useful to do before you start work in the sector.



The main entry qualifications you could do before you start work are:

# Level 1

Award in Preparing to work  
in the care sector

# Level 2

Certificate in Preparing to work  
in the care sector

# Level 3

Certificate in Preparing to work  
in the care sector

## Qualifications whilst you're working in adult social care:

The current qualifications in health and social care are diplomas, which have replaced NVQs, although many workers will still hold NVQs that are still valid for these roles. The most common qualifications for the job roles in this booklet are the level 2 Diploma in Health and Social care and the Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social care. If this is your first job in adult social care, then you could gain these diplomas whilst you work.

As well as the diplomas there are a range of smaller Continuing Professional Development (CPD) qualifications which can support workers in more specialist areas of social care or with particular interests or requirements. These CPD qualifications will be either Awards or Certificates.

## The range of topics include:

- dementia
- learning disability
- stroke
- end of life care
- mental capacity
- activity provision
- diabetes.



For direct care roles, you will have to complete the Common Induction Standards (CIS) when you start work, which are a great introduction into the care sector, non-direct care roles can also benefit from this training.

**Job roles:**

Care worker/Care assistant/  
Senior care worker/Support  
worker Personal assistant  
Social worker Community,  
support and outreach work  
Management Occupational  
therapist Activities worker  
or co-ordinator Employment  
support Advice, guidance  
and advocacy Technician  
Administration/Office staff  
Ancillary staff

# Care worker

Care assistant/Senior care worker  
/Support worker

These are ‘front line’ staff who work with people who have direct care needs. They have a varied range of duties, depending on who they are working with.

No two days are the same as a care worker, but some duties can include:

- assisting with eating/mobility/washing/dressing
- providing interesting activities for the service user to do
- monitoring service users health e.g. taking temperatures and pulse rate
- helping service users to live as independently as possible.

Care workers are supervised by a manager or senior care worker. They can work in a residential care home, domiciliary care, or out in the community. Senior care workers will often be in charge of a shift of workers, and offer guidance and support to other care workers.

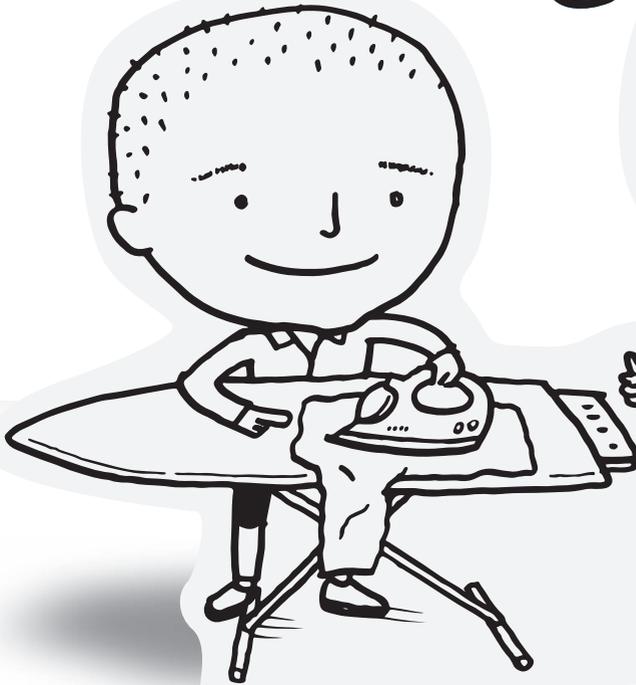
My job is  
challenging but  
rewarding



### **Training/qualifications:**

There are no specific minimum entry qualifications for this job although workers must go through a criminal records check and industry standard induction training. When a new worker begins this role they will be expected to work through the Common Induction Standards, which are mandatory. Alongside this, training is also given in food hygiene, health and safety, and manual handling. Care workers at this level should be encouraged to take a Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care once they are working.

My day is really varied  
- I could be shopping,  
playing football or  
helping to cook a meal  
with my employer



# Personal assistant

Personal assistants, or PA's as they're often referred to, do the same job as a care worker but they only work directly with one individual who needs support and/or care services, usually within their own home.

They work for an individual employer. They support this individual in every aspect of their daily life. This could include helping to prepare and cook meals, assisting with mobility, personal care, doing hobbies, attending clubs or group activities and going on day trips or holidays.

## **Training/qualifications:**

Many individual employers select personal assistants on the basis of their personality and flexibility; for many, experience of social care is not always important, however the core qualifications already mentioned can still be applied to these roles. In addition the smaller CPD qualifications and Common Induction Standards can be very helpful. You may also be expected to do some online training once you are working as a PA.

# Social worker

Social workers provide advice and emotional support to help people adjust to changes in their lives, caused by illness, age related problems, disability or bereavement. They may also work with people who suffer from mental illnesses like depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and personality disorders.

Their job is to work out what type of care is needed, and revisit people who use care services to reassess their needs over a set period of time.

