

Academic Employability and Skill Writing Report

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Module Code: LCHS4001

Module Name: Academic and Employability Skill

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Submission Date: 23 April 2026

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1. Introduction

The health and social care sector plays a fundamental role in supporting individuals who require assistance due to age, illness, disability, or other vulnerabilities. Within this sector, residential care homes provide essential long-term care services for individuals who are unable to live independently. Effective management in these settings is crucial to ensure that care is safe, person-centred, and of high quality. One of the key roles contributing to this objective is the Assistant Care Home Manager.

This report aims to critically explore the role of an Assistant Care Home Manager. It will first describe the nature of the role and its key responsibilities within a care home environment. It will then examine three essential skills required for effective performance in this role: communication, leadership, and organisational skills. For each skill, the report will analyse its importance and provide role-specific examples. Furthermore, the report will identify and evaluate three strategies for developing each skill. A critical discussion will also be included to demonstrate deeper analysis and understanding of the complexities involved in the role.

The report is supported by relevant academic and professional sources, using the Harvard referencing system, to ensure credibility and academic integrity.

2. Role Description: Assistant Care Home ManagerThe Assistant Care Home Manager is a senior position within residential care settings, responsible for supporting the overall management and operation of the care home. This role involves working closely with the Care Home Manager to ensure that the service operates efficiently, safely, and in compliance with legal and regulatory standards.According to Skills for Care (2023), management roles in the care sector are essential in ensuring that services meet quality standards and deliver person-centred care. The Assistant Manager plays a key role in translating organisational policies into practice, ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities and deliver care accordingly.This role is both administrative and practical in nature. On one hand, it involves managing documentation, staff schedules, and compliance requirements. On the other hand, it requires direct engagement with residents and staff, particularly in situations that require decision-making or problem-solving. Therefore, the Assistant Care Home Manager acts as a bridge between senior management and frontline staff.In addition, the role requires a strong understanding of ethical and professional standards. Assistant Managers must ensure that residents are treated with dignity, respect, and compassion, while also safeguarding their wellbeing. This highlights the complexity of the role, which demands both technical knowledge and interpersonal skills.

3. Duties and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of an Assistant Care Home Manager are wide-ranging and require a high level of competence and accountability. One of the primary duties is to support the Care Home Manager in overseeing the daily operations of the care home. This includes ensuring that staff are appropriately allocated and that all tasks are completed effectively.

Another key responsibility is supervising and supporting care staff. The Assistant Manager must ensure that staff are performing their duties correctly and following care plans. This may involve providing guidance, training, and feedback to improve staff performance.

Ensuring the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care is also a central responsibility. This involves regularly reviewing care plans to ensure they reflect the individual needs of residents. For example, a resident with dementia may require specialised communication approaches, which must be clearly communicated to staff (NHS, 2022).

In addition, the Assistant Manager is responsible for maintaining health and safety standards within the care home. This includes ensuring that policies are followed, risks are managed, and incidents are reported appropriately. Failure to meet these standards can have serious consequences for both residents and the organisation.

The role also involves handling complaints and resolving conflicts. This requires strong interpersonal skills and the ability to remain calm under pressure. For instance, if a family member raises concerns about the quality of care, the Assistant Manager must investigate the issue and provide a satisfactory resolution.

Finally, maintaining accurate records is a critical responsibility. Documentation is essential for monitoring care, ensuring continuity, and meeting legal requirements. The Care Quality Commission (2023) emphasises the importance of accurate record-keeping in maintaining care standards.

4. Essential Skills

4.1 Communication Skills

Communication is one of the most essential skills for an Assistant Care Home Manager. The role involves constant interaction with residents, staff, families, and external professionals. Effective communication ensures that information is conveyed clearly and accurately, reducing the risk of errors.

Good communication is particularly important in care planning. The Assistant Manager must ensure that staff understand residents' needs and follow care plans correctly. For example, if a resident requires specific medication at certain times, clear communication is necessary to avoid mistakes.

Research by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (2021) indicates that effective communication improves patient outcomes and enhances teamwork. This suggests that communication is not only important for individual performance but also for overall organisational effectiveness.

However, communication in care settings can be challenging. Residents may have communication difficulties due to conditions such as dementia or hearing impairment. Therefore, the Assistant Manager must adapt their communication style to meet individual needs.

