

“ we’re promoting careers in adult social care ”

could you, or a member of your workforce be a care ambassador?

The North East Care Ambassador project supports people involved in social care to inspire, encourage and inform others about the sector.

Social care will touch most of us, if not now then at some time in the future. At some point in our lives, either we or someone close to us is likely to need care.

It is well known that there are problems attracting enough of the right people to work in care. One of the main reasons is that people do not understand what social care is about. Social care has changed and progressed enormously in recent years, with the introduction of personalisation and a huge increase in skills and qualifications, plus the development of an established career framework, but many people still have an outdated or negative perception of the sector.

With the help, support and passion of care ambassadors we are working hard to improve these negatives images and demonstrate how rewarding and fulfilling a career in the sector can be.

Getting the right people into social care is vital, but not everyone is right for the sector. Care ambassadors use their own experiences, coupled with the many resources available to allow people to determine if they have the right qualities work for social care.

The North East currently has a register of over 70 volunteer Care Ambassadors, who work at all levels in a wide variety of roles across the sector. Their involvement in the project takes many forms. Some attend school events and hold information stalls on careers in the care sector, others deliver talks and presentations to groups of people of all ages, some even offer work placements to students and teachers and even taster sessions for those returning to work after a period of unemployment or illness.

Activity has included up skilling 180 JobCentre Plus front line staff, who had very limited knowledge about what to look for in a potential recruit for social care. The feedback was excellent and the vast majority said they learnt so much from the Care Ambassadors.

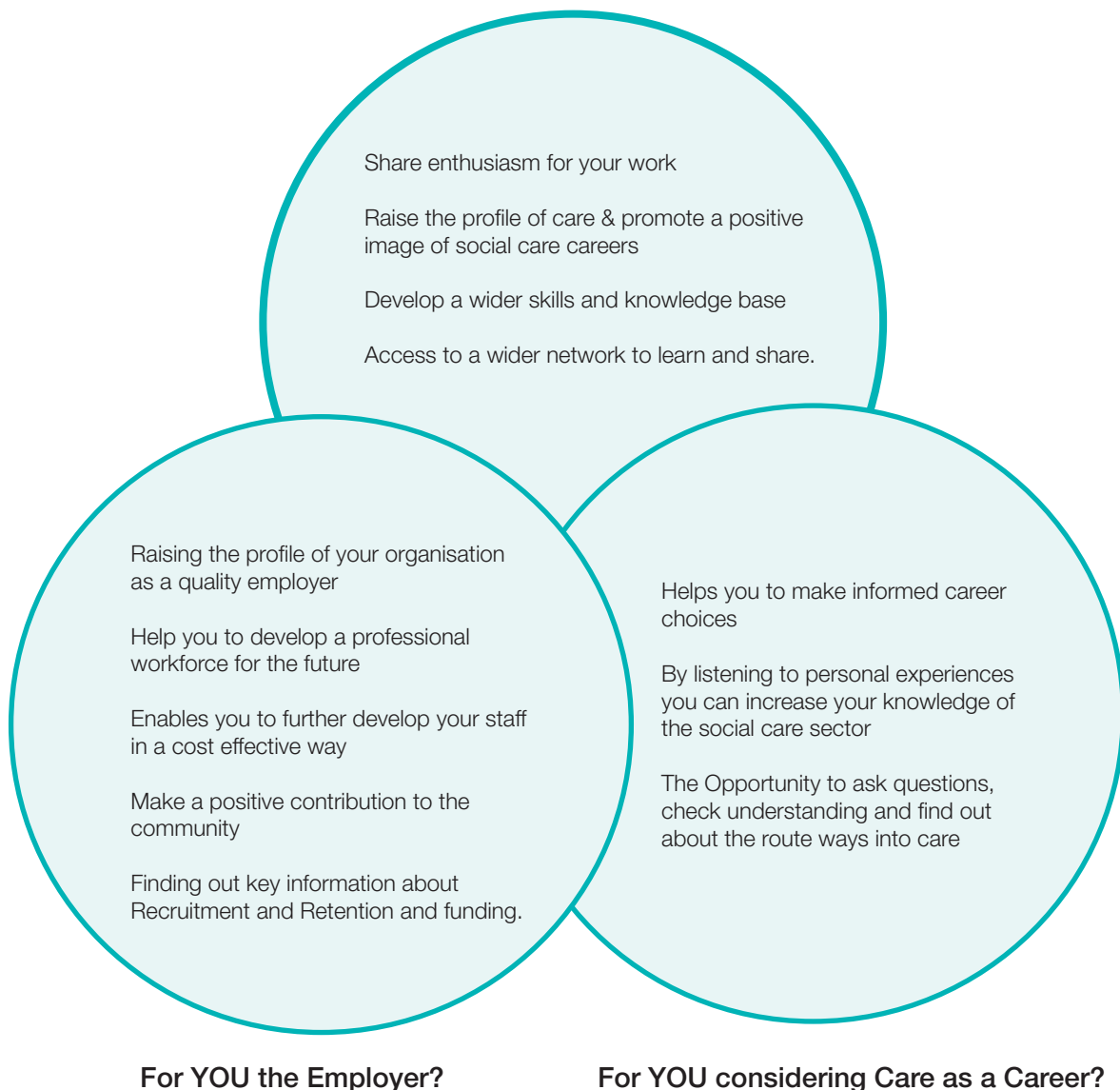
Care Ambassadors have also responded to large scale redundancy in the region at both Corus and Garlands offering an insight into the sector and in some cases advertising job vacancies to those affected.

They really do make a positive difference to the sector.



what can your involvement mean to you and others?

