

Coventry City Council and Job Centre Plus

# Coventry Social Care Jobs Fair and Careers Information Event

## Background

Difficulties in recruiting the right social care workers has been raised within Coventry in several ways:

- Verbal feedback from employers
- Discussions at Registered Managers Network meetings
- Concerns raised by Commissioners
- High turnover rates indicating an issue in identifying and recruiting the right staff

This event was developed as part of a range of Coventry based activities to support employers with effective recruitment including the development of online resources, free advertising of vacancies, monthly adult social care recruitment sessions in the local Job Shop and effective recruitment and retention seminars for employers.

## What we wanted to achieve

**The three organisations came together with some common aims:**

- to increase the understanding of careers in adult social care
- to improve the quality of applicants and applications for social care vacancies
- to overcome some of the barriers for those seeking employment in social care
- to introduce job seekers and employers with vacancies

- to ensure employers and job seekers understand the advantages of values based recruitment and were able to access practical resources, such as A Question of Care, to assist with this

## What we did

Following a period of planning between all parties, an event was hosted in a prominent city centre location and was promoted via Job Centre Plus, libraries, local GP surgeries, local radio, social media and the local Job Shop.

A range of employers with current vacancies were invited and 14 attended on the day. Space was provided so that people could apply for jobs on the day. The local managers network – Coventry Cares Learning Network supported finding the employers and supporting them on the day.

The local Job Shop was very helpful in supporting the event and promoting it to people. They also ran a Job Search and Application event a few days before the job fair, focusing on the Care Sector, to help job seekers to feel better prepared and more confident to approach the providers on the day.

Job Centre Plus heavily promoted the events to Job Seekers and facilitated the wider day - welcoming delegates, signposting them to the various elements and collecting evaluation data.

Participants were encouraged to start by visiting a workshop session that explored what working in social care was really like. These workshops

were facilitated by Skills for Care and involved a provider of pre-employment opportunities and employers. The focus was on the values and attitudes needed in social care and how they could positively demonstrate these to employers during the recruitment process.

A range of careers resources were made available for people to take away and read/explore.

## What we achieved

Feedback was collected from Job Seekers (on the day) and Employers (on the day and 4 weeks after the event). This feedback is summarised below:

### Job Seekers:

- Around 200 attended the event, just over half of whom were on Job Seeker's Allowance although almost a third were not any benefits
- Feedback was extremely positive with 99% finding the event useful and almost all of these having taken with them application forms and details of current jobs available
- Almost 73% has not worked in care before and indicated that they now had a better understanding of the sector and roles

### Employers:

- Feedback from the 14 employers that attended confirmed that a large number of interviews had been arranged as a result of the day. All employers stated that they would attend another event.
- Following up 4 weeks after, all employers indicated that they had either directly recruited as a result of the event or were in the process of doing so.

## What we learnt

Combining a job fair with a careers event worked well for all involved. It translated the overall objectives into clear outcomes, with attendees gaining employment in social care and employers filling vacancies.

The promotion and location ensured a large footfall of job seekers who had an active interest in social care careers. Future events will include additional promotion through social media.

The A Question of Care resource was well received by both employers and job seekers as a useful resource to aid values based recruitment as part of a wider approach.

Employers have reported they are willing to pay a small charge to be involved in these events, which will allow them to carry on, on a twice yearly basis.

“ We have spoken with lots of people today who have seemed very interested and keen to apply for posts ”

Anonymous, Social Care Employer

## For more information please contact

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## Skills for Care Recommends

Skills for Care has helped to develop a range of resources that directly help employers address some of the challenges they face. In addition, we continue to share good practice and learning emerging from health and social care integration.

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### Finding and Keeping Workers

This comprehensive online resource enables employers to access a large number of key resources and practical tools to help them to recruit and retain staff.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/  
Finding-and-keeping-workers/  
Finding-and-keeping-workers.  
aspx](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Finding-and-keeping-workers/Finding-and-keeping-workers.aspx)

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### Think Care Careers

This engaging online resource provides important information for people considering a career or a career change into adult social care. Using practical examples, it helps raise awareness of routes into the sector.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Care-careers/Think-Care-Careers/  
Home-Page.aspx](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Care-careers/Think-Care-Careers/Home-Page.aspx)

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### A Question of Care

This online resource presents a realistic insight into working in care using video demonstrations. People using the service can identify if working in the sector is right for them.

[www.aquestionofcare.org.uk/](http://www.aquestionofcare.org.uk/)

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