

Workforce Development Guide for:
The Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector
Including
Personal Assistants & Carers



2026/27

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Introduction

As an employer you are responsible for the development of your staff to ensure that service users are at the centre of their own care and support, giving them choice and control over their lives.

There are a number of ways you can support staff performance:

Induction

It is important to set standards and culture awareness during your induction process so that new staff can improve the service they deliver. This not only benefits the organisation, but the team and you as their manager.

Supervision

The supervision process enables you and your staff to openly discuss workloads or caseloads. The process allows you to review and audit the quality of work and to discuss any areas of concern whereby learning and development may be required in line with job responsibilities.

Meetings

In order to standardise practice, or to discuss new policies or procedures, managers are encouraged to deliver action learning sets which provide a safe environment for open discussions. This may highlight any collective emerging requirements.

Listening and Observing

By listening to staff and observing practice, you are able to suitably judge best practice, competency and compliancy.

During the Supervision and Appraisal process and other informal situations, you have the opportunity to discuss workloads, caseloads and other related issues with your staff. From these discussions you will be able to review staff performance and identify any areas which may require further development and support.

You should identify areas of skills and knowledge which require developing to ensure your staff are competent to carry out duties in line with their job responsibilities and business needs.

There are many solutions to meet learning and development needs which you should consider, such as:

- Apprenticeships & Qualifications
- Coaching & Mentoring
- Work Shadowing
- Social Learning
- E-Learning
- Team Meetings
- Free Resources
- Delivered training courses

The Care Workforce Pathway

The Care Workforce Pathway is a national career framework created to define clear roles, skills, and progression routes for everyone working in adult social care in England. It was developed by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in partnership with Skills for Care, and first launched in January 2024. Its purpose is to professionalise the sector, improve recruitment and retention, and give care workers a structured, recognised career journey.

The Care Workforce Pathway:

- Outlines the knowledge, skills, values, and behaviours required to work in adult social care.
- Provides the first universal career structure for the adult social care workforce in England.
- Supports career planning, workforce development, recruitment, and retention by clearly defining expectations and progression routes.
- Helps individuals understand the training and qualifications relevant to each stage of their career.

The pathway currently includes 8 job role categories, covering both direct care and leadership roles:

1. New to care
2. Care or support worker
3. Enhanced care worker
4. Personal assistant
5. Supervisor or leader
6. Practice leader
7. Deputy manager
8. Registered manager

Each category describes:

- Core knowledge
- Required skills
- Expected behaviours and values
- Training and development routes

For further information please visit: [Care workforce pathway for adult social care - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/care-workforce-pathway)

Skills for Care

A strategic workforce development organisation for adult social care in England. It works to ensure the sector has the *right people, skills, and support* to deliver high-quality care

Skills for Care provides a wide range of support to the sector, including:

1. Workforce Development & Training Support

They offer tools, resources, and guidance to help care providers recruit, train, and retain staff across all levels - from new entrants to senior leaders.

2. Quality Improvement

Practical resources help services achieve and maintain high standards of care, including support linked to CQC requirements.

3. Data & Evidence

Skills for Care collects and analyses workforce data through the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS), the main data source for the care workforce in England. This evidence guides national workforce planning.

4. Supporting Care Leaders

They run national and local networks - especially for registered managers and deputy managers - to share best practice, offer peer support, and strengthen leadership.

5. Championing Learning & Development

Skills for Care promotes continuous development through standards such as the Care Certificate, Quality Assured Care accreditation, and a range of development programmes.

The Skills for Care Mandatory Training Guide is an official resource that outlines the statutory and mandatory training adult social care employers in England must provide to ensure their workforce is safe, competent, and compliant with legislation and regulatory standards.

For further information please visit: [Home - Skills for Care](#)

Learning & Development Solutions

The Care Certificate

The Care Certificate standards define the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of specific job roles in health and social care. They can be used if you are 'new to care' and be used to inform what information is covered during induction.

The standards were updated in March 2025 to align with sector developments and the introduction of the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification.

There are now 16 standards. A new standard has been added to capture awareness of learning disability and autism.

