

## Job Role for a Health Care Assistant

As a care worker, you have one of the most important jobs in the community today. In everything you do, you'll need to think about the care and support you provide from the service user's point of view, so that their rights and choices are always respected.

By helping service users to carry out everyday tasks you make a big difference to their lives. As a careworker you are:

- ◆ **Supporting people to live independently at home**, so they can continue to live in the way they wish. This helps to maintain their individuality, independence and self-esteem.
- ◆ **Enabling people to stay in familiar surroundings**, to take part in their usual activities and to be part of their community.
- ◆ **Helping to maintain their health and wellbeing** through the support you offer, and by recognising when people need specialist help or treatment from another professional.
- ◆ **Supporting people to make their own decisions** about day-to-day life, such as what to wear, buy or eat.
- ◆ **Providing social contact**. A friendly face and a chat can be important for everyone, especially those who live on their own.
- ◆ **Helping other carers** – such as service users' family members, to continue to care for their loved one.

Your work will be very rewarding, but it is complex and can sometimes be challenging. As well as common sense, kindness and good humour, you will need to develop a range of professional skills, knowledge and personal attributes. For example, you will:

- ◆ **Support people from different backgrounds, cultures and lifestyles**, so you will need to be open-minded, sensitive and non-judgemental. Your own beliefs or opinions must not affect the service you provide or the way you treat service users.
- ◆ **Support people with many different health issues**, so you will need to understand different conditions and how they affect people. You will also need to be able to spot any signs of ill-health or changes in a person's wellbeing and help them to get the necessary treatment or care by reporting concerns to your manager.
- ◆ **Help people to do things as much as possible for themselves** rather than doing things for them, so you'll need patience and understanding in order to avoid the temptation to 'take over'.
- ◆ **Help people to carry out intimate or personal tasks**, so you'll need tact, sensitivity and the ability to build a good relationship with people so that they feel comfortable with you. You also need to know the steps you can take to help maintain their privacy and dignity to avoid people feeling embarrassed.
- ◆ **Need to be conscientious and dependable**, so you must arrive as punctually as you can, and carry out tasks to the best of your ability.
- ◆ **Be faced with the unexpected**, so you'll need to know what to do in an emergency.