

Sector skills report: Health and social care

Opportunities in the health and social care sector

In partnership with Suffolk County Council, Business East Monthly is running a series of reports aimed at informing young people about the career opportunities that exist in the region and the skills required to make the most of these openings. This month's report features an overview of the health and social care sector.



Health and social care sector overview

By Louise Whitley
at Suffolk Brokerage
and Care Careers
Suffolk

The health and social care sector is the largest sector by employment in the region and the fastest growing. It is likely we will see a 33% increase in demand for services between now and 2030. We are also seeing new ways of working to join up the NHS and social care, meaning that the number and diversity of roles available in this field is expanding.

Roles ranging from occupational therapist and activities coordinator to care manager and social worker all offer career opportunities in the sector.

This sector can be hugely rewarding for those that work in it. Supporting people to maintain their independence and live the life they choose to live, gives many the job satisfaction which had not been fulfilled working in other sectors. For those considering a career in social care it's important to note that many skills are transferable and what employers are really looking for are the values people have rather than past experience.

The perception of this sector amongst the general public is very narrow - i.e. people tend to think only of care assistant roles and not the many other opportunities that are



available. Likewise, when people think of social care they firstly think of supporting the elderly. Although this is a key client group, those working in social care also support many other groups, such as adults with learning disabilities, those with mental health problems and people at end of life.

Through our Care Careers Suffolk service we work with the sector to promote social care as a career of choice and bust some of the myths that are out there.

• Visit www.carecareerssuffolk.co.uk or email info@carecareerssuffolk.co.uk



Stowlangtoft Healthcare:
Jean and Natasha.

The Employers

Q&A: JOANNA MCCALL, REGISTERED MANAGER, HOME INSTEAD

What is the current state of the health and social care sector in East Anglia?

The current state of health and social care I would say is challenging, especially over this last winter. The demand for care services has significantly increased over the last few years and with a society that is living longer, this demand is only set to grow. The Government announced during the Budget its plan for a green paper on social care funding. On the other side of this providers have been dealing with the challenges of recruiting quality staff. They have also had to work with low levels of funding from the local authority. The UK Health Care Association (UKHCA) recommend an hourly rate of £16.70, but the local authority in Ipswich pay well below this rate.

What work does Home Instead do?

Home Instead Senior Care is part of a global organisation devoted to providing quality care and is locally owned by Chris and Susanna Lye. Nationally, Home Instead Senior Care has 180 locally owned and operated offices who together deliver over 5 million hours of care to over 9,000 clients and employ over 8,000 people. Locally we have over 100 employees and over 150 clients in the Ipswich, Woodbridge and Felixstowe area.

Day to day we provide care, companionship and support for older



people living at home. We specialise in the care and support of those people living with dementia.

Where are the opportunities in your sector?

There are definitely opportunities to progress in this sector and having the Health and Social Care diploma structure allows individuals to study alongside their development. My own career over the last nine years and that of many of my colleagues has developed from starting in this sector as a carer - 70% of our office team were caregivers before they moved into office roles. I think this is one of the benefits of this sector that most managers will have had hands-on experience with clients. What we need to do as a sector is ensure that as they develop they are supported to become great leaders.

What specific skills are you looking for?

We recruit our caregivers for their caring natures rather than care experience - it is important to us that they are caring and compassionate people. Our caregivers are not only the face of the company, they are the people that make a difference in our clients' lives so choosing the right people is very important to us. Caregivers need to, first and foremost, really want to support individuals to live independent lives. They have to be willing to learn how to give quality care, they need to be able to communicate well and especially have the skills to listen. They need to be friendly, personable and have a dollop of common sense.

How do you recruit this talent?

We have recruited through our own website, job centres, the EADT, online recruitment websites and regularly hold open events for recruitment. We recruit caregivers from all walks of life, those over the age of 18 through to our oldest caregiver who is in her 70's. We take the time to match our caregivers to our clients, as our clients are all different with different interests we need a very diverse workforce.

We very much look to progress people that have joined us as caregivers through to more senior roles via our succession planning initiative. The experience they gain out with clients is invaluable and it helps us identify those that have the right talent for the future. We feel it is our duty to find the leaders of the future and to nurture their progress from the moment they start with us.