The standards have been developed jointly by Skills for Care, NHS England and Skills for Health.

The 16 minimum standards should be covered if you are 'new to care' and should form part of a robust induction programme. This learning should happen alongside any statutory and mandatory training

Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification

This accredited qualification is based on the same 16 Care Certificate standards but builds, deepens and consolidates the knowledge and understanding. It's designed to provide a baseline standard to care, reduce the need for repeat training, and gives recognition to the care workforce for the professional career that it is. You can learn more about the qualification the on [Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate page](#).

You should look to continue learning and development through the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification or other development opportunities as outlined in the Care Workforce Pathway. You might want to enrol a worker on the qualification right away to begin building upon the knowledge and skills gained during induction, or you could wait until the worker has passed their probation period.

For further information please visit: [Care Certificate standards](#)

Wakefield District Health & Care Partnership

Wakefield District Health & Care Partnership are a partnership of NHS, Wakefield Council, Healthwatch Wakefield, health, care, housing, voluntary and community sector organisations working together across Wakefield District.

WDHCP together to plan and deliver services and improve the health and wellbeing of the 350,000 people who live in our district.

Their People Plan focuses on bringing workers together across professional and organisational boundaries to deliver a seamless health and social care service for people living in Wakefield District.

Programmes of work related to Workforce Development include Training & Education and Coaching & Mentoring.

A Learning Platform is also available that hosts over 40 tailored eLearning modules for your employees. These online courses cover essential skills for individuals and teams, including:

- Leadership & Coaching
- Workforce Culture
- Managing Culture
- Inclusive Workplaces
- Wellbeing & Personal Development

For further information please visit: [Home - Wakefield District Health & Care Partnership](#)

Wakefield Adult Education Service

Wakefield Adult Education Service have over 40 nationally recognised qualifications that can be achieved in only 8 to 10 weeks.

A range of short online courses which can be completed in as little as 4 hours are also available.

All online courses are free, regardless of income, if you have a West Yorkshire post code.

Please note there is a cost implication for non-completed courses.

Online Courses include:

Short Online Courses

Business Skills

Health & Social Care (please see the NCFE section on p13 for further information)

Mental Health

Face to Face Courses include:

English and Maths

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

ICT & Digital Skills

Health & Wellbeing

For further information please visit: [Wakefield Adult Education Service - Wakefield Council](#)

Wakefield & District Safeguarding Adults Board

The Wakefield and District Safeguarding Adults Board (WDSAB) works to help keep adults in the community safe. Especially those who might be at risk of harm or neglect.

It's made up of different organisations such as:

- the Council
- Police
- health services
- third sector organisations

They all work together to protect people and make sure they get the right help when they need it.

WDSAB offer high quality safeguarding training to Wakefield organisations.

For further information on WDSAB training please contact:
workforcedevelopmentadults@wakefield.gov.uk

e-LfH

e-LfH is the NHS's central digital learning platform, offering free, high-quality training to health and social care professionals, supporting patient care, workforce development, and national training programmes.

The platform is accessible to a wide range of health, care, public sector, and partner organisations including:

- NHS staff (including Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)
- Social care staff – including those aligned with Skills for Care
- Hospices and care homes

e-LfH hosts a large catalogue of online training programmes designed for:

- NHS staff
- Social care workers
- Public health professionals
- Students and trainees in health disciplines

covering clinical, statutory/mandatory, technical, and professional development topics.

For further information please visit: [NHSE elfh Hub](#)

Other eLearning

Female Genital Mutilation

A recent study revealed that 137,000 women in England and Wales are estimated to be living with the consequences of FGM. To address this issue, the Home Office is championing a proactive approach and has launched this free online FGM training package.

This course is useful for anyone who is interested in gaining an overview of FGM, particularly frontline staff in healthcare.

[Free FGM Training Online | Recognising & Preventing FGM Free Course | Virtual College \(virtual-college.co.uk\)](#)

Forced Marriage

This course has been developed with the Forced Marriage Unit of the Foreign Office. It aims to raise awareness, challenge perceptions and inform you of the correct actions to take should you suspect someone is at risk.