4.2 Leadership Skills

Leadership is another critical skill required for this role. The Assistant Care Home Manager is responsible for guiding and supporting staff, ensuring that they perform their duties effectively.

Effective leadership involves motivating staff, resolving conflicts, and promoting a positive working environment. According to West et al. (2015), strong leadership in healthcare settings leads to improved staff satisfaction and better patient outcomes.

For example, during staff shortages or emergencies, the Assistant Manager must take control and ensure that care continues without disruption. This requires confidence, decision-making ability, and resilience.

Leadership also involves setting an example. By demonstrating professionalism and ethical behaviour, the Assistant Manager can influence the attitudes and performance of the team. This highlights the importance of role modelling in leadership.

4.3 Organisational Skills

Organisational skills are essential for managing the complex environment of a care home. The Assistant Manager must handle multiple tasks, including scheduling, documentation, and compliance.

Effective organisation ensures that tasks are completed efficiently and that resources are used effectively. For example, creating staff schedules ensures that there are enough workers available to meet residents' needs.

The Care Quality Commission (2023) states that well-organised care homes are more likely to provide safe and effective services. This suggests that organisational skills are directly linked to care quality.

However, poor organisation can lead to serious problems, such as missed tasks or incomplete records. Therefore, the Assistant Manager must be highly organised and able to prioritise tasks effectively.

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5. Strategies for Skill Development

5.1 Developing Communication Skills

One strategy for improving communication skills is attending professional training programmes. These programmes focus on areas such as active listening, clear speaking, and non-verbal communication.

Another important strategy is reflective practice. Schon (1983) suggests that reflecting on experiences allows individuals to learn from their actions and improve their performance. For example, after a difficult conversation, the Assistant Manager can reflect on what went well and what could be improved.

Seeking feedback is also valuable. Feedback from colleagues and residents provides insight into communication strengths and weaknesses. This allows continuous improvement.

Finally, practical experience is essential. Regular interaction with staff and residents helps develop communication skills over time.

5.2 Developing Leadership Skills

Leadership skills can be developed through mentoring and coaching. Working with experienced managers allows individuals to observe effective leadership behaviours and learn from them.

Training programmes focused on leadership development are also beneficial. These programmes provide knowledge and skills related to decision-making, conflict resolution, and team management (West et al., 2015).

Another strategy is gaining practical experience. Taking responsibility for tasks such as managing shifts or leading meetings helps build confidence and competence.

Self-reflection is also important in leadership development. By evaluating their performance, individuals can identify areas for improvement and develop more effective leadership strategies.

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5.3 Developing Organisational Skills

Organisational skills can be improved through time management techniques. For example, prioritising tasks and setting deadlines ensures that important responsibilities are completed efficiently (Covey, 1989).

Using digital tools and systems is another effective strategy. Care management software can help track schedules, tasks, and resident information.

Regular planning and reviewing of work processes also contribute to improved organisation. This allows the Assistant Manager to identify inefficiencies and make necessary improvements.

Maintaining a structured routine can further enhance organisational skills by reducing stress and improving productivity.

6. Critical Discussion

Although communication, leadership, and organisational skills are essential, it is important to recognise that these skills are interconnected. For instance, effective leadership relies heavily on strong communication skills, while organisational skills support both leadership and communication.

However, developing these skills can be challenging. Factors such as high workload, staff shortages, and emotional stress may limit opportunities for professional development. This suggests that organisational support is essential in helping individuals develop these skills.

Furthermore, the role of an Assistant Care Home Manager is constantly evolving due to changes in policies, regulations, and societal expectations. This requires continuous learning and adaptation.

Therefore, it can be argued that professional development should be an ongoing process rather than a one-time activity. This highlights the importance of lifelong learning in the health and social care sector.

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7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Assistant Care Home Manager plays a vital role in ensuring the delivery of high-quality care within residential settings. The role involves a wide range of responsibilities, including staff supervision, care planning, and maintaining regulatory standards.

Communication, leadership, and organisational skills are essential for effective performance in this role. These skills enable the Assistant Manager to manage staff, support residents, and ensure the smooth operation of the care home.

By applying strategies such as training, mentoring, reflective practice, and practical experience, individuals can develop these skills and enhance their professional competence. Ultimately, this contributes to improved care quality and better outcomes for residents.

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