

# JOB ROLES

here are some ideas  
on your care career journey

# CARE CAREERS SUFFOLK

You can find out more at  
[www.carecareerssuffolk.co.uk](http://www.carecareerssuffolk.co.uk)

There are lots of different jobs you can do in the care sector. In addition to social care, there are numerous roles within health. Sometimes people swap roles between the two areas.

You can see videos and hear people talking about their jobs on our Care Careers Suffolk website  
[www.carecareerssuffolk.co.uk](http://www.carecareerssuffolk.co.uk)

## ACTIVITY CO-ORDINATOR

Activity co-ordinators usually work as part of a residential care home's staff team, but they can also work within a community care setting, or even in a person's home.

They have an important role to play in promoting the mental health and wellbeing of people they care for.

A co-ordinator's job is to organise activities – such as cooking, crafts, musical events or outings – to help people keep alert and active, and maintain a good quality of life.

Activity co-ordinators need to know all about the people they care for and be sensitive to their needs. That means being a good listener, being good at organising things, and understanding how what they do benefits their client's mental health and wellbeing.

## ASSISTANT MANAGER

A care home assistant manager supports the work of the care home manager.

They step up to take charge of the care home, and ensure its smooth running, during the care home manager's absence.

Having contact with resident's family members and other care professionals is a large part of this role, and they must ensure all the national rules and policies are followed correctly.

Assistant managers are responsible for overseeing much of the home's administrative tasks. This could include anything from getting a bill paid, to organising for repairs to be made to the home. Other areas include sorting out and running staff shifts and schedules, and financial tasks, such as payroll and accounts.

As an important member of the home's management team, duties are varied and busy, with career progression to a care home manager.

Maxine Brand is an assistant manager at Partnership in Care and started her career as a nurse. She said: *"I assess new residents in hospital and at home. I do rotas for staff, supervise staff, and teach clinical roles. There is so much to my role - and it's all about people."*



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## CARE ASSISTANT

Care assistants are also called care workers. They fulfil a vital role and usually work in residential homes. They work with people of all ages and abilities.

Care assistants have a variety of duties focused on helping people who have difficulties undertaking their day-to-day living activities. Care assistants will also keep an eye on people's medical conditions and will also carry out health checks, such as taking a temperature.

To be a care assistant, you need to have the ability to relate to people from different backgrounds and cultures and be sensitive to their needs. Enjoying helping people, helping them maintain their independence and improving their lives, is what this job is all about.

Damian Kowalczyk is a care assistant at The Willows Care Home. About his role, he said: *"The best thing about this job is spending time with residents and seeing how they are progressing. What I like about this job is you don't feel stressed, there is great team work with colleagues, and you can spend time with residents."*



## CARE MANAGER

A care home manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of a care home. This could be a residential, nursing, or dementia care home – or, indeed, a home specialising in all three areas of care. To succeed in this role, care home managers must have strong leadership, communications and management skills because they have to do all the decision-making. Care home managers must ensure staff are meeting the needs of people using their services, and meeting the required national standards of care quality and safety. Care home managers have varied duties to perform but, above all, they must lead by example.

## CARE CO-ORDINATOR

Care co-ordinators have an important organisational role to play and are responsible for things like rotas, care reviews, and organising carers looking after people in a residential home or in their own homes.

Care co-ordinator Charley Smith works for the Cambridge Care Company. She said: *"I really enjoy this job because it's incredible and you can achieve so much in care. I think you need to be a confident and organised person. I hope to be a nurse or paramedic eventually."*



## HEALTHCARE ASSISTANT

Healthcare assistants work in hospital or community settings under the guidance of a qualified healthcare professional.

You need to be caring and kind and physically strong (for pushing trolleys and lifting), and willing to be hands-on. You'll be able to work in a team but use your own initiative. You also need good communication, organisational and observational skills.

