

INSPIRE THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

A Career Inspiration Series

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**WHAT COMPANY DO YOU WORK FOR? ANGUS HEALTH & SOCIAL
CARE PARTNERSHIP**

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE? SOCIAL CARE OFFICER (SCO)

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING THIS? 14 YEARS



Tells us more about your role?

*I am employed by Angus Council as a **Social Care Officer** at Rosehill Resource Centre in Montrose. I work as part of a team which provides day care support for adults with learning disabilities and our aim is to ensure that the men and women who attend Rosehill receive a service which is meaningful to them. We aim to support our service users to meet their needs and preferences in areas such as communication, sensory experiences, socialising, etc. and to participate in activities in their local community as well as centre-based activities. I have worked at Rosehill for 14 years and still enjoy going to work and supporting our service users.*

What else have you done before getting to where you are now?

*I studied Secretarial Studies with Languages at College, so originally this was never a career I had considered when I was younger. I worked as a secretary when I left college, which I did not really enjoy, although I was good at my job. I stopped work in 1992 before the birth of my first son and remained a stay at home mum for 14 years to bring up my sons. **Eventually I decided I would like to return to work and I undertook a course with the Open University - K100 An Introduction to Health & Social Care with a view to gaining an understanding of the subject and to gaining employment. Shortly after successfully completing the course, I noticed an advertisement for the post of Social Care Officer at Rosehill Resource Centre in Montrose.***

A JOINT PROJECT BROUGHT TO YOU BY

I almost didn't apply for the post as I did not think I would have a chance of being successful as I had no previous experience of working with adults with learning disabilities. However, I submitted my application and was over the moon when I was offered an interview. I did some research about Rosehill and went to the interview determined not to make a fool of myself and to learn from the experience. A few weeks later I was offered the post of Social Care Officer, working in what was then known as the Special Care Unit at Rosehill supporting adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) and I have never looked back.

What are the best aspects of your job?

When people ask me what I do for a living and I tell them I often get the response 'you must make a big difference to their lives' or something similar. I always reply 'no, they make a big difference to my life'. Sometimes we face great challenges in our service, but the rewards and achievements are great too. Some of the best moments at work come when we are sharing a joke with service users (because people with learning disabilities do have a sense of humour and I am often the source of their amusement). One of my most satisfying moments came when one of our service users participated in a storytelling group for the first time. That may not sound a big deal, but it had taken my colleague and I over a year to engage her in this group and our perseverance paid off and she now participates and takes her turn at choosing stories to be read in the group.

*I have mentored HNC students during their placement at Rosehill for several years now and it gives me a feeling of pride and achievement when they finish their placement and go on to further study or employment. I am also involved in preparation for autism accreditation for our service, which is a challenge I am enjoying. I have also recently been given the opportunity to mentor a modern apprentice who will be based at Rosehill. **There are many opportunities for staff to improve and develop their skills and knowledge and to take on additional roles, if they wish.** I also have regular supervision sessions and my annual appraisal with my Line Manager during which I can discuss any training I would like to undertake in order to improve my skills and knowledge.*



What are the key skills needed for your job?

*In this career it's important to be a **team player** as we all have different strengths and expertise which we all share to ensure everyone receives the best service we can provide. **Good listening and communication skills are important too** and you must respect people and be willing to support their rights as individuals. You must be aware of the need to **respect confidential information** regarding service users and their families/carers. There are lots of skills which can be learned on the job, including how to record information correctly in files, the use of equipment, methods of communication such as Makaton, etc. and there is always lots of training available.*

Do you have any advice for young people on how to choose the best career path for them?



If I could offer any advice about choosing a career, I would say don't be afraid to change your career path if you are not happy. I am much happier in my career now than I ever was as a secretary. It may seem easier just to stick with what you are doing, but job satisfaction and personal wellbeing are important.



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