

Care Assistant in Adult Residential Care

Structured report for Academic and Employability Skills

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1 Introduction

This report discusses the profession of an adult residential care assistant and the reasons why three skills are necessary to practice safely and effectively. In Wales, social care encompasses practical and emotional support, personal care, medication help, and activities to maintain the people safe and well (Social Care Wales, 2026b). Care assistants are frontline employees, and hence the quality of their communication, relationship, and daily observation directly influences the dignity, comfort and independence of a person (Zarska, Avgar and Sterling, 2021). The topic of adult residential care is discussed due to the fact that there the roles of the care assistant in relation to the aspects of dignity, consistency and teamwork are especially evident.

2 Care assistant role in adult residential care

According to the guidance provided in the National Careers Service (2026), such jobs as a care assistant, day-to-day work, and assisting with washing, dressing and personal care, feeding and medication, promoting physical and social activity, reporting issues, and maintaining records are also referred to as a care worker. Skills for Care (2026a) additionally defines care workers as a part of assisting people with social and physical activities, appointments, personal care and monitoring the condition of an individual.

Residential care workers in Wales are part of an expanded social care workforce, and one of the abilities it has is to support people in expressing what is important to them, developing their strengths, and staying well (Social Care Wales, 2024). This implies that the position is not merely a completion of physical assignments. An effective care assistant should also consider every resident as a human being, collaborate with the other members of the work, and know the initial signs that the needs of a person might evolve. Small activities like using the preferred name of a person in a house setting, by adhering to the care plan and observing the variation in routines can greatly contribute to the outcomes.

3 Three essential skills

3.1 Communication

Communication is crucial as care assistants chat with residents, their relatives and workmates during all shifts (Reuter-Sandquist, Ernstmeier and Christman, 2022). Workers are expected to help people to articulate their views and choices and to communicate in a manner that is appropriate, open, clear and meaningful (Jian et al., 2025). Written or digital records also require communication; the

standards of the Care Certificate provide that communication may occur face to face, through the telephone, through reports and records, and through a digital system (Skills for Care, 2026b). As an example, in case a resident with hearing impairment is overwhelmed with feelings of anxiety about personal care, a care assistant must slow down and speak clearly, maintain eye contact and ensure that the individual has comprehended the next step. In the absence of effective communication, there is a possibility of misinterpretation of needs and a lack of trust.

3.2 Empathy and person-centred practice

Person-centred practice and empathy are also crucial, as care should be person-centred and not based on the service routine (Grilo et al., 2023). According to the Code of Professional Practice, the worker should be able to assist people in a person-centred manner, and they should respect their dignity, privacy and religion, beliefs and culture (Social Care Wales, 2026a). Empathy assists the workers in knowing what a person feels and experiences, and makes people feel secure enough to say what they truly believe. In the case of a care assistant, the skill influences such everyday choices as the way to promote personal care, which activities to promote, or the reaction to a refusal to help someone. A compassionate method saves face and provides the resident with additional voice and authority.

3.3 Observation and accurate record-keeping

A care assistant should be observant as well as record-keeping. Both the National Careers Service and Skills for Care emphasise that one of the responsibilities includes keeping track of a person and revising the care plans or records (National Careers Service, 2026; Social Care Wales, 2026a). This is important as care assistants are the ones who usually detect minor changes in appetite, mood, mobility or skin condition. According to the Social Care Wales (2025d) guidance on recording, the information must be current and documented since they assist the individual to get what they value having and can lead to better living. Poor records in residential care may impact continuity and safety, particularly where a number of workers have the same resident on different shifts.

4 Strategies to develop these skills

4.1 Induction, training and handover practice

The initial plan is to apply induction and ongoing training to enhance communication. According to the 'All Wales Induction Framework', new employees are expected to acquire the knowledge, understanding and practice necessary to occupy that position (Social Care Wales, 2025c). The

standards of the Care Certificate are also the knowledge, skills and behaviours of new workers in health and social care (Skills for Care, n.d). This learning, followed by practice of handovers, writing notes and active listening in a real situation, would enhance confidence and consistency. This would assist a care assistant in adjusting to the various communication requirements and minimise errors as a result of ambiguous or partial handovers.

4.2 Reflective supervision and feedback

The second plan is regular reflective supervision. According to Social Care Wales, supervision is a two-way process with an opportunity for workers to reflect on practice, receive feedback and identify personal development needs (Social Care Wales, 2025b). It is particularly useful in empathy and person-centred care since self-awareness, attitude and behaviour determine these abilities. Talking about challenging events with a supervisor could assist a care assistant to realise the presence of assumptions, consider how a resident might have been feeling and devise an improved approach in the future. This would eventually help in more respectful, thoughtful and individualised care.

4.3 Using care plans and same-shift note writing

The third plan is to utilise care plans better and to take notes during or right after care activities. It is purposeful to review the care plan to support a resident: the worker can understand the normal routines, risks, and preferences of the person; observations can be more accurate and easier to exchange when all the information is documented on the same shift. Social Care Wales underlines that the data regarding what is important to an individual can vary and must be communicated to other individuals who provide support (Social Care Wales, 2025a). This would enhance attention to detail, updated records, and make the wider team responsive to needed changes in a faster manner.

5 Conclusion

Finally, the position of the care assistant is real, interpersonal and very responsible. Personal care, assistance in everyday life, observation, reporting, and assisting people to preserve their dignity and independence are elements of the job (National Careers Service, 2026; Social Care Wales, 2026a). The communication, empathy with person-centred practice, and observation with precise record-keeping are vital as they have an impact on safety, trust, and quality of life. Such skills are possible to be acquired with the help of organised training, the reflective supervision and the disciplined use of the care plans and records. These strategies taken together would assist a care assistant in offering safer, more respectful and more effective care.

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