



Name: Dorota Pierzchalska

Student ID: 2519628

Module Code: LCHS4001

Module: Academic and Employability Skills

Lecturer: Markus Klingelfuss

Title: Describe one specific role within the health and social care sector and give examples of duties and responsibilities of this role.

Submitted on: 22.03.2026

Introduction.....	3
Description of, and background to, Family Support Worker in Healthcare.....	3
Evaluation of the skills needed for Family Support Worker in Healthcare.....	5
Strategies to improve the skills for Family Support Worker.....	6
Conclusion.....	7
Conclusion.....	8
References.....	9

The Role of a Family Support Worker in Healthcare

Introduction

For my presentation, I have chosen the role of a **Family Support Worker (FSW)**. I selected this role because I am interested in working with families who face a range of challenges, including mental and physical health problems, financial difficulties, addiction, domestic violence, and special educational needs (SEN).

A Family Support Worker provides practical advice, emotional support, and guidance to families experiencing both short- and long-term difficulties. This role is important because it supports all family members and helps improve their overall well-being. I am particularly interested in this profession because I enjoy working closely with people and making a positive difference in their lives. In the future, I hope to work as a Family Support Worker, especially supporting families with disabilities, as they often require additional care and assistance.

Description and Background

A Family Support Worker plays a vital role in healthcare, education, and social care settings. Their main aim is to help families function more effectively and improve their quality of life. In healthcare settings such as hospitals, hospices, or mental health units, Family Support Workers address the social determinants of health, which are non-medical factors that affect a person's recovery.

They carry out holistic assessments, ensuring families have access to essentials such as food, heating, and transportation to attend appointments. They also act as advocates, helping families understand complex medical information and ensuring their needs are communicated to healthcare professionals.

Family Support Workers are also involved in crisis situations. For example, if a parent is suddenly admitted to hospital, they may arrange emergency childcare or liaise with schools. In palliative care, they provide emotional support to children and siblings dealing with serious illness or bereavement.

Duties of a Family Support Worker

The role of a Family Support Worker is varied and requires a flexible approach. Key responsibilities include:

- **Assessment and Planning:** Identifying family needs and creating personalised support plans.
- **Parenting and Household Support:** Providing advice on parenting, routines, and budgeting.
- **Child Development Support:** Assisting with children's education, behaviour, and emotional well-being.
- **Case Coordination:** Working with professionals such as social workers, teachers, and healthcare staff.
- **Crisis Intervention:** Supporting families during demanding situations such as illness, bereavement, or financial hardship.
- **Advocacy:** Helping families access services and representing them in meetings or appointments.
- **Record Keeping:** Maintaining accurate and confidential records following safeguarding policies.

One of the most important responsibilities is building trust.

Family Support Workers regularly visit families in their homes or communities, creating a safe and supportive environment where individuals feel understood and respected.

Key Skills Required

To perform this role effectively, a Family Support Worker must have a range of important skills:

- **Empathy and Active Listening:** Understanding people's emotions without judgment.

- **Communication Skills:** Clearly explaining information and working with professionals.
- **Patience and Emotional Control:** Remaining calm in stressful or crisis situations.
- **Flexibility:** Adapting to changing needs and circumstances.
- **Teamwork:** Collaborating with multidisciplinary teams.
- **Problem-Solving Skills:** Responding quickly and effectively to challenges.
- **Basic IT Skills:** Recording and managing information accurately.
- These skills allow the worker to provide both emotional and practical support while maintaining professionalism.

Evaluation of the skills needed for Family Support Worker in Healthcare

Three of the most important skills for a Family Support Worker are active listening and empathy, building trust, and communication with advocacy.

Active Listening and Empathy

Active listening and empathy are essential because they allow the worker to understand both the emotional and practical needs of families. Many families feel overwhelmed or judged, so it is important to listen without criticism. A Family Support Worker must provide calm and consistent support, especially in situations such as illness or bereavement. Without empathy, families may feel misunderstood and may not engage with the support provided.

Building Trust and Rapport

Trust is crucial in this role and must be developed over time through honesty and consistency. Families may feel intimidated or defensive, especially when involved with support services. If trust is not established, families may pretend to cooperate without making real changes. By being honest, transparent, and non-judgmental, Family Support Workers can build strong relationships that encourage families to open and accept help.

Communication and Advocacy Skills

Effective communication is essential for explaining information, discussing support plans, and working with other professionals. Family Support Workers also act as advocates, ensuring that families' voices are heard and that they receive appropriate care and services. Effective communication skills help families navigate complex systems such as healthcare and education, while advocacy empowers them to make informed decisions.

Crisis Intervention and Advocacy

Family Support Workers often support families in crisis, where strong decision-making and emotional control are essential. Key crisis intervention skills include:

- Remaining calm and managing stressful situations
- De-escalating conflict
- Assessing risks such as abuse or neglect
- Communicating clearly during emergencies
- Working with other professionals to provide support

Advocacy is also a key part of the role. Family Support Workers help families access services, attend meetings, and understand their rights. By supporting families in this way, they help build long-term independence and resilience.

Strategies to Improve the Skills for Family Support Worker.

There are several ways a Family Support Worker can improve their skills:

Practising Active Listening

Active listening involves fully focusing on the speaker and understanding their message. Workers can improve this skill by managing their emotions, paying attention to non-verbal communication, and reflecting on conversations.

A Family Support Worker If does not have these skills – will have difficulty carrying out their duties, because lack of empathy in a family support worker can lead to a loss of trust, poor engagement, and increased stress for the family.

Seeking Feedback and Reflection

Receiving feedback from colleagues and reflecting on performance can help identify strengths and areas for improvement.

For example, recording communication or reviewing casework can help improve professional practice.

Developing Communication Skills

Using empathetic language and adapting communication to different individuals can improve relationships.

Rather than solving problems for families, workers should guide them to make their own decisions. This helps build confidence and independence, leading to long-term positive outcomes.

Challenges in the Role

One of the biggest challenges for a Family Support Worker is maintaining professional boundaries. Because they work closely with families in personal settings, there is a risk of becoming too emotionally involved.

While empathy is essential, workers must remain professional and objective to identify safeguarding concerns and provide appropriate support. Balancing compassion with professional distance is a key skill in this role.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of a Family Support Worker is both important and complex. These professionals provide practical assistance, emotional support, and advocacy to families facing a wide range of challenges. By offering early intervention, they help prevent problems from becoming more serious and support families in achieving stability.

Family Support Workers not only help families during difficult times but also empower them to build resilience and improve their quality of life. Their work benefits both individuals and society by creating stronger, more stable communities.

Overall, this role is highly rewarding and aligns with my personal goal of helping others. In the future, I hope to pursue a career as a Family Support Worker and make a positive impact on families in need.

Reference List

Action for Children (2025) Our Impact Report 2024/25. Available at:
https://media.actionforchildren.org.uk/documents/ACT-0326_Impact_Report_2025_A5_36pp_DIGITAL_FINAL.pdf (Accessed: 27 March 2026).

Department for Education (DfE) (2023) Working together to safeguard children: a guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children. Available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> (Accessed: 27 March 2026).

Hammond, W. (2010) Principles of Strength-Based Practice. Resiliency Initiatives.

HM Government (2025) Supporting Families Programme Annual Report 2024 to 2025. Available at: www.gov.uk (Accessed: 27 March 2026).

Housley, W. (2017) *Interaction in multidisciplinary teams*. London: Routledge.