To register for the E-Learning please use the below link:

[Forced Marriage Awareness - Free Course | Virtual College \(virtual-college.co.uk\)](#)

Motor Neuron Disease

The purpose of the MND Association's Care Worker's module is to introduce you to the issues surrounding the care for people living with MND and discusses equipment and procedures you may encounter in this role. Actual equipment and techniques that you use during formal training will vary.

To register for the E-Learning please use the below link:

[OLCreate: MNDA CWM MND Association's Care Worker's Module \(open.edu\)](#)

Parkinsons Disease

Understanding Parkinsons for Health & Social Care Staff:

This course was produced by the Parkinson's Excellence Network.

As a health or social care professional you may provide care for people with Parkinson's. This may be in hospital, full-time residential care, in the community or in short-term respite care. It is likely that you will mostly come into contact with people with Parkinson's who are at the complex phase and this will be the focus of this course.

OLCreate: PUB 5985 1.0 Understanding Parkinson's for health and social care staff (open.edu)

Parkinsons Foundation Modules for Health & Social Care Staff: These free, online, interactive modules, delivered by Parkinson's Excellence Network and endorsed by the Royal College of Nursing, will help any health and social care professional increase their knowledge and understanding of Parkinson's, so they can improve their practice.

Online courses | Parkinson's UK

React To

React To is a series of training resources specifically designed for care home staff and other healthcare providers. 12 topics are available including Stroke, Deterioration, Falls, Frailty and more.

For further information please visit: [React To Training Resources for Care Home Staff | Crocodile House | React To](#)

NCFE's (Online Distance Learning)

Provided by Wakefield Adult Education Service and fully funded by the UK Government, this L&D solution allows workers to enhance skills whilst gaining a Level 2 Nationally Recognised Qualification. To commence the distance learning, candidates are required to attend an online induction to complete the relevant paperwork which enables the Government to release the necessary funding.

Course Topics Include:

- Caring for the Elderly
- Allergy Awareness
- Customer Service for Health & Social Care Settings
- Understanding the Safe Handling of Medication in Health & Social Care

Many more topics are available.

Guidance for Managers and Staff:

- Learners need to be of 19 years of age and over.
- Learners will have to undertake some independent research and be committed to completing the qualification.
- Course duration is usually 8 or 10 weeks, depending on the course.
- As part of the induction process initial assessments (including an English assessment) are undertaken by the learner to help identify any needs they may require support with. The assessments are not timed, and the learner can take as long as they need to complete these. The assessments are marked by the Learning Provider and the results are not shared with the employer.
- These qualifications are fully funded by the Government and staff will be required to complete relevant paperwork. This includes a request for a National Insurance number, which is required for funding purposes only. This must be provided on the day of the induction.
- Also, due to funding regulations if a learner is not a UK national, they must evidence permanent residency in the UK for the last 3 years before funding can be accessed. This rule is set by the Skills Funding Agency and has no relation to a learner's employment status.

Should learners withdraw or fail to complete the course within the specified time (without extenuating circumstances) the learning provider will charge the *individual* for costs incurred

For further information please visit: [Health and social care online courses - Wakefield Council](#)

Open Learning Packs

Open Learning Packs have been developed to deliver subject specific learning to all staff as an alternative to, or to complement, delivered training. The Open Learning Packs are developed by subject specialists within the Adult Social Care Workforce.

To access any of the packs detailed please contact us and we will forward the relevant workbooks. There is no set time to complete the Open Learning Packs, as they enable learners to work at their own pace. Once the learning journey is completed, you as managers or supervisors, mark the Open Learning Pack.

Hearing Impairment - To enable learners to work effectively and support people with a range of hearing impairments.

Visual Impairment - Learners will gain an understanding of the term visual impairment and the effects this can have on a person and how to identify and access the help and support available to a person with a visual impairment.

Oral Care for Adults in Care Homes - by following the guidance, staff should gain sufficient knowledge to improve the oral health of the people in their care home.

