

CARE AMBASSADORS' NEWS LETTER

CaringWORKS

ISSUE 2 October 09

Welcome to the second edition of Caring Works news letter. It will be produced quarterly and will follow a similar format each edition. Each edition will include a different job profile, which you may find useful to keep, and a Care Ambassador profile, so you should all get to know each other. Also included are forthcoming events.

Careers Pathways

Skills for Care has launched the new Career Pathways e-tool to promote careers in care in the adult social care sector

The e-tool can be found on www.skillsforcare.org.uk in the "Helpful Links" box on the bottom right hand side of the home page (or in the "developing skills" section)

The tool can also be used "off-line" via a CDROM. The official national CDROM is not yet available, so an interim copy can be requested by emailing asknvg@bracknell.ac.uk and giving your name and postal address

Career Pathways aims to provide information about the different caring roles in the many different settings in adult social care - including case studies of people who work in the sector explaining what their job involves, how they started in care, why they enjoy their jobs etc (in video and written form); to give information on the different qualifications required for different job roles and levels; links to regional employers for those who want to start applying for jobs

For those already working in social care, it provides information about career development options. This includes an interactive "matrix" to help people understand the different job levels and settings (again linked to case studies) and the range of qualifications to aspire to.

What are the target audiences? Those who know nothing about social care, those who want to start in social care, those who want to develop their career, managers who want to discuss career progression with staff, careers advisers and Care Ambassadors who want to help people understand the different careers available in social care.

*Charlie Roberts
Head of Department, Workforce & Employment Skills
Bracknell & Wokingham College*

Care Ambassador news

Berkshire Care Ambassador Francesca Chapanari - congratulations to the proud parents on the birth of their Son Eli on 27th August at 1:03pm weighing in at 5lbs 10.5 ozs. Francesca was due to go on maternity leave on the 4th September
Congratulations to Joy Baker and Suzanne Sapsed for achieving their Certificate in Teaching the Lifelong Learning Sector.

Kent and Medway - Care Ambassador of the Year - Wendy Hughesman
Welcome to all new Care Ambassadors

Portsmouth - Danni Thomas, our Care Ambassador from the Independent Sector has just been promoted to Acting Manager for Robinia Care Homes, who provide individual support solutions for people with learning disabilities and those within the Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Danni has been an active Care Ambassador since the launch of the scheme in Portsmouth and is still keen to continue her support despite the additional responsibilities she has taken on.

Berkshire

On the 14th September Berkshire Care Ambassadors spent the day at the Care Ambassador Celebration being held for the Kent and Medway area. During the morning we held a session introducing the Oliver Story DVD and showing how this can be used in schools. The Kent and Medway care Ambassadors became the students and gave presentation's on how they could support Oliver following his accident. We also introduced the careers pathway tool and showed how this could be used with students.

In September we held our Care Ambassador Support meeting. This gave us a chance to share activity ideas with each other and meet some potential new Care Ambassadors. One activity that was shown at this meeting has already been put into practice at a school event for a group of "A" level students. Care ambassadors had written two case studies each linked to their job roles. Students were able to see how different professionals work together to meet the needs and wishes of a service user. Feedback from the students was really positive and they asked some great questions. Over the next few months we have several more events planned both with schools and job centre plus. We have also started to plan the two big Oliver Story events taking place in Berkshire in March 2010

Students with OT Care Ambassador →



←Care Ambassadors chatting to our Steering Group

Suzanne Collins

Kent & Medway

Care Ambassador Celebration

On 14th September the Care Ambassador scheme in Kent & Medway held an event to celebrate the achievements of the last 3 years. As part of this the Care Ambassadors attended a morning training session, provided by Care Ambassador's from Berkshire as part of the Skills for Care South East Regional Contract. This was a fantastic opportunity for the Ambassadors to learn about another Care Ambassador scheme and to be trained in using the Oliver's story resource that Berkshire have developed.

In the afternoon the Stakeholders group joined us to help celebrate the success of the scheme over the last 3 years. We were able to hear from our first group of people who use services that have been trained to be Care Ambassadors - they have recently filmed a DVD showing what a difference it makes to them to received good support and why they are passionate about being involved in recruitment - this was a powerful message and made us all think.