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Q&A: RUTH DAYNES, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, LEADING LIVES

What is the current state of the health and social care sector in East Anglia?

We have an ageing population and therefore an increased demand for social care. Many people have complex health needs including multiple disabilities. They have the right to be supported in the way they prefer, which means the sector needs to accommodate this.

What does Leading Lives do?

Leading Lives offers high quality social care support in the home and in the community. We support people who have learning disabilities, complex physical needs, autism, ADHD or an acquired brain injury. We also provide social care for people who need support to remain

independent through age, ill health or are living with dementia. We can also support young people making the transition to adult services. We support 1200 families across Suffolk and neighbouring counties to access short breaks or respite for their adult loved ones.

Where are the opportunities in your sector?

Currently, we are looking to recruit support workers, a team leader and some business support. This is around the expansion of our domiciliary support service, Independence Plus, which is a growing part of our company.

What specific skills are you looking for?

We look for people with a genuine

desire to work in social care and who want to make a difference. We have a comprehensive training and induction and this will quickly help people to gain the experience they need. We also try and promote from within, so people can progress to other opportunities within the company. We offer both specialist training and all staff complete the Care Certificate.

How do you recruit this talent?

It is important that we have a mix of new starters and more experienced workers so we can match more closely with customers. For example, a younger person may prefer to be supported by someone closer to their own age who is interested in similar things to them. We also use our more

experienced workforce to provide peer support for people new to the social care profession so it is important to have a mix.

We believe the most important thing people need to be a good support worker is good values and to understand everyone needs to be treated with respect.

We work closely with Care Careers Suffolk to take apprentices across the company and really value the difference our apprentices have made.



Q&A: RUTH FRENCH, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, STOWLANGTOFT HEALTHCARE.

What is the current state of the health and social care sector in East Anglia?

Moving forwards, we will need increasing social care provision in East Anglia. Our region has an increasingly high proportion of people needing residential or nursing care and there is a shortage of specialist beds, particularly for those living with advanced dementia or with palliative care needs. It is a highly rewarding sector, but also a tough one to work in, and I think barriers to market entry are much higher now than they were even

seven years ago when we started our business. The businesses that succeed have a keen eye for detail and have to be able to invest heavily in premium facilities.

What work does Stowlangtoft Healthcare do?

We are a family run business operating three, and soon to be four nursing homes in Norfolk and Suffolk. We employ nearly 160 staff and currently look after up to 130 residents at any one time across our homes, all of which are rated 'Good' by our regulator the Care Quality Commission. We are specialists in palliative care, but also find that we provide a great service to people who are still fairly independent, but enjoy a bit of TLC, either as a permanent resident or even for a short period of respite or post-operative recuperation.

Where are the opportunities in your sector?

We employ nurses, carers (qualified and new to the sector), activities coordinators and support staff such as cleaners, cooks and maintenance. We are always keen to hear from people looking for a potential career with us and offer very competitive pay and other benefits.

What specific skills are you looking for?

What is most important to us is



Stowlangtoft Healthcare:
Jean and Natasha.

Picture:
CONTRIBUTED



staff who have a caring and compassionate nature and above all a real interest in people. We offer great training and qualifications, so if applicants are looking for a new career path, we can support them. Your pay also increases as your qualifications

are achieved, so you have a real incentive to learn.

How do you recruit this talent?

We have found it to be a really positive experience to take on school leavers and apprentices in

the past and we also welcome applicants who are changing tack in their career and can offer different experiences. We work with a local provider to support staff through their qualifications whatever age and stage they are at.

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The Employees

'How I got a job in the care sector...'

Josh Heath, 20, works for the Cardinal Healthcare Group as an assistant physiotherapist and occupational therapist at the Bayham Care Centre near Needham Market

What do you do?

I work alongside the physiotherapist and occupational therapist as an assistant devising and carrying out treatment plans - treatments can vary from chair-based exercises for the less mobile to plans for respite clients at the centre with a view to enabling them to return to their own home.