## HOME CARER

People who need care - but choose to remain in the comfort of their own home - can be helped to carry out their daily personal living by a home carer. Once a person's needs have been assessed, agreed and written down, it will be a home carer's job to look after the person in their home, and to help them live the life they have chosen to lead. This might include daily visits to care for a person, helping them with the day-to-day living needs and making their lives more comfortable.

Sarah Harris is a carer at the Cambridge Care Company. She has done the job for eight years. She said:

*"I provide personal care and administer medication and support people to live at home. I like to help people and I like knowing that I am enabling them to stay at home and do the things they might not be able to do alone."*



*"The care sector is very rewarding and there is much job progression and a lot of different training and opportunities available. You need to be a genuinely caring person and have a sense of humour. You need to work hard and care about helping people."*

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Occupational therapists are sometimes called therapists for short. They are trained to identify what treatment or equipment would help people overcome difficulties caused by physical or mental illnesses, or ageing.

They are able to suggest ways in which people can improve their mobility or independence. Again, this could be achieved by specific treatments or by having equipment installed in a home or care home.

They work with people of all ages and need to be good listeners and communicators, with the ability to help people who may be frustrated by their circumstances. Relating to people, and building up good relationships with people, are also paramount.

## PERSONAL ASSISTANT

Personal assistants - also known as PAs - work for direct employers who need support due to age or disability. They provide support and/or care to meet their needs.

PAs carry out a wide range of tasks within their role - all with the objective of helping people lead the lives they choose to live.

A personal assistant must understand that each person they support is an individual with specific requirements, and that their role is to support them to have choice and control.

## PROGRESSION WORKER

Progression workers work alongside support workers and deal with more complex issues such as crisis management, finance and health issues.

The role is very varied and involves helping people access services and other professionals within the community, and supporting individuals with issues such as benefit claims, daily finance and housing needs.

Being a good communicator, well organised, and able to support people to be independent in different areas of their lives are essential parts of this role.

Edward Abbott is a progression worker with Leading Lives, a social enterprise providing care for people with learning and physical disabilities, multiple complex needs and autism. He said: *"My job is varied. From day to day, I could do any number of things - from going into people's homes and helping them deal with bills and benefits requests and employment issues, to working with people on a short-term basis helping them find employment, volunteering and education opportunities."*



## SUPPORT WORKER

Support workers look after people's physical and mental wellbeing, giving them emotional as well as practical support.

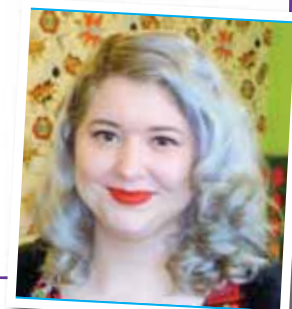
The role involves things like teaching people life skills in order to help them to live as independently as possible, or may involve providing personal care and help with daily living tasks.

Support workers help people get involved with the community and enable those they support to access education, training, employment and leisure activities.

Being a good listener and having the knowledge of what services are available to help people, are important in this role.

Justine Booth, is a support worker at Leading Lives. She said: *"My job entails supporting customers at our day centre service and I run arts and crafts workshops and I also do other support worker roles like personal care. What I really like about care is that you make a difference. You are working with people who are just wonderful; they literally give me life and light up my day. There are not a lot of jobs out there that you can say that about."*

*Her advice would be to look at the different care sectors - for example elderly care, learning disabilities - and choose one you would be interested in. She also advises contacting local care companies and care providers to see if you can visit their premises to see what the job entails. Leading Lives is one place you can do this, she says."*



## SOCIAL WORKER

Social workers are trained to support people facing a wide range of difficult circumstances. They are responsible for looking at an individual's circumstances and making recommendations around helping that person. They take on cases, and are responsible for caseloads. The job includes agreeing what practical support a person needs, offering information and counselling, building relationships and supervising team members. Social workers work closely with lots of different organisations to make recommendations about people's safety and wellbeing.