

what you didn't know about care work



 **candlelightcare**
here when you need us

introduction

What you didn't know about care work will help you understand what care work is all about with real-life stories from people who work for Candlelight, the doors care work can open to many other careers and why care work is a good career choice for people of all ages.

What is care work?

Care work is helping people who may have an illnesses, disability or some other barrier which prevents them from getting around and attending to normal daily living activities.

Our care staff visit clients in their own homes to provide the help that is required. Although elderly people have the most need for our services, they are for people of all ages and differing backgrounds. There are many tasks you might be asked to do, but here are some of the most common ones:

- **Personal Care** - which includes things like assistance with washing/bathing/showering; dressing/undressing; oral hygiene; toileting and incontinence; administer creams and/or assistance with medication
- **Practical Support** - which includes things like: meal preparation; cooking simple meals; shopping; light housework such as cleaning, vacuuming and dusting; laundry and ironing; taking people to appointments/social activities; providing companionship or welfare checks



5 essential qualities of a care worker

To work in care, you don't necessarily need to have previous qualifications or experience (although these can help). There are, however, certain personal qualities that you will need to possess if you are interested in becoming a care worker.

1. be a 'people person'

To work in care you must be interested in people. For most of our staff, the relationships they form with their clients are the most important part of the job. You need to be friendly and approachable with a caring nature. Empathy and sympathy are also really important.

2. be respectful and professional

is important to respect clients and their homes and help them in a way they are comfortable with. You should take pride in what you do, and complete all tasks, however mundane, with a high degree of professionalism. It's also really important to be responsible and reliable.

3. be practical, level-headed and flexible

Care work is really varied. No two days are the same and as you see lots of different clients, a flexible attitude and ability to adapt

to new situations and people is a must. You need to be level-headed and able to remain calm if you face an unexpected situation or emergency.

4. be independent, but work in a team

Although you will mainly work with clients on your own and spend time travelling between their homes, you will also be part of a team with lots of support available to you.

5. be patient and have a sense of humour

You will be working with people from all walks of life, with various types of problems and conditions, so patience is important and as you are likely to come across all sorts of situations you need to approach your job with a smile. A good sense of humour helps too!

Does this sound like you? Why not come and work for Candlelight Care?



case study

GEMMA VOYSEY

GEMMA WORKED AT CANDLELIGHT CARE AS A CARE AND SUPPORT WORKER DURING HER GAP YEAR AND UNIVERSITY HOLIDAYS.

When I was 18 I had been offered a university place studying psychology but I wanted to take a gap year first and urgently needed to earn some money so that I could go travelling. My granny was receiving care from Candlelight Care at the time and my mum suggested giving care work a go as it was relevant to my career path. After sending off my application I was asked to an interview and offered the job! It was exciting and a bit nerve-wracking.

THE FIRST WEEK

Before starting work I went on Candlelight's in-house training course, followed by three days shadowing an experienced care worker. I had a bit of a shock on my first day when I walked in to a house and saw a lady starkers in her bathroom – it was quite an eye-opener! I must admit, the first week out on my own was quite hard and I did consider giving up. I was travelling lots of miles, got lost a lot and managed to dent my car. But I had a lot of support from my manager and after the first week things got better. I would definitely advise anyone new to care work to stick it out no matter how hard it might seem at first. It does get easier and is a really rewarding job, especially when you start to get things right and leave people with a smile.

HOW WOULD I COPE?

I was a bit worried how I would cope with doing personal care for people, but I realised that it must be worse for them than for me and so I just decided to get on with it and approach it in as professional a way as possible. In the end it wasn't so bad – it just became part of the job.

FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT DURING THE HOLIDAYS

With the money I earned I was able to go travelling for six months, which was amazing, and when I came back it was time to go to university. But during my holidays I would go back to work for Candlelight, even if it was just for a few weeks at a time. They were so flexible, the work was there when I needed it and although I had gaps in working, I didn't have to go through the training again every time, I was able to do any updates through the Workbooks, which was really handy.

A GREAT OPTION FOR STUDENTS

Care work gave me some really great life experience and the confidence to deal with different people from all walks of life. Actually, that is the best bit about the job – meeting all the different people and hearing all their stories, as well as being able to help them. I hadn't actually realised how much personal development I had gained from this job until after graduating when it was time to look for a new job and my experience and the confidence I had gained through Candlelight helped me get a job as an assistant occupational therapist.



“The new skills you learn are completely transferable, no matter what your career path”

I would really encourage other students to give this job a go because:

- it's a great little money earner whilst living at home to contribute to living costs during term-time at university; there is always work available during the holidays;
- the additional life and work experience and confidence you gain is amazing;
- all the skills learnt are completely transferable to any job within the health care profession and many of the skills are transferable to jobs in other fields;
- it teaches you how to be flexible and how to work on your own as well as part of a team;
- you get to meet lots of new and exciting people;
- every day is different.