Physiotherapy is to do with treating the body and strengthening it. Occupational therapy is more focussed on activities that enable people to go about their daily lives and to become independent again. We might use tools to help people to eat and drink or a shower chair, so they can shower themselves. We assess people in some depth and often physios and occupational therapists work in partnership to come up with the best plan.

I help care for elderly people who are either residents at the centre or have come into the centre to receive treatment.

We care for people with dementia and respite patients who have been living at home independently but maybe have come into the centre for a few weeks to get some confidence back. I also assist in delivering palliative care, which involves relieving pain for patients as part of their end of life care.

Everyone is

different and will have different needs. In addition, health situations can quickly change overnight, so when I come in in the morning I can't expect things to be the same as they were the night before.

My clients vary immensely and their requirements are case specific. Their treatments will depend on the outcome of their assessment - they could be recovering from a stroke or be post-surgery with a hip replacement.

How did you get into the health care sector?

When I was 14 I did a week's work experience with a physiotherapist and it really opened my eyes to it. I decided that I would like to explore this type of work further.

I studied GCSEs at Thurston Community College where I took all the standard GCSEs. I also took a GCSE in PE, which was really relevant to the work I have gone into. I then went onto West Suffolk College in Bury St

Edmunds to take a two-year Level 3 BTEC course in Sport and Exercise Science.

We studied physiotherapy for the elderly as part of the course and it was an area I became interested in.

I finished my studies at WSC in May 2015 and then started my current role with the Cardinal Healthcare Group in June. I feel I was lucky to get the job and I'm really enjoying it.

What do you enjoy about your work?

I like the variety - no two days or two patients are the same.

I also find the work very rewarding as it can have a very positive impact on a person's quality of life. You also get to build strong relationships with people and their families as you continue to work with them.

On the downside - it is difficult when people you have got to know and have worked alongside pass away. It can get to you but you have to try and think positively about it, and think that the work you have done has improved their life and made things easier for them. Thinking that way makes things a lot less upsetting.

What are your ambitions for the future?

Ideally, I'd like to go off to university and become a fully qualified physiotherapist. Beyond that there are lots of different paths I could take. When I left college a few years ago I felt that I had had enough of education and that I wanted to go into work. But now I realise if I want to progress I must go back to study. I'm fine about that because it is something I'm interested in.

Any advice to young people looking to develop a career in the care sector?

I found work experience very helpful. Physiotherapy wasn't something I knew much about before I did that week and it set me on the path I am on now.

Research what courses are out there for where you want to go. That also includes your choice at GCSE as they are the start of the pathway. Beyond that - enjoy it, work hard and you will get there.

'No two days are the same - you may have a plan then unexpected situations can arise.'

Harriet Torpey is a social worker working for Adult and Community Services within the Haverhill Neighbourhood Cluster

What industry qualifications

have you studied for?

As I was working I studied a Diploma in Law as I became interested in the law and policies that guide practice in health and social care. I then decided to study LLB Law with a Higher Diploma in Paralegal Practice where I studied subjects including European Union Law, law of business associations, family law, criminal and civil litigation from Anglia Ruskin Cambridge, which qualified me as a professional freelance paralegal.

I was working both day and night shifts in the care sector and then studying in between. It was difficult but I had a long-term goal to achieve.

I then went on to study a Masters in Social Work, also at Anglia Ruskin, Cambridge, which I completed last year. This enabled me to take up a qualified position in Haverhill. In all, I've been studying for nine years.



USEFUL WEBSITES

- www.carecareerssuffolk.co.uk

Information on opportunities in health and social care.



- www.icanbea.org.uk

Follow and learn about leading employers in the sector.



- www.newanglia.co.uk/new-anglia-youth-pledge-marque

The Youth Pledge Marque is awarded to businesses in Norfolk and Suffolk who are committed to supporting the future workforce.



- www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org

Find out about apprenticeship opportunities.

- www.its-mygo.co.uk

Mygo is a modern youth employment service for 16-24 year olds looking for training or education-based in Ipswich and across Suffolk.



- www.newanglia.co.uk/new-anglia-enterprise-adviser-network

Find out more about the benefits of becoming a New Anglia Enterprise Adviser - working with schools and colleges to help raise career ambitions and work prospects of young people in Norfolk and Suffolk



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What do you do?

