

The CARE CERTIFICATE

Your personal development

- What you need to know

Standard



Developing a personal development plan (PDP)



Personal development happens throughout your life. At work, it starts with agreeing your aims and objectives and thinking about your strengths and development needs. You then set goals so that you can meet your objectives and make the most of your talent.

A personal development plan (PDP) is an action plan that helps you get organised, identifies learning and development needs to help you do your job better or help in your career, and then tracks progress.

For those new to health and social care, the Care Certificate is the beginning of your learning and will usually form part of your induction. All good employers will want to develop their workers further over time. A development plan to achieve this might be agreed during your induction period or during a review at a later point.

As a first step, you will agree with your employer how you are going to complete the Care Certificate, including how long it (and any other induction training) will take. Then, as you continue to work in health and social care, it will be important that you develop your skills and abilities. This may involve further training, specialist courses and qualifications. Your employer will know what they expect from you and will help you set targets and find the learning you need, and so will create your PDP with you. The majority of PDPs cover a 12-month period, and should therefore be updated and renewed each year.

The most important person involved in your PDP is you; however, your manager, other workers and the people you provide care and support for will all play a part.

In order to agree your **PDP** you need to ask yourself questions such as:

- What do I want to achieve?
- What are the standards, skills and knowledge needed by my current role and do I have any gaps?
- What are the learning and development opportunities in my current role?
- What are my ambitions and goals?
- Am I making the right choices to get me there?



Supervision and appraisal

When you are carrying out your work activities, you will be supervised by a more senior member of staff. 'Supervision' has two meanings in social care and health work:

- 'working under supervision' means that you are working within the sight of a more experienced worker, not necessarily your manager, who is overseeing your work
- 'supervision sessions' are pre-arranged meetings between you and your manager or supervisor in order to discuss your performance and development.

Supervision sessions are a regular opportunity to talk through any part of your work, your role or about the individuals you provide care and support for. Your supervision might take place one-to-one with your manager or in a group or team meeting. Sessions take place at a time and frequency agreed with your manager and notes should be kept.


Regular supervisions are important to any job so concerns can be addressed, progress checked and additional support arranged. Whether your work is in one location or within the community, your employer should ensure that you have regular supervision opportunities.

An **appraisal** is a one-to-one meeting, usually once a year, between you and your manager which reviews how well you are working and making progress. At this meeting your manager will support you to plan your next steps and update your PDP.

Agreeing your objectives

Your objectives are the things that you want to achieve. Objectives are easiest to agree if you keep them 'SMART', which stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based.

Once you have set clear SMART objectives, it is time to break them down into manageable action points and record this information in your PDP.

S	Specific	
M	Measurable	
A	Achievable	
R	Relevant	
T	Time-based	

You should follow these steps:

Step 1. Agree objectives

Example: Be able to write and review care plans with the individuals who receive care and support in my workplace.

Step 2. Plan activities and timescales to meet the objectives

Example:

- read the instructions and look at the process for care planning in my workplace.
- discuss these and ask questions of an identified more experienced worker.
- work with my manager to choose three people with care plans and get their permission to discuss those care plans with them.
- arrange with my manager how and when I am going to report back and discuss any questions or learning points.

Plan the timescale: for example, one of the four activities listed will be achieved each week, so this will take four weeks (say which four weeks this will be).

Step 3. I do the agreed activities within the planned timescale.

Step 4. Outcome.

Discuss with my manager the three care plans examined and the comments of the people who are supported by them. Possibly update those plans (with my manager), and review what I have learned from the process.

Developing your knowledge, skills and understanding

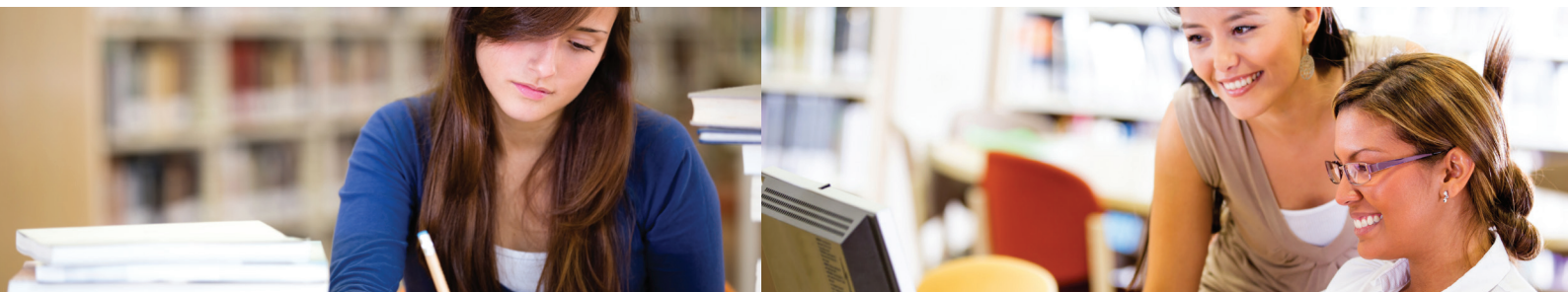
Core skills

Whatever your health or social care workplace, it is important that you have the right level of literacy, numeracy and communication skills.

- You may need to read and contribute to care plans, record data clearly and legibly, fill out forms, write emails or take notes.
- You need to be able to read and understand instructions about your ways of working.
- You might be involved in supporting an individual to monitor their weight, for example, and keep a record of weight loss and then calculate overall progress.
- You might take and record an individual's temperature or blood pressure at regular intervals and report on any concerns.
- You might need to know the difference between a variety of different measures, such as gram and milligram, and be able to calculate simple conversions.