5 reasons care work is rewarding

A career in care can be incredibly rewarding. You are providing a valuable service not just to the people you are looking after, but to their friends, families and society as a whole. You can make a difference to a person's quality of life, their mood and their overall health and wellbeing. And that's not all; here are five more benefits of working in care.

1. connecting with people

If you like people, there's nothing better than care work as you have the opportunity to form relationships with people of all ages from many different backgrounds. Clients look forward to care visits and it is one of the most satisfying parts of the job to know you are leaving them in a better frame of mind than when you arrived.

2. supportive environment

Although care staff usually work on their own, at companies like ours they are part of an extremely supportive network. You will have the support of other care staff and you can call the office at any time with questions or concerns. Knowing that other people are there to help you and that you are a valued member of a team is really important to work satisfaction.

3. flexible working hours

We always try to be as flexible as we can so that you can have a healthy work-life

balance. Care staff generally work in a regular shift pattern with a set number of hours. Many of our care workers have young families and manage to fit their shifts around the school run, while others prefer to do shifts in the evenings or at weekends.

4. career progression

Another great thing about care work is that you don't usually need any formal qualifications to start with as you will receive all the training you need to be able to do your job. However, we encourage and support our staff to gain vocational qualifications alongside their work and offer opportunities for career progression.

5. varied working life

The work is extremely varied, however as you frequently see the same clients, you will soon have your own routine. It is this balance between variety and routine that many of our care staff really enjoy about their job.

“If someone is looking for a worthwhile career, then care work is a really good place to start as it opens doors to so many different occupations.”



Care Worker
Senior Care Worker
Care Supervisor
Care Co-ordinator
Team Leader
Residential Unit Manager
Community Worker
Mental Health Worker
Social Services Officer
Counsellor
Registered Nurse
Social Worker
Occupational Therapist
Activities Co-ordinator

**Why not talk to us about
doing a care-related
apprenticeship and earn
while you learn?**

case study

SCOTT RANGE

SCOTT HAS BEEN WORKING AS A BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION APPRENTICE IN OUR SHERBORNE BRANCH FOR JUST OVER A YEAR. HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT CAREER TO GO INTO BUT NOW HE HAS FOUND SOMETHING HE REALLY LOVES.

When I left school, I had no idea of what I wanted to do. I passed my GCSEs with good grades which meant there were lots of things open to me, but nothing stood out. So I went travelling for six months, but once home again I was bored. I looked at various college courses but they didn't really appeal to me as I don't particularly like bookwork. Then I came across Apprenticeships which sounded just right as I realised I could learn something while working and get paid all at the same time! Plus I wouldn't have to pay any study fees! A win win situation.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE A CARE COMPANY?

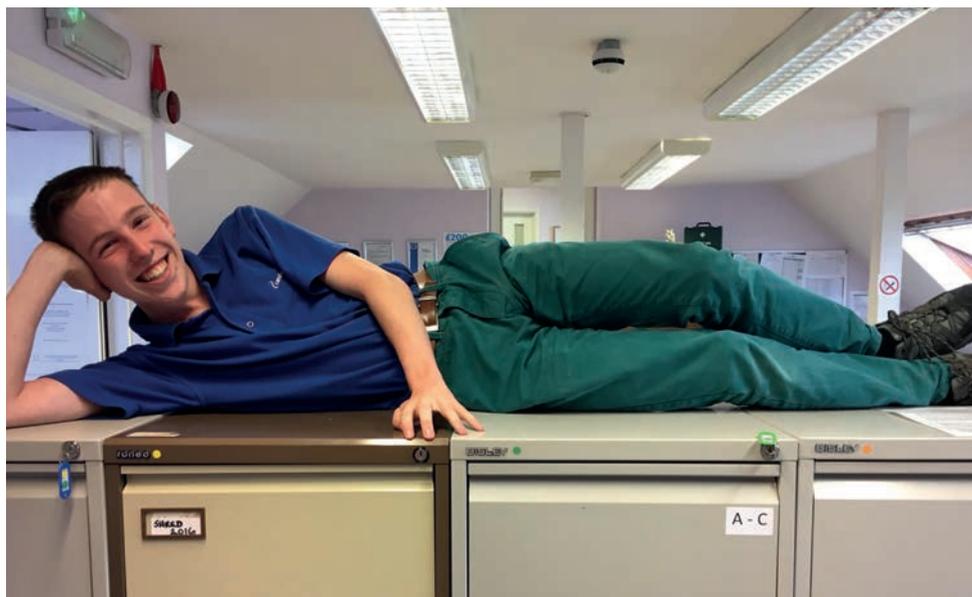
I saw Candlelight Care's name in a list of local companies offering apprenticeships and remembered that my mum had done care work in the past and how much I enjoyed hearing her stories about the people she had seen. She had really enjoyed the work and encouraged me to look into it. So I contacted Candlelight Care about doing a Business Administration Level 2 apprenticeship and when I went for the interview it felt instinctively right. There was a lovely atmosphere in the office and the people were very friendly. The work sounded really interesting too, lots of variety and interaction with people which I really like, so I was thrilled when they offered me the apprenticeship.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK?

