



Department
of Health &
Social Care



Practice leaders

Guidance on jobs in adult social care in England



May 2025

This guidance is in Easy Read.

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Easy Read



This is the Easy Read booklet about practice leader jobs.

The full guidance which is not in Easy Read is on our website

www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-workforce-pathway-for-adult-social-care/practice-leader-role-category



This Easy Read booklet uses clear words and pictures.

People might still want help to read it.

Bold word



Some words are **bold**.

We tell you what the words in bold mean.



Some words are blue and underlined.

This means they are links to websites or email addresses.

You can click on these links on a computer.

Who we are



Department
of Health &
Social Care

We are the Department of Health and Social Care.

We are part of the UK government.

We help lead health and **adult social care** in the UK.



Adult social care means helping people who have disabilities or who are ill for a long time. For example, people with a

- Mental health illness



- Physical disability

- Learning disability



- **Autism**

Autism means someone's brain works differently so they might think or feel in ways that are different to most people.



- **Dementia**

Dementia is an illness that makes it hard for people to remember and do everyday things.

About this booklet



There are lots of different **roles** in adult social care in England.

A role is another word for a job.



We put these roles into different groups.

We call these groups **role categories**.



This booklet tells you about the **practice leader** role category.

What practice leaders do



Staff in this role category help people who need support to live their lives.

Practice leaders might help people with

- Personal care like washing or dressing
- Cooking and cleaning
- Supporting people to live on their own.



Staff can do this work in different places.

For example

- People's homes
- Care homes
- **Supported living** homes.

This is housing with support to live independently.



Staff in the practice leader role category have become an **expert** in an area of social care.

An **expert** is someone who knows a lot about something.



Practice leaders can do leadership training to get skills to teach other staff what they know.

They help other staff to give the best care to the people they support.

Values that practice leaders need



A **value** is an idea or belief that helps us make choices and do things.



In this role category it is important to have these values.

- Being kind and understanding.
- Seeing the **whole person**
This means not thinking of someone as just one thing, like being old.
- Showing people respect.
- Being brave.
- Being honest.
- Being proud of good work.
- Being flexible and happy to change.
- Being happy to learn new things.



Behaviours that practice leaders need



A **behaviour** is how someone acts or the way they do something.

Practice leaders should show these behaviours.



- Be professional at work.
- Work well with the staff team and the people they support.
- Talk to staff about their work and how they can give people better care.



- Lead **person-centred support**
This means making sure staff listen to what support people want or need.
- Make sure the people they support can live a good quality of life.



- Make sure staff have the skills they need to give good support.
- Be organised so people get the support they need when they need it.

Knowledge and skills for practice leaders



Knowledge means what someone needs to understand to do their job well.

Skills are how someone uses what they know to do their job well.



This part tells you what people need to understand to work in the practice leader role category.

They can do this by getting a Level 4 certificate.