They usually work as part of a team, responsible for a number of cases which all might need a different approach. They also need to work closely with organisations such as the police, health services, schools and probation services.



**Training/qualifications:**

A degree in social work

OR

Previous professional qualifications including the Diploma in Social Work, CSS (Certificate in Social Services) and CQSW (Certificate of Qualification in Social Work).

*I provide  
advice and support  
to help people*



There are lots of job titles that fall under this category such as Community support worker, Substance misuse worker, Mental health support worker and Community development worker.

For a full list of job titles see the Skills for Care website.

# Community, support and outreach work



Their work is more support based rather than direct personal care. They can provide support and guidance in various ways, including counselling, teaching people who use care and support services every day skills (such as how to cook a meal safely or make a cup of tea), organising activities with people who need care and support (such as sport or shopping trips) or simply being with individuals in their home, helping them to cope with day to day living.

These workers usually have a number of individuals that they get to know very well. Some work in residential homes although this type of role is usually undertaken within the local community or within individuals own homes.

### **Training/qualifications:**

For most roles there is no formal entry level requirement but you need to be literate and numerate. Previous experience of working with people in a social care/support setting can be very useful.

You will have to go through a criminal records check and industry standard induction training. When you begin working you will have to work through the Common Induction Standards. These standards provide underpinning knowledge for all roles in social care. They can be completed in a number of different ways according to the organisation you are working for. Alongside this, training is also given in food hygiene, health and safety, and manual handling. Care workers at this level should be encouraged to take a Level 2 or even Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care once they are working.

# Management

There are lots of different jobs which fall under the management category in adult social care, from being a supervisor or team leader to being the CEO of a care home.

**Supervisors** have some responsibility for the level of care an organisation provides. They supervise the work of other care and front line workers.

**First line managers** are responsible for the day to day provision of social care services – this means they support the staff and have a key role in ensuring that the standard of care delivered is always high. Types of job titles which fall under this category are team leaders, service managers and residential wardens.

**Middle managers** are responsible for overseeing the organisation and managing whole departments. Examples of their duties include determining staffing requirements and managing budgets. Workers in this category could be area managers, managers or department heads.

**Senior management** workers have overall responsibility for the organisation, and their main job role includes giving the organisation leadership and direction. They have total responsibility for the quality of care provided and the health and safety of staff and service users. Senior managers could be owners, directors or chief executives.

### Training/qualifications:

Knowledge and experience of the care sector is usually required for these roles. The core qualification is the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership in Health and Social care. This qualification can only be achieved once you are working in a management role. In addition new managers or aspiring managers would be encouraged to work through the Manager Induction Standards which provide a number of areas of knowledge which are helpful and will support a new manager in their role.

*I am responsible for  
the wellbeing of staff  
who provide care  
and support*





### **Training/qualifications:**

A degree or two year postgraduate diploma is needed to work as a practicing occupational therapist. You must also be registered with the Health Professionals Council.

An Occupational Therapy Assistant does not need these qualifications – but would be expected to work towards earning them.

# Occupational therapist

Sometimes referred to as an OT practitioner or therapist for short, this role can work with people who need care and support in the following areas:

- physical rehabilitation
- mental health
- learning disabilities
- care management
- equipment for daily living
- housing.

They work with people to overcome the effects of their disability, and assess what treatment or equipment is needed to increase their independence. This could be physical treatment to improve their mobility or advising on equipment they need or the design of people's houses. For example, they would give advice to housing departments for a person who uses a wheelchair.

# Activities worker or co-ordinator

I help people  
discover new  
skills and talents



The role of these workers is to create, and oversee activities for people who need care and support services. This could be in a residential care home, a community care setting or in an individual's home.

The activities stimulate new interests and skills, and are designed specifically to meet individual's needs. These workers promote social activities within, and outside their care setting.

### **Training/qualifications:**

Activities co-ordinators will usually have experience of working with vulnerable adults in a residential, community or voluntary setting. Grades A – C in GCSE Maths and English are usually required. A Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care and experience in areas such as drama, music or crafts would also be desirable. In addition there are smaller CPD qualifications which are relevant for this role.



# Employment support

This role specialises in supporting people who need care and support in obtaining and continuing employment. They would help to identify employment opportunities for people who need care and support, and help with preparing CV's and with interview skills. These workers would also have involvement with employers to help individuals settle into their new job.

Example of job titles within employment support are: Supported employment worker, Employment advisor, Inclusion worker.

I help people who  
need care and support  
find employment



### Training/qualifications:

Employment advisors need to have good people skills. Qualifications may be less important than life and career experience, but workers could be expected to work towards gaining a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social care.

# Advice, guidance and advocacy

This is a specialist role focussing on matters related to legislation. They work with people who need care and support services to help process, and offer advice on, any funding or support they need to apply for. This could include housing benefit, sick pay, disabled living allowances etc. Job titles that fall under this category include: welfare rights officer, advocacy worker, advocate court liaison offer.