For YOU the Care Ambassador



Working in partnership will ensure the right people with the right qualities work in the care sector and deliver high quality services to those who need care and support.

some of the benefits of your involvement.....

Q. the project has helped me/my organisation by...

- Giving me confidence to go out and promote/sell care
- Alerting us to support available and given valuable opportunities to network
- Make training more interesting through the use of interactive games
- Maintaining awareness of sector issues and views of others
- Input of ideas and initiatives from a broader area
- Developing my own knowledge about workforce development
- Using the care ambassador project as a forum for discussion at network meetings

Q. the project has helped the care sector by...

- Being the rational voice
- Enabling me to take back ideas on how we can help the sector locally
- Promoting social care as a rewarding career
- Bringing together people from different paths within the sector to share and enhance knowledge/skills/experience
- Giving me the opportunity to pass on my experience of working in the sector to encourage new workers
- Using real people and their experience to encourage a career in care
- Highlighting opportunities and identifying the variety of job roles available within social care and promoting career opportunities

Q. the best thing about the project is...

- Activity engaging with all parties - employers, job hunters, young people etc.
- Drawing on others expertise from a broad forum
- Networking opportunities
- Creates awareness of need
- Feeling like you are making a difference to individuals in the future
- Networking opportunities and a chance to encourage a career in care
- Engaging with other social care workers to have a deeper understanding of training issues & seeing the wider picture
- Being able to look at the big picture and tap into the motivation/dedication of all involved.

Q. In the project I did not expect...

- To learn as much as I have about what is out there
- To enjoy it so much
- The level of knowledge gained through networking and forums
- Continue to build my knowledge and teach session – always at least one new piece of info
- To enjoy myself so much and find it as interesting.

could you be a care ambassador?

We've put together a short self assessment to determine if you could be a care ambassador.

Do you have...

- Enthusiasm and passion for your work?
- A desire to share your knowledge and experiences of working in care?
- An eagerness to encourage others to pursue a career within the social care sector?
- A commitment to promoting a positive image of the care sector?
- Good communication skills and sensitivity?
- An ability to relate to a wide range of people?
- A desire to enhance your knowledge and skills through training?
- Where appropriate your manager's support to become a Care Ambassador?



here's a snapshot of what one north east care ambassador had to say about her involvement...

What have you enjoyed the most about your involvement?

"I've enjoyed all of my involvement as a Care Ambassador, particularly the training, which was both exciting and thought provoking. Interacting with a drama group and learning how to project myself in the best way to tell someone about my role was really valuable to me."

What has your involvement meant to you both personally and professionally?

"Professionally, my involvement has enabled me to ensure that any information I provide is targeted at the right level. and that it's interesting, stimulating and encourages people to think positively about social care. It's through my involvement as a Care Ambassador, that I have returned to academic study at Northumbria University.

Personally I've developed friendships with different people both through Skills for Care and the University. My involvement has also provided me with increased job satisfaction."

Please give an example of some of the activities you have been involved with as an ambassador?

- *Job and Career Fairs*
- *A workshop session with primary school children using hand puppets to tell a story about social care.*
- *Sharing my story with school and college students.*
- *JobCentre Plus training session*

What would you say to someone who is considering becoming a care ambassador?

"Go for it, you won't be disappointed."

frequently asked questions

How much time do I need to give?

This is one of the great things about the Care Ambassador scheme, how much time you give can be decided by you together with your manager.

Care Ambassador activities can be tailored to fit the demands of your job role and reflect your particular interests.

Whether you give a few hours, a day or a week, is in many ways irrelevant. The fact you are willing to give some time to share your experiences is the most important factor.

Are there certain types of work I would be committing to if I were to become a Care Ambassador?

The short answer is no! You can pick and choose which activities you become involved in and we would not ask Care Ambassadors to take part in activities they do not feel comfortable with.

It is appreciated that standing in front of groups of people is not for everyone. Whatever you decide, you will be provided with training and support to enable you to become an effective Care Ambassador.

How will I be supported in my role as a Care Ambassador?

We will help and support you in any way we can. This could include training, mentoring or just attending an event with you until to gain the confidence to go it alone.

Will I get paid for my work as a Care Ambassador?

Unfortunately not, but as a Care Ambassador you will be playing a vital role in improving your current and future workforce while widening your skills and knowledge base for your future.

If you are interested in registering to become a care ambassador, please complete the attached application form and return it to:

Skills for Care North East
DBH Business Centre
Belasis Hall Business Park
Coxwold Way
Billingham
TS23 4EA

Or for more information please call 01642 345681 or email anna.mclaren@skillsforcare.org.uk

care ambassador application form

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Care Ambassador. Please complete this form to register your details and return it to the address at the bottom of the page.

Surname		First name	
Title		Tel no	
Email			
Address			
Current job role			
Previous care experience			
Other relevant experience			
Do you have any special requirements?	e.g. wheelchair access, Braille, large print documents		
Name of employer			
Address of employer			
Tel of employer		Email of employer	
Times available		Preferred geographical area	
Do you have your own transport?			
Qualifications			
What do you most enjoy about your work?			
What attracts you to becoming a care ambassador?			
I have discussed this application with my employer and I give my permission for my employer to be contacted (If applicable) (Please sign)			

Skills for Care in the North East
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TS23 4EA

Tel: 01642 345681

Fax: 01642 345669

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web: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/northeast

The Care Ambassador concept was developed by Denise Harrison and was rolled out across England by Skills for Care (formerly Topss England). Whilst Skills for Care were assigned the rights by Denise to the Care Ambassador Toolkit in order to produce the Care Ambassador Resource Pack, the intellectual property rights for the concept remain with Denise Harrison. To that end any publication we produce will acknowledge this ownership.