My job involves a variety of roles, such as working with adults with physical and learning disabilities, supporting them to maintain their well-being, and promoting their choices and independence. This also involves liaising with partner agencies as well as carrying out assessments and reviews.

There is a lot of engagement with health colleagues who I work closely with. Often our customers have both physical and mental health needs, so we do joint work with mental health professionals and sometimes children services.

How are you finding being a social worker?

My studies aren't over - I am currently undertaking a mandatory training programme called ASYE, which is a twelve month programme for assessing newly qualified social workers. It's designed to help us develop skills, knowledge and professional confidence and involves working with a mentor in the workplace.

It enables me to enhance my knowledge and reflect on what I could have done better in a situation and what can be improved in practice. With social work there is a learning curve

with no end, you learn from experience, which is continuous.

I would like to continue within the social work sector and then progress into research into law which helps to inform practice. I'm particularly interested in working around safeguarding vulnerable adults and mental capacity and deprivation of liberty safeguards.

What kind of person would enjoy the care sector?

Firstly, you must be passionate about care; be empathetic and an effective listener with the ability to communicate; you must have time to attend to a client's needs which means you must be well-organised and prioritise how and where you spend your time and resources. No two days are the same.

You may have a plan then unexpected situations can arise. You have to be pragmatic.

It can be stressful - however there is space to manage stress. You can always talk to managers and colleagues.

Any advice to young people looking to develop a career in the care sector?

Be determined, aim high and then plan and focus on both short and long-term goals. It is challenging, however it can be done stage by stage.

I would encourage people to initially undertake an apprenticeship within the care sector to get experience and a broad understanding of the sector. From there they can decide on the area they would be interested in.



What skills will be in demand in the care sector in 2025?

Ruth French - Stowlangtoft Healthcare

Changes as a result of Brexit are likely to have a knock on effect on EU nurses supporting the social care sector in the UK and removal of nursing bursaries will make it harder for prospective British nurses to consider beginning their studies. As a company, we will be looking at ways in which our registered nurses can be supported by highly trained carers, who may not only give medication, but may have additional clinical responsibilities. One thing is for sure, the demand for nursing beds will not be decreasing and we want to be at the forefront of thinking to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable elderly people in our society are fully met.

Ruth Daynes - Leading Lives

Social care will continue to evolve and people will be being supported in the community and their own homes with increasingly complex social and health care needs. This means there will be a need for workers who are able to provide support for multiple customers

all with different needs. This will require a high degree of training and skill. There will also be an increased use of assistive technologies in social care and social care professionals will need to be comfortable with this.

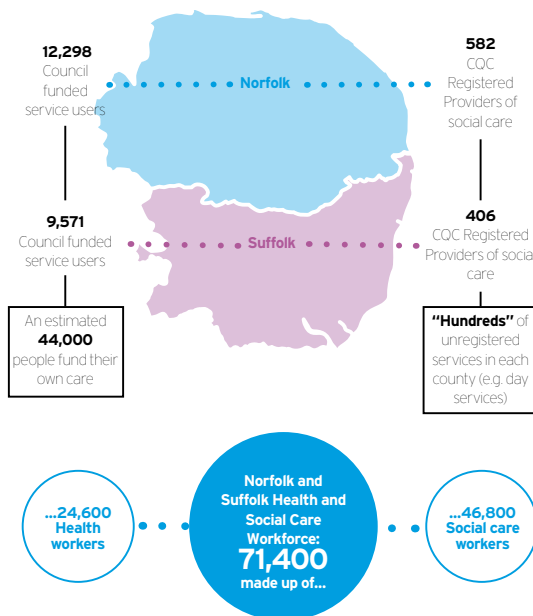
Joanna McCall - Home Instead

With concerns about standards of care in the industry and regular exposures, I see technology playing an important role in 2025. We are already seeing technological developments to help with paperwork, with care plans, and daily activity records being recorded on handheld devices. I think this will become more common over the next few years, however long term I can see us having whole visits recorded as a way to evidence what has happened.