The afternoon ended on a high note with awards for Care Ambassador of the Year going to Wendy Hughesman, Organisation of the Year to MCCH and a special award for Outstanding Contribution to Sharon Pryce.



Recruitment in Kent & Medway

Thursday 17th September turned out to be a busy day in Kent and Medway with 2 recruitment events happening at the same time, in different parts of the county. 7 Care Ambassadors held a stand at the Kent Messenger Recruitment event at the Maidstone Leisure Centre. As always this event had a busy start with people queuing to get in before the doors opened and nearly 2000 visitors throughout the day. The majority of visitors were looking for work locally or training opportunities with a few people attending to network - looking for information to support groups that they work with. The Care Ambassadors, using the Caring in Kent information pack provided information about a wide range of social care roles across the sector as well as giving detailed information about the jobs that they do.

At the same time 2 Care Ambassadors attended a smaller event held in partnership with the job centre plus and Ashford Borough Council to raise the profile of Social Care careers in the Stanhope area of Ashford. This event had a different feel with fewer visitors but was focused entirely on social care and giving detailed information about the sector. The Care Ambassadors worked alongside a number of local employers to encourage applications into social care vacancies locally.

For more information about the events that the Care Ambassadors in Kent & Medway are attending visit www.kent.gov.uk/careambassador

Judi Arnold

Portsmouth

Current developments Portsmouth

We have begun the process to recruitment four new Care Ambassadors to join our current six (we are only a small authority!). In preparation for their new role they will be attending a two day presentation skills course in November. The range of groups and events attended by Care Ambassadors has broadened since the Scheme started in Portsmouth two years ago to include adults, other professionals and community groups so our current six Ambassadors are also invited to attend the training days to refresh their skills and to share their experience.

Links have been made with Portsmouth Careers Development Group and the Director of Contracts for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight CDG, who arranges training requested by Jobcentre plus and works on various employer strategies to help people back to work. CDG receives referrals for people who have been unemployed for 18 months or more and are registered with Jobcentre plus, it is proposed that we will provide briefings to small groups who have shown a particular interest in social care. Both Portsmouth and Hampshire are enthusiastic at the prospect of working with the respective regional Care Ambassador Schemes.

Karen Downie and Steve Hudsmith, both from Skye Close talked to 50 plus interested people when they hosted a stand in Cascades in August (see separate article for more information).

Karen and Steve also gave a presentation at an Occupational Update day for Careers Advisors in September. They described the work of Care Ambassadors, the support that can be given to schools and colleges and finished with a lively talk on their very different career paths that finally led them to working in residential child care. Karen has just been successful in getting a funded place on the Social Work Degree course after completing a competitive selection process.

Caring Works in Cascades!



Karen Downie and Steve Hudsmith, two of Portsmouth's Care Ambassadors talked to more than 50 people about working in Social Care when they hosted a stand in Cascades Shopping Centre during the summer. Karen and Steve both from Skye Close Residential Children's Home said they had a great day talking with young people studying Health and Social Care at college, mum's wanting to return to work and those interested in a career change. Geographic changes also featured with an enquiry from someone wanting to relocate from Salisbury and a social worker from Poland.

Steve said the event was really worthwhile, "a totally different approach to giving presentations in schools, colleges, job fairs and to other professional groups which are the usual activities for Care Ambassadors".

Gill Manley and Chris Kirby

Milton Keynes, Oxford and Bucks

Our Care Ambassadors are being invited to refresh their skills during November. We are currently looking for new Care Ambassador's, particularly Care Apprentices within the region who will be offered training during January. Opportunities to undertake some presentation skills training is also being explored to continue their development.

Erika Forsdick from Heritage Care in Winslow, recently attended a Heart FM roadshow in Oxfordshire to speak with young people considering a career in Care. The event was held during the summer break and was a good opportunity to catch school leavers wandering through the town, and it was the one day the sun was gloriously hot! We did speak with a few individuals about Care Apprenticeships, who have since filled in application forms and are seeking positions.



Further relationships with schools are being established to offer curriculum support.

Teresa Jackson

Surrey & Sussex

Sussex Care Ambassadors have been involved in a number of care specific Job Centre Plus recruitment fairs over the summer and their input has gone down well with JCPlus staff and the people interested in moving into jobs within care services. The focus of their presentations have been on how care services have and are changing and what that means for the type of work that is now available, be that in a residential establishment or working one to one as a Personal Assistant. The feedback has been very positive and we are about to embark on another round of presentations involving Job centre plus advisors.

