

SOCIAL CARE FACT SHEET

This fact sheet accompanies 'Myths and Misconceptions' – our series of short podcasts about social care jobs. Find them on [YouTube](#) or the DWP intranet with answers to your questions about what it's really like to work in social care in Scotland.

Who can work in social care?

We talk qualifications, skills and criminal records in Episode 1 [\[click here to listen\]](#).



You can **do your qualifications on the job**. You don't need any to start.



Some jobs require a **driving licence, but not all of them**. Look for a service based all in one place.



It's a **job about people and ordinary life experience**. We look for **values** during recruitment – warmth, patience, and the belief that people should be able to make their own choices.



A previous criminal conviction **does not necessarily prevent you working in social care** unless you are barred from working with children or vulnerable adults. **You would already know if you were**. We run background checks with Disclosure Scotland. You can't pass or fail, they just pass on information. The employer decides whether to offer you a job and assesses any risks, so **talk to them about it – it's better they hear it from you**.

Are all social care jobs the same?

We discuss social care as a whole, diverse sector in Episode 2 [\[click here to listen\]](#).

People assume that working in social care means working in a care home or doing short domiciliary care visits. These jobs exist, but there are lots of others as well. You could work with older adults, adults of all ages, or in children's services.



Social care workers support lots of different people of all ages, including people with learning disabilities, people with autism, people experiencing mental health difficulties, people accessing support for substance use or addiction, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, people with physical disabilities, older people, and people with complex needs.



Social care **includes support for vulnerable children and their families**, as well as children's residential and respite care.



There are supported living and housing support services, as well as care homes and care at home, and other services that work out of community hubs.

Social care work can be active, fun and involve supporting people to get outside and into the community. We'd recommend it for **people who don't want to sit at a desk from 9-5**.



Is it all about personal care?

We explain how personal care fits into social care in Episode 3 [\[click here to listen\]](#).

Personal care includes **anything of a personal nature**: bathing, showering, dressing, and toileting, but also trimming beards, doing hair or make-up, cutting nails. Don't let the stereotypes put you off.

Not all social care jobs involve personal care. Not everyone needs it, and others just need prompting or reminding.

Often, it's just a small part of the role. You might support someone to get up and dressed and then to carry with the rest of their day.

Providing personal care is a skill. We want the people we support to have choice, independence, and dignity. **We'll train you to provide personal care well.**

It quickly becomes normal. In our experience, people don't leave social care because of personal care. **But if you're worried – ask.** Employers will explain what the job involves.

Why would I work in social care when the news says it's in crisis?

We discuss how social care's bad press matches up with reality in Episode 4 [\[click here to listen\]](#).



Being a social care worker is **not a minimum wage job. You must be paid at the Scottish Living Wage or more.**

Social care offers **secure, permanent jobs**, with paid annual leave, support and training. There are casual / relief jobs if that's what you want, but we mostly need people on stable contracts.



Social care does run on shifts, but not everyone works unsociable hours. If you are worried about shift patterns, ask around. Not every service or type of social care works the same way.

People stay in social care jobs for the **relationships and job satisfaction**. You get to know your team and the people you support, and **you can see the impact you're having**.

The pandemic has been difficult. The sector needs investment and there's a lot of unmet need. **That hits the headlines. But the 'crisis' is because we need more staff, not because jobs are at risk.**

Is working in social care a 'dead-end job'? And is it for me?

We look at social care as a career, and who it suits, in Episode 5 [\[click here to listen\]](#).

- ☆ Social care is a great entry-level career because you can join without qualifications, get registered and progress through your SVQ.
- ☆ We need team leaders, managers and leaders, plus specialist practitioners with different areas of expertise. This means there are opportunities for promotion and further training.
- ☆ Lots of social care organisations have senior leaders who started off as support workers.

People often think social care is not for 'people like them'. But **social care work can be for anyone – of any age or gender**. Every person we support has their own background and interests and we need a diverse workforce to match.

People come to social care from all different backgrounds and experiences. Have a look at [Craig McCallion](#) or [Sara McGeechan's](#) stories on the [Scottish Government Care to Care website](#).