

“ we support people involved in social care to inspire, encourage and inform others about the sector ”

**the care ambassador project**



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## are you involved in...

**Social care or social work education or development?**

**Supporting people into employment?**

**Information, advice and guidance for people considering career options?**

Social care will touch most of us, if not now then at sometime in the future. At some point in our lives, either we or someone close to us is likely to need care. We are an ageing population with greater and increasingly complex demands for care.

There are problems in attracting enough of the right people to work in care. One of the main reasons for this is that people do not understand what social care is about. Social care has changed enormously in recent years but many people have outdated or negative perceptions of the sector. Care Ambassadors are working to change things!

Care ambassadors are volunteers, who work at all levels in a wide variety of roles across the social care sector. This includes employees who deliver front line social care and social work services, support staff, managers, employers, people who use services and carers and owners of services. Ambassadors are chosen for their passion, experience, skills, and desire to inspire others.

Ambassadors undertake a range of diverse and creative activity which can include, talks, project setting, workshops, and attending job and career fairs. Ambassadors can also offer work placements for students, teachers and taster sessions to those returning to work after unemployment or illness. Their work may be relevant to a wide range of people including students, teachers, parents, men, retirees, lone parents, young people and those looking for a change in careers.

Many people are unaware of the range of career options and progression routes available. The status of social care is rising, there are opportunities for progression and there has been a huge investment in the development of staff.

Getting the right people is vital. Not everybody is suited to working in care and unique personal qualities are required to do the job. There are lots of people with these qualities who do not consider care as a career. It is important that people who come into care have good key skills or are willing to learn these skills.

There are currently approximately 1.4million workers in social care. By 2025 this is set to increase to between 2.25m and 2.5 million. The number of people aged 85+ is set to rise four fold. Social care acts as a vital support to the NHS and increasingly many procedures undertaken by health staff, e.g. many tasks undertaken by nurses now take place in a social care setting.

There are massive changes happening. Government is to support people to stay in their own homes and be independent. Individuals have more power over their own lives and decisions



to buy bespoke services giving them access to support in a form, time and location that is appropriate to them. This will inevitably create changes, challenges and opportunities in the future. It is important to ensure these opportunities are communicated.

Like some other jobs, the garden is not rosy all of the time. There are challenges and difficulties. This is about working with people! There is great satisfaction, pride and personal achievement in supporting others to reach their full potential, be this enjoying their day or achieving their dreams. Care ambassadors give an open, honest and current picture of social care.

Ambassadors have access to a development programme, networking and learning opportunities. There is also a range of resources available including websites, posters, case studies and work placement guides for students and employers.

### **a snap shot of profiles of North East Care Ambassadors...**

**Joan works for Gateshead Council. She currently assesses older people for services/ equipment and provides advice to enable individuals to stay in their own homes. She has a huge amount of experience and has seen her career progress. Her roles have included working with children with severe learning difficulties, residential social work, assistant manager within older people residential care and managing home helps. Joan has some great examples of why she would recommend care as a career including enabling a 101 year old to remain in her own home. She says “You are always learning in social care, there is a need to think outside of the box and be creative to enable people to live in the way they want to live.”**

**Paul works for Rehab UK. He manages, develops and monitors care delivered to people with disabilities in a range of settings including domiciliary, community and day care. Having previously been a miner Paul had a major change of career after having a minor brain injury as a result of an accident. He wants to use his experience to ensure people receive high quality care in the future. Paul has previously undertaken a range of development activities to enhance his role including the Social Work Diploma, Registered Managers Award and is continuing to undertake further courses to turn his Social Work Diploma into a BA.**

**Ruby is Chair of the Skills for Care North East Regional Advisory Group. She is passionate about social care having thoroughly enjoyed every job she has had. She has extensive experience of social care having undertaken a range of roles rising to Assistant Director of Cleveland County Council and Head of Children and Family Services in Hartlepool. She didn't stop there and she is busier than ever in her work with people who use services and carers. She is also involved in a range of other activities including using her expert knowledge in the inspection of care services and NHS involvement initiatives. Ruby would recommend care as a career as “you can make a real difference and see people blossom and grow.”**

If you would like to know more about the project or if you may have opportunities for ambassadors please contact:

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