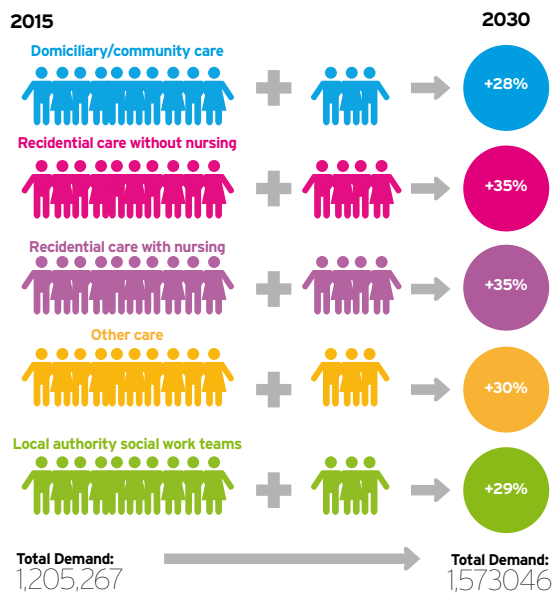
I also think that as more people live longer and want to remain in their own home the demand for social care will increase significantly. However, we will be supporting a society that is not just more computer savvy but also more vocal about what they want, which is no bad thing.

Health and social care sector - at a glance

Users of Council Funded Social Care = 21,869



National increase in workforce demand by 2030 due to population growth only



There is a forecast of a 33% growth in demand for full time workers by 2030 based on population growth alone

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The Educators

WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE

'Many students are unaware of the multitude of disciplines that a nurse may specialise in'

Rachel Boast, director of healthcare and early years.

What health and social care courses do you offer?

We have full-time courses at BTEC levels 2 and 3 that fully equip students to go on to employment in the care sector. The beauty of the level 2 first Diploma in Health and Social Care and the Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma in Health and Care is the strong emphasis on practical skills. Students studying at Level 3 will complete over 250 hours of work placement experience for each year of their programme. The course is also recognised by universities.



What routes are there into the care sector?

The routes into the health and care sector are many and varied and it is important to appreciate that students might take a mixture of options to achieve their end goal of a career in health and care.

For example, approximately 30% of students who complete a full-time classroom-based Level 2 programme, with work placement, will progress onto Level 3 with apprenticeships. The Level 2 diploma gives them enough insight and skills to be work ready for industry and they can continue the academic development with the apprenticeship team whilst in employment.

Similarly, students are able to gain employment after successful completion of their Level 2 qualification.

By contrast, approximately 60% of students completing the Level 3 extended diploma will progress to university, gaining places to study a wide range of disciplines – social work, nursing, children's nursing, midwifery, speech and language therapy, paramedic medicine,

physiotherapy, psychology or teaching. There are exciting developments ahead with regard to apprenticeships and, in the next two to three years, it will be possible to attain higher level apprenticeships in fields such as nursing.

In the last three years, 100% of students completing their Level 3 qualification have gone on to their destination of choice – either university or employment within the sector.