Good communication skills are one of the Care Certificate Standards. When working in health or social care an exchange of information will develop your understanding of an individual's needs. If the information is inaccurate or misleading, mistakes can be made which can result in care that is not person-centred.

The internet has a number of websites where you can check your literacy, numeracy and communication skills and get help to develop them further if needed. Non-web-based materials and face-to-face learning opportunities can also be found. You might be expected to have skills at a specific level in your role and be provided with support to improve your skills. Ask your manager if there are any particular opportunities, resources or support available.



Learning and development

Your employer may provide internal training that is designed to help you with your learning and development. You should ask your manager or colleagues about this. Finding information outside your organisation can also help you gain knowledge and skills.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC), your trades union or staff association (if you have one), the Social Care Institute for Excellence, or other workers and networks provide a wealth of guidance and information. Sector bodies Skills for Care or Skills for Health, or the National Skills Academy for Health, are all good sources of information about qualifications, courses and apprenticeships that are suitable for your role.

www.cqc.org.uk/
www.scie.org.uk/
www.skillsforcare.org.uk
www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/
www.nsahealth.org.uk/
<https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide>

Everyone learns in different ways and there are lots of opportunities today to mix and match (to 'blend') different methods and opportunities to suit you and how you like to learn. Depending on your role, there are many formal and informal activities that you can carry out as part of a blended approach to learning. Resources for learning may be reading materials, TV or video clips, or research on the internet or even applications (apps) on your phone. These all develop your knowledge and understanding. Learning also takes place through social media forums such as Twitter and other social media. These are live and can develop your awareness of others' approaches, but always check with the ways of working in your workplace if you are unsure about anything you have learned - and never break the confidentiality of anyone at your workplace.

Structured learning will include work shadowing, where you work alongside a more experienced worker, or undertaking e-learning (that is, computer-based learning). Formal learning, courses and qualifications, can improve your knowledge and skills and confirm your competence to do your job.

Active learning involves you in reading, writing, describing, discussing, listening and reflecting on presented information. It gives you the opportunity to explore new areas and gives you fresh ideas. Discussing ideas with others will give you greater self-confidence in your work as you gain deeper knowledge and understanding. This will enable you to put the theory into practice and improve your overall work.

Reflection is a learning tool which uses past experiences to help you develop your skills and gain greater understanding of your abilities. It involves thinking about your actions and how you relate to the people who receive care and support as well as your work colleagues. You look back on a situation or activity and consider the way it has been done, thinking about what you could do differently. It helps you think about how good your work is and the improvements that you want to make.

Speak to your manager and other colleagues about their recommendations for further learning.

Receiving feedback

You need helpful feedback when joining a new workplace and learning new skills. As you progress through the Care Certificate and your induction, you should receive regular feedback from your manager or assessor. This should help you to develop your skills, provide clarity and give you the ability to meet the standards required.

Not receiving any feedback can lead to a false assessment of your own abilities. Health and social care work involves using knowledge, skills and understanding together to manage complicated and stressful situations in a caring and compassionate way. Constructive feedback is one way of helping you develop your confidence and your ability to solve problems. It is an essential part of learning and development which helps you develop awareness of your strengths as well as areas for improvement.

Feedback can be formal or informal:

Formal

Formal feedback would usually be given in writing. This might be part of an assessment or appraisal or on a comments sheet. Formal feedback is also given verbally in supervision sessions, but is then written down in the notes of the session.

Informal

Informal feedback happens in day-to-day discussion with work colleagues, managers or the individuals that you provide care and support for.

You should be given feedback as soon after the event as possible. The most helpful feedback is always given positively and is constructive. This means it should be based on the facts and describe what you could do differently or what you did well. It should concentrate on how to change rather than on personal factors like confidence or intelligence.

The Care Certificate

The Care Certificate is a key part of the induction an employer has to provide. It is expected that it be completed and assessed before new health or social care workers are allowed to work without direct supervision. It sets out specific values, abilities and behaviour that ensure that the new health or social care worker is able to provide good quality care with compassion. It comprises 15 different standards, ranging from your own role and development to values like equality, diversity and dignity, to health and safety and infection prevention. You need to be overseen for each of the standards until your assessor is confident that you are meeting them all and can work without direct supervision. The 15 standards can be found here:

www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/projects/item/24-care-certificate

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Standards/Care-Certificate/Care-Certificate.aspx

The Care Certificate workbooks and activities cover the knowledge content, though your employer may choose to provide more detailed information about each part. Whether you are using these training materials, or others your employer has arranged, it is important that you are given the time to learn during your induction. Your employer will want to regularly check progress, review your learning and feedback.

The combination of the knowledge content, practical training and workplace assessment should enable you to develop the essential skills to undertake your role. Some workers undertaking the Care Certificate will require more support than others. Your manager should be able to identify this as part of supervision, but always let them know if you need more support.

Continuing your learning

As a health or social care worker, it is important to carry out further training and qualifications. Continuing professional development, (CPD), is a record of your learning, development and achievement. It will usually be in a folder which keeps records of your progress beyond your initial training. The PDP will help you to focus on areas for learning and development. Continual learning is needed by all workers, especially in health and social care as changes happen regularly. For example, legislation may change, ways of working may be developed and ways to complete documentation may be improved. Your CPD file will become valuable evidence of what you have done to develop your knowledge and skills.