The next phase of development for the Surrey & Sussex Care Ambassadors will be to develop more people to get involved and that will include training new care ambassadors in October and building up the network of presentations they can be involved in. Part of the training will include becoming familiar with the Career Pathways tool as a means of seeing what Social Care has to offer.

Karen Stevens

Care Ambassador profile - Suzanne Collins - Berkshire

Some fun questions to begin with:-

Beach holiday or Ski holiday ? Beach holiday. I use to live in Devon and whenever I am in Devon now I spend some time of every day on the beach.

Marmite or peanut butter? Marmite, the smell of peanut butter makes me feel sick.

Cheese or chocolate? Cheese and red wine

Superman or Romeo? Superman

The Clangers or Barney? Clangers , no question!

Do you have any hidden talents? A puppeteer.

Describe your current job role? I get to meet lots of different people who teach me something new every day. I support them to achieve their NVQs in Health and Social Care

What do you most like about it? This was a great experience for me, I loved my job and learnt a lot. The home where I worked had a fantastic ethos and sparked my interest in supporting people with disabilities' to live as full a life as possible.

What do you like least about it? Nothing

What was your first job? One of my first jobs was working in Ilfracombe pottery making and selling pottery and my first care job was in a Residential home for adults with a learning disability.

What qualifications did you need to do your first job? For my first residential job, I did not really need any qualification, just the right attitude.

What qualifications do you have now? NVQ level 4 in Care, NVQ level 4 in Management, Registered Managers Award, my A1 Assessors award and V1 award

Other Jobs? After working in London for three years I moved to Berkshire and started working in a residential home that also had a respite unit. I took on the role of manager for the respite service. This role included working with parents and carers as well as service users. After many years in Berkshire I moved on to become an Inspector for the Commission for Social Care Inspection (now called the Care Quality Commission) I worked there part time and also at Bracknell and Wokingham College as an NVQ assessor and Internal Verifier. After a year I left the Inspection team as the office moved to Bristol and I did not want to spend all day on the M4.

Why do you enjoy being a Care Ambassador? I love to promote social care values and good practice. I want people to see that working in a learning disability, or older people services can be fun and rewarding.

Job profile

Substance Misuse Worker

Substance misuse specialists work in a variety of roles, supporting both adults and young people with drug and alcohol dependency problems. Working in healthcare, social care and criminal justice teams, they may:

- conduct drug and alcohol tests
- assess the needs of individual clients, referring them to other specialist support or rehabilitation
- provide education, advice and guidance
- deliver one-to-one or group counselling and other support interventions
- administer medication and monitor and oversee clients' rehabilitation.

Tasks can vary widely, depending on where they work. However, all share the common goal of winning clients' trust and giving constructive support.

Working hours can be varied. Some work standard hours, Monday to Friday, but some work evenings and weekends. They may work in clinics, outreach venues, prisons and community sites. Part-time and volunteer positions may be available.

Salaries are likely to start at around £17,000, potentially reaching £40,000 a year or more for project leaders.

Substance misuse workers should have:

- excellent communication and observation skills
- the ability to develop positive relationships with clients from all backgrounds
- belief in each client's ability to make positive changes
- patience and empathy
- a non-judgemental manner
- a genuine interest in working with people.

Jobs exist with a variety of employers throughout the UK, including prisons, support organisations, charities, NHS trusts, specialist clinics, treatment units and housing agencies. Many people transfer into this field from other professions including nursing, teaching, youth work, prison or probation services. All posts are usually subject to a Criminal Record Bureau check.

There are no set minimum entry qualifications but most employers will look for previous experience from a health, social care or criminal justice setting. The Advanced Apprenticeship in community justice (Drug and Alcohol Pathway) is a possible entry route.

Most employers offer training on the job and new entrants are usually closely supervised. Some organisations operate mentoring programmes. NVQs and professional and development awards are available in substance misuse.

Some experienced workers move into management positions, supervising workers, and some may choose to specialise, for example working with young people or adults.

Useful website:- www.connexions-direct.com/Jobs4u