## **Training/qualifications:**

There are no minimum requirements for this career. A Level 3 Diploma in advice and guidance work, along with volunteer work in the community, youth work or counselling can be very helpful. There are specific qualifications in advocacy but many of these qualifications can only be taken whilst working in the role. Life experience and knowledge of local government work may be valuable assets.

*I can advise  
on potentially  
complex issues*



# Technician

Technicians advise on and maintain equipment which is designed to enable people who need care and support services to live more independent lives. This includes electronic and electro-mechanical equipment.

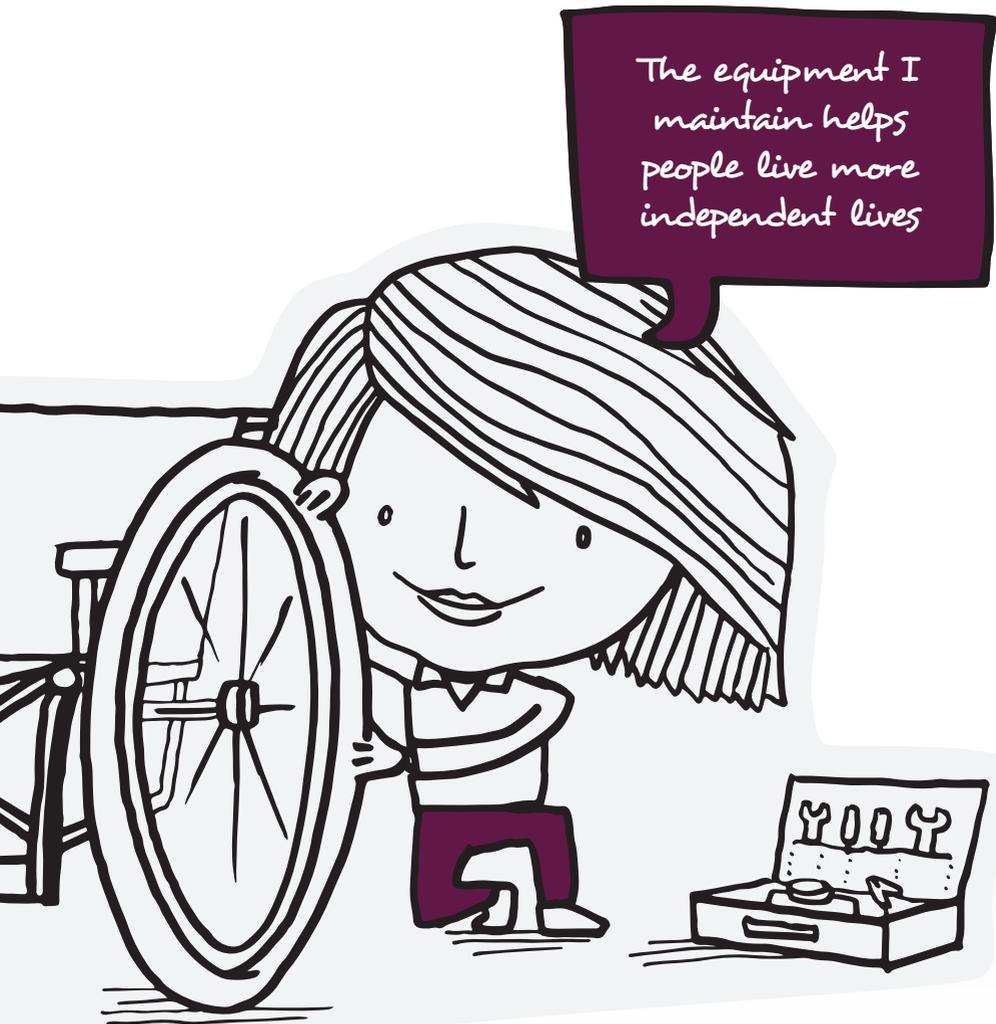
## **Their job can include:**

- involvement in individual's assessment
- explaining how to use equipment
- maintaining and servicing equipment
- monitoring and recording users progress
- manufacturing custom equipment for individuals.



**Training/qualifications:**

There are no specific entry requirements but employers usually expect 4 GCSE's (A – C), science A-levels, or BTEC in electronics or an engineering degree.



# Administration/ Office staff

*I provide vital support  
for the whole  
organisation*



Administration roles are not specific to care, but large care homes have many roles available within an office environment.

Some of these roles include:

- personnel and human resources (HR)
- receptionist
- finance
- IT
- marketing.

#### **Training/qualifications:**

These roles include all levels, such as assistants and managers. Experience and qualifications for these roles vary.

# Ancillary staff

Ancillary job roles, which are not specific to working in care, but are vital to providing a good service, can include any of the following:

- domestic/cleaning staff
- catering/chef
- driver
- maintenance
- handy person.

## **Training/qualifications:**

These roles include all levels, such as assistants and managers. Experience and training for these roles vary.



*It's great working  
in care*

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