I love talking to people and a big part of my job is talking to clients, their families, care staff as well as social workers, district nurses and other professionals. There is plenty of variety in my role and I have learned so much about the care industry. No two days are the same!

WHAT ARE YOUR LONG-TERM GOALS?

I am very lucky to have found the area to make my career in. Although I came to Candlelight Care to gain a business qualification, I realise now that I would like to do care work; to go out into the community and make a real difference to people's lives. I have heard the care staff talk about their work and how rewarding it is and I would like to be a part of that. Care work may not be for everyone but I think I have something to offer and so I am going to give it a go.



“I realise now that I would like to do care work; to go out into the community and make a real difference to people’s lives.”

IS THERE A GOOD CAREER IN CARE WORK?

There are great career opportunities in Candlelight and as they support and encourage people to gain qualifications, further down the line I hope to progress to more senior roles. If someone is looking for a worthwhile career, then care is a really good place to start as it opens doors to so many different occupations.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND CARE WORK TO OTHERS?

The care industry is not for everyone, and not everyone can be a care worker, but I would highly recommend giving it a go. The skills I have learned will be useful to me no matter what path I take in life and I have grown in confidence and learned a lot about myself. I know now that I really want to work with people and make a difference, so watch this space!

case study

LORNA KENT

LORNA KENT IS THE REGISTERED MANAGER AT CANDLELIGHT'S SHERBORNE BRANCH AND HAS HAD A CAREER IN CARE FOR OVER 20 YEARS. SHE MANAGES A TEAM OF OFFICE AND CARE STAFF AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT SAFE, HIGH-QUALITY CARE IS PROVIDED TO ALL CLIENTS.

When I first began working in care, I was employed as a care assistant at a local residential home and followed this job with a number of roles in residential care and hospital wards over the coming years. I knew I had found what I wanted to do, but I wanted to make it a proper career!.

HOW I GOT INTO CARE WORK

Like many people, when my children were young I had a number of part-time jobs but it was when I was a domestic cleaner at Longbridge Deverill Nursing Home that I discovered I really enjoyed the company of older people. I loved listening to their stories and making them laugh and I think that my employer spotted something in me because I was soon offered a job as a care and support worker.

WORK VS STUDYING VS FAMILY LIFE

I left school with very few qualifications (due to undiagnosed dyslexia) and no career expectations but I knew I wanted to do something with my life and have a worthwhile career. Care work gave me this opportunity and I wanted to progress, so I decided to go to college and gain some qualifications. At this point my dyslexia was finally diagnosed and I was shown it didn't have to hold me back - it was just a different way of learning. I wasn't stupid after all! My confidence soared but it was a hard time constantly juggling work, studying and family life, but I was determined to succeed. Somehow

I managed to tap into resources of time and energy that I didn't know I had and did well in my studies which opened up a world of opportunities for me.

OPENING DOORS

Now I had some qualifications, including a Diploma Level 2 in Health & Social Care, I was able to move up the ladder quite quickly going from a care assistant, to liaison officer, then staff trainer, care coordinator and, finally, registered manager. When the company I was working for was sold I looked for another registered manager position and was lucky enough to find Candlelight Care in Sherborne.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY JOB

What I love about being a manager is giving other people the confidence to succeed as I know what it's like to face struggles in life. I understand the challenges my staff can face and I really enjoy leading my teams and supporting, nurturing and developing individuals. I actively encourage my staff to gain qualifications and I believe in promoting



"I never dreamed that I would progress so far and go on to become a registered manager supporting 80+ clients and 25 staff."

from within. Care is a great field to work in because it's so rewarding to know you are making a difference to someone's life and it opens doors to other aspects of health and social care, such as occupational therapy or nursing. The work can be challenging though and requires a particular set of skills, some of which can be learned, while others are personal qualities. But I hope my story shows that anyone can do well if they are committed to their work and are determined to succeed.

"Believe in yourself. Anyone can do what they want to do with the right guidance and support."

A career in care can be really rewarding.

If you think you've got what it takes to support people in their own home and you live in or around Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire or East Sussex, call your nearest local branch to find out more.

GLASTONBURY Tel: 01458 831201

Email: glastonburyinfo@candlelightcare.co.uk

SHERBORNE Tel: 01935 817800

Email: sherborneinfo@candlelightcare.co.uk

TROWBRIDGE Tel: 01225 776000

Email: trowbridgeinfo@candlelightcare.co.uk

UCKFIELD Tel: 01825 765008

Email: uckfieldinfo@candlelightcare.co.uk

WIMBORNE Tel: 01202 848203

Email: wimborneinfo@candlelightcare.co.uk

**Why not join us and be a part
of one of our amazing teams?**