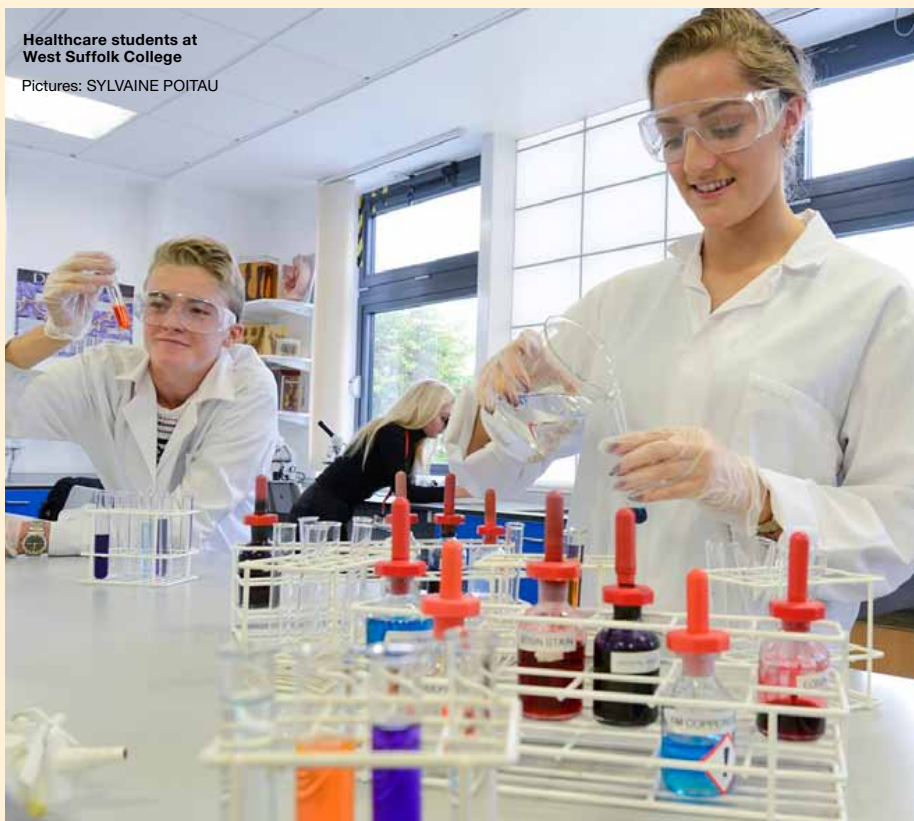
What advice would you give to young people looking to enter the care sector?

Keep your options open – for example, many students might feel that they want to be a nurse but, at 16, are unaware of the multitude of disciplines that a nurse may specialise in.

Speak to relevant people in the industry to get more information about potential career options. Choosing a general health and social care course, either at levels 2 or 3, depending on prior GCSE attainment is an excellent route into the sector which will broaden horizons and provide exposure to the many professions allied to medicine and social care.

Healthcare students at West Suffolk College

Pictures: SYLVAIN POITAU



SUFFOLK ONE COLLEGE

'More males need to consider a career in this sector'

Emma Wrigley – health and social care teacher

What routes are there into the care sector?

People who go into this career ultimately want to try and help people. That can be helping children, social work, nursing, becoming a paramedic or a nurse or getting into teaching.

Ultimately you want to try and make a difference.

I started off as a nurse and now I'm a teacher of health and social care. I became a nurse and the highlight for me was supporting individuals when they were at their most vulnerable. Being that source of reassurance was a nice feeling.

I decided to change to teaching in later life as I was disillusioned with the NHS and the fact that paperwork took prominence over people. I still loved what I do but now I guess I love teaching even more. The payoff in seeing students get the results they need to progress to the next level of

their lives or careers is indescribable.

My experience proves that there are many routes into a career into this sector.

I'd also add that more males need to consider a career in this sector, as approximately only 2% of our students on the Health and Social Care courses we offer are male.

How do apprenticeships fit into all of this?

Apprenticeships are another route into the industry. You learn your trade whilst working and the reputation of this route is improving – especially with university fees rising. I've seen a shift in their importance in recent years although this is because the government has committed to ambitious targets in relation to getting more people to take this educational path. That said, I'd say the industry is buoyant in terms of career options for young people, irrespective if you go down the



apprenticeship or university route.

What advice would you give?

You need to have a strong interest in the sector and you need to want to help people. What makes this special is that you are saving and shaping lives, understanding humanity, supporting the needy and developing great empathy.

Being motivated and hardworking is an integral part of working in health and social care – but then most worthwhile careers require this.



Sector skills report: Health and social care



EAST COAST COLLEGE

'Ensure any course you undertake provides quality work placement experiences'

Ruth Thacker, course leader and lecturer.

What health and social care courses do you offer?

Apprenticeships are a good way for young people to gain qualifications while working in the role as this means they can make decisions as to whether the job is for them at a fairly early stage.

However, most 16-19 year olds benefit from the depth and quality of full time diplomas. There are several options at BTEC Level 2 and 3 which enable students to undertake work placements, working with people of different ages and with different needs, and these provide good academic qualifications. The Level 3 provides the qualifications for entry to university but also tells employers that the students have a depth of

knowledge and work relevant experience.

We have established some excellent relationships with local healthcare providers, including Kingsley Healthcare and James Paget Hospital developing work placements and apprenticeship opportunities.

