

*I care...*

A Skills for Care guide to:

creating a skilled  
social care  
workforce for the  
future success of  
large employers

## social care apprenticeship programmes

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# apprenticeships: an investment for the future

The success of every large business depends on its people, and forward-thinking employers know that a sound workforce development strategy is fundamental to continuing that success.

But balancing current costs against future growth requirements can be quite a conundrum.

For employers in the social care sector this is especially challenging. An ageing population will lead to increased demand on care services in the not-too-distant future. Changes to the way care services are procured – through personal care budgets – will mean that providers will need to focus on a new set of commissioning requirements.

These and other future challenges mean that employers need to consider how they create a skilled and motivated workforce that is ready for the journey ahead.

Apprenticeships present the ideal way of introducing new skills into the social care workforce in a cost-effective way.

With advice, funding and ongoing support available for businesses of every size, there has never been a better time to consider setting up an apprenticeship programme.

If you're looking for guidance on setting up an apprenticeship programme for your company, this brochure will give you an outline of the benefits you can expect, and how to go about it.

a wide variety of  
business benefits for  
large employers

With guidance and advice available from a variety of sources, employers can quickly and easily create their own apprenticeship programme and begin to enjoy the benefits within a short space of time.

**a tailored development programme**

Employers can create a programme that is designed to meet the needs of both newly-recruited staff and existing staff.

Apprenticeships can cover a wide range of job roles in the care sector; from personal assistants through to care supervisors.





**Samantha Mwedekeli**

Vocational Learning and PSA  
Manager for Look Ahead  
recognises the many benefits of  
apprenticeships for employers

**help with recruitment  
of apprentices**

The National Apprenticeship Service provide a no-cost service to employers which matches potential candidates to apprenticeship vacancies. On average, this saves employers around £3,500 per candidate, when compared with recruiting a permanent member of staff in the traditional way.



### funding

Reflecting the government's priorities in tackling youth unemployment, 100 per cent funding for training costs is available for apprentices aged between 16 and 18 years.

This represents a saving of around £4,500 per staff member taking an apprenticeship. Part-funding is also available for the training of older apprentices. This will vary according to factors such as sector, location, apprentice age and employer size.

Funding is paid directly to the organisation that provides and supports the apprenticeship scheme. This could be the employer if they use in-house training, or a workforce development centre, or an external learning provider such as a local college.

### benefits to existing employees

Apprenticeships are not restricted to new positions and therefore don't necessarily require new people to join the workforce. Funding extends to apprenticeships for existing employees and also depends on sector, location, apprentice age and employer size.

In addition, many employers report the wider benefits of having apprentices. These range from the new perspectives into working practices that apprentices can bring, to the creation of a learning culture in the entire workforce.



# how apprenticeships work

## social care apprenticeships

Skills for Care, in partnership with the Department of Health, promotes social care apprenticeship programmes across public and private organisations. Working closely with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), Skills for Care ensures that those employers that are interested in social care apprenticeships get the help and advice they need, and understand the business benefits of apprenticeships.

The Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care is a post-16 programme but is not restricted by any upper age. Apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships are a framework of competence and knowledge-based qualifications targeting school and college leavers as well as adults of all ages who want to work in social care, including existing staff. These sector-recognised qualifications allow young people and adults to become qualified, skilled workers within the social care sector.

Apprenticeships are designed by the relevant sector skills council or sector skills body. Skills for Care designs the framework for those working in social care, and the Skills Funding Agency supports the training with funding.



The apprenticeship framework consists of:

- a vocational qualification which ensures the apprentice is practically skilled
- a knowledge qualification which gives apprentices knowledge and expertise about the sector and their work
- Key Skills or Functional Skills which ensure good standards of literacy and numeracy
- a component on Employment Rights and Responsibilities.

Apprenticeships also have the scope for any specialist employer requirements to be included.

### **learning providers support a work/study balance**

An apprentice will spend the vast majority of their time in the workplace, with the study element of their placement being supported by a learning provider. This might mean that the apprentice studies one day a week at college, or the learning provider might come to the apprentice's workplace to carry out training. Either way, the learning provider will fully support and assess the apprentice's progress in their formal vocational study programme. This will include their handling of all the paperwork relating to the study aspect of the apprenticeship.

Since the learning providers will be at the leading edge of changes in thinking and in working practice in the sector, employers will benefit from having access to the most up to date information. This is a great spin-off benefit for the rest of the workforce.

### **mentor support**

Within the workplace, an apprentice would benefit greatly from the support of a mentor who would be responsible for their on-the-job skills development. This is a crucial aspect of the programme and contributes hugely to the outcome of the placement. Following an agreement between Skills for Care and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for a more flexible approach that allows 16 to 18-year olds to provide personal care as long as they are appropriately trained and supervised, the role of the mentor is especially important for younger apprentices aged 16 to 18, who can offer personal care. Employers already running apprenticeship programmes often report that mentors themselves derive benefits from the personal development opportunities this role offers them.



## case study

Barchester

Healthcare's

apprenticeship

success story



“any company that doesn't offer an apprenticeship programme is now really missing out”

Apprenticeships are a key part of the exciting range of development opportunities that we offer; and they are just the start. Apprentices are assured of jobs and continued access to learning at the end of their programme.

### the challenge

Barchester Healthcare opened its first care home in 1994, and now has over 200 homes, employing over 16,000 staff looking after 10,000 residents. It prides itself on the outstanding quality of the facilities offered and the five-star care given to residents in every aspect of their lives. Maintaining a uniformly high standard of service across such a large workforce is a top priority, and an apprenticeship programme was devised to ensure that new people, skills and experience could continually be introduced across all roles.

### the solution

In the last 10 years, Barchester has developed a wide-ranging learning and development strategy that is deployed across its operations. Underpinning this approach are apprenticeships; a pivotal element of Barchester's workforce development programme. Covering a wide variety of subjects from the traditional health and social care, to leadership, hospitality, administration, pre-nursing and even a chef's programme, Barchester has over 1,000 apprentices of all ages at any one time.

### success

The success of the programme has been far greater than could ever have been imagined when it was first set up five years ago.

Barchester achieves completion rates of over 90%, with 87% of apprentices choosing to stay with the company upon completion. A substantial number of apprentices have gone on to be promoted to managerial positions.



This document is part of Skills for Care's comprehensive range of resources that includes case studies and guides aimed at those potential apprentices and employers considering adult social care apprenticeships. Leaflets and posters are also available for teachers, career advisers, Year 9 pupils and school leavers.

For more information about social care apprenticeships and to access further resources, please visit:

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/icareapprenticeships](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/icareapprenticeships)

or [www.socialworkandcare.co.uk](http://www.socialworkandcare.co.uk)

You can also see us online or get in touch via:

**YouTube** [www.youtube.com/user/skillsforcare](http://www.youtube.com/user/skillsforcare)

**Facebook** [www.facebook.com/icareapprenticeships](http://www.facebook.com/icareapprenticeships)

**Bebo** [www.bebo.com/icareapprenticeships](http://www.bebo.com/icareapprenticeships)

**Twitter** @icareapps

**Text** 'icare' to 60300\*

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\*Text messages will deliver further information to your mobile phone device and will be charged at your standard network rate.