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# Case study

Although John started in the social care sector later in his career, he is delighted to have made the move from the hospitality industry and feels he's now found his niche. He has worked as a carer for four years at the Executive Care Group's Crystal Court Care Home in Harrogate. The care home offers nursing for elderly people that need general and dementia care.

## John Garrity

Carer, Executive Care Group  
Harrogate

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[www.skillsforcare.co.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.co.uk)

I care...

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## Background

Before John started in social care, he spent a number of years working in the hospitality industry including roles as a chef and a pub landlord. He had always enjoyed working with people and often found himself supporting his friends who had relatives with dementia or talking to his pub customers about their personal experiences of the care sector. He was always drawn to the idea of helping people. When he found himself unemployed, John took on a pre-employment training course in care, recommended by Jobcentre Plus, and soon realised that this was the career that he wanted to explore further.





## Career progression

At the age of 48, John feels that he has found a career where he can make a big difference, not only to the day to day lives of his service users, but to his own outlook on life.

Before starting his pathway into social care he was a friend of the Alzheimer's Society on a voluntary basis where he discovered care work. He worked directly with people who use the service and offered relief for their carers on a regular basis, enabling him to assess whether the role suited him and what he could offer. The two-week pre-employment course gave John a real flavour for what would be involved in social care and included learning about everything from moving and handling to the different care elements that he might get involved in. Shortly after the course, John had his first interview and got a carer role at the Executive Care Group in Harrogate. He hasn't looked back.

## A role in social care

John's role is primarily to support residents in the care home and manage everything from personal care and mental care issues to assisting nurses with medical care. He works as part of a team of three carers and a nurse.

There is no such thing as a typical day in John's role as he finds every day to be different when working in dementia. He can be doing anything from assisting residents with washing, dressing and feeding to organising activities like bingo, dominoes and days out or simply spending time with them, to help them reminisce.

John finds his carer role to be very satisfying.

There are also constant challenges, with every resident having different types of dementia and needs. John enjoys the variety in his role and has risen to every challenge. He feels that he is constantly learning on the job and always thinking on his feet.

**“I wish I'd got into the social care sector a lot sooner. I can really make a difference in this role. Just knowing that I can make people happier and more comfortable in their environment is the most satisfying part of my job.”**

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## Ongoing support

John has found the constant support from his employer, team and peer group to exceed all his expectations. His first role in the sector has given John a hunger to continuously develop and learn, so he has taken every opportunity to attend training courses and to work towards qualifications that will help him to progress in social care.

He has completed training courses that include moving and handling, nutrition and food hygiene, personal care and fire safety, as well as achieving a level 2 qualification in Health and Social Care. He will be attending an advanced dementia course and a diversity and discrimination course in the near future. This particular course will broaden John's skills to manage the different needs of residents from varying backgrounds and cultures.

“My next step is to work towards a level 3 qualification and I definitely want to specialise in dementia. In social care, there are plenty of avenues for you to consider for a long-term career.”

John has no hesitations in recommending a career in social care.

“There are so many different paths you can explore. For me, it's about improving the quality of someone's life and making that difference. I think it also helps you to develop your own personal skills away from work and show kindness to others. It's helped me to broaden my horizons and I've taken the plunge to take up photography and revisit my former love of dance.”

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