To request a workbook please email:

workforcedevelopmentadults@wakefield.gov.uk

Resources

Digital resource for Carers

Carers UK have launched the Digital Resource for Carers, a solution that combines their own digital products and online resources with links to local information and support, providing a comprehensive online tool for carers. It includes:

- An e-learning resource that helps carers identify & build networks
- A care co-ordination app for people sharing care
- The role of good nutrition
- Upfront guide to caring
- Looking after someone Carers Rights Guide
- Being Heard a self-advocacy Guide for Carers

For further information please visit: [Digital products and services | Carers UK](#)

SCIE

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is an independent social care charity with deep experience of bringing partners and people with lived experience together to collaborate and innovate to improve people's lives (e.g. national government, DHSC, local authorities, care providers, academics, foundations). Working across social care, health and related services such as housing, for adults, children and families, SCIE contribute to the development and implementation of better care, support and safeguarding at local and national level.

SCIE offer training - bespoke online or face-to-face learning and development solutions - as well as guidance and tools to support best practice, co-production and innovation.

For further information please visit: [Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\)](#)

South West Yorkshire Partnership Teaching NHS Foundation Trust

The South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust have compiled a directory of Services and Support Groups to promote independence and healthy living across the Wakefield District. This is an invaluable link for staff and service users.

For further information please visit:

[Our creative approaches | South West Yorkshire Partnership Teaching NHS Foundation Trust](#)

Think Local Act Personal

Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) are a national partnership of more than 50 organisations committed to transforming health and care through personalisation and community-based support. Working with government to shape reform and influence policy they also co-produce a wide range of tools and resources available on their website to inform and inspire positive change

For further information please visit: [Home - TLAP](#)

Research in Practice

Research in Practice work with and for professionals in the social care, health, criminal justice and higher education sectors offering resources, learning opportunities and specialist expertise.

For further information please visit [About | Research in Practice](#)

Penderels Trust

Penderels Trust work with over 40 local authorities across England and Wales under contract as direct payment support service providers and to provide advice, support and information services.

Their service includes PA Finder (online PA registers), appointeeships, deputyships and personal health budget support in addition to direct payment support services.

For further information please visit: [Penderels Trust - Opening the Door to Independent Living](#)

Connect to Support

Wakefield's *Connect to Support* service is a local online information, advice, and support directory designed to help adults in the Wakefield district who may need care or support to live independently. Designed for:

- Adults with care and support needs
- Older adults
- People with disabilities
- People with learning difficulties
- Carers seeking information or support

It provides access to practical information, resources, and local organisations that can help adults stay healthy, independent, and connected.

For further information please visit: [Home | Wakefield Connect to Support](#)

Funding

LDSS

The Learning and Development Support Scheme (LDSS) is a Department of Health and Social Care initiative launched in September 2024 to support non-regulated adult social care staff to develop skills, gain qualifications, and progress in their careers.

It provides reimbursement funding to Adult Social Care employers for eligible training and qualifications completed by their workforce.

Funding is split into two reimbursement points:

- 60% claim: within 3 months of the qualification being paid for and started
- 40% claim: within 3 months of qualification completion
- Claims must be submitted within 3 months of course completion

Eligible employers must:

- Provide an adult social care service
- Directly employ care staff in England
- Have an up-to-date Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS) account

For further information please visit: [Learning and Development Support Scheme for the adult social care workforce: a guide for employers - GOV.UK](#)

Funding for PA's

Funding options are available for individuals employing personal assistants (PAs) in England, allowing them to cover training costs and enhance the skills of their PAs.

Types of Funding Available

1. Individual Employer Funding: This funding is designed for individuals who directly employ their own PAs using personal health budgets, direct payments or their own money. It can cover training costs for both the employer and the PA, ensuring high-quality care and effective management.

For further information please visit: [Individual Employer Funding](#)

2. Direct Payments: Local authorities are required to offer personal budgets, which can be received as direct payments. This allows individuals to hire their own support workers (PAs) and have more control over their care needs.

For further information please visit: [Using your care and support personal budget - Wakefield Council](#)

Contact us

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