What routes are there into the care sector?

There are a range of traditional health and social care professions such as social work, occupational therapy, radiography, art therapy, nursing but also a wide variety of job roles outside of the NHS and local authorities, working for charities and social enterprises, for example. There are also new roles emerging in all sectors and a range of qualifications that reflect



this such as Foundation Degrees.

What advice would you give?

Get good careers advice – visit or contact your local college and speak to their industry trained tutors; ensure any course you undertake provides quality placement experiences; consider an apprenticeship; ask friends and relatives who might work in the sector to talk to you about their job role and responsibilities; do some research on the National Careers Service website; volunteer in a local care home.

WHY NOT BECOME AN ENTERPRISE ADVISER?

Sarah Stock, who is managing director of Independence Matters – an organisation that provides support for adults with learning disabilities, has signed up to be an Enterprise Adviser at The College of West Anglia and City College in order to inform the future workforce about the employment opportunities available in the social care sector.

The New Anglia Enterprise Adviser Network works to connect senior, local business leaders with senior leaders in local schools and colleges, helping to motivate and inspire young people, to make a major impact on their work prospects. The volunteers work as advisers and bring their wealth of knowledge and experience of the world of work

to help develop a comprehensive action plan for careers education which will fully support young people between 11 and 18 years old. The New Anglia Enterprise Adviser Network is supported by New Anglia LEP and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, and is part of a wider national movement from the Careers and Enterprise Company.

Sarah Stock said: "I signed up to be an Enterprise Advisor as it is really important to us at Independence Matters that we give back to our profession and support and nurture the next generation of youngsters wishing to enter into the field of social and health care."

"The quality of care delivered to people is very much dependent upon getting

The quality of care delivered to people is very much dependent upon getting the right staff with the right attitude and values

the right staff with the right attitude and values and our belief is that this starts early on in the development of a young person whilst they are still at school and college. The social care profession is often portrayed in a very stereotypical way and perceived to be low paid and hard work, however, it is about so much more than this, it is about relationships and making a real and lasting difference to people's lives. Every day is different and staff



can be empowered and work very autonomously."

■ If you would like to find out more about the New Anglia Enterprise Adviser Network and how your business can be involved contact Melvyn.ruff@norfolk.gov.uk or visit <http://www.newanglia.co.uk/skills>

The New Anglia
**Enterprise
Adviser Network**

KINGSLEY HEALTHCARE

The care sector is a vibrant industry

CEO of Kingsley Healthcare, Daya Thayan, discusses key trends in the care sector



I have frequently stated that the care sector should be viewed as a vibrant industry, justifiably comparable in our region to the energy industry, with a range of opportunities for well paid jobs and exciting career paths. Apart from caring and nursing roles, Kingsley offers a range of opportunities including catering, maintenance, admin and domestics.

Always demand

There is always a demand for nurses and support workers (carers). For support worker roles, human qualities – empathy, compassion, a bright personality – are more important than academic qualifications. Support workers can still climb the career ladder to team leaders and higher, for example, one of Kingsley's regional managers started as a teenaged Saturday girl in a care home.

The big challenge facing the sector currently is the levels of social services funding and it is pleasing that the government has taken this as a growing issue and has come up with extra funding.

Industry leader

We provide care for the elderly and clients in the learning disability sector, where Kingsley is recognised as an industry leader.

Kingsley has a national presence with a portfolio of 28 care homes and a 29th due to open near Ipswich in the Spring. We currently employ more than 1,600 people nationally, caring for nearly 1,100 residents.

Care Academy

To ensure a pipeline of quality staff Kingsley will be launching a Care Academy in September in conjunction with Lowestoft college, now part of East Coast College. Candidates accepted on to the one year course will be offered a range of benefits – a bursary, a free laptop, work experience and study visits, entry into Kingsley Care Awards – and a guaranteed job.

Technological advance

Technological advances will continue apace – we are currently investing in person centred software and computerised systems to support the administration of medication – and there will be growing opportunities in specialised roles such as IT with developing artificial intelligence.

■ Find out more about Kingsley Healthcare by visiting the www.icanbea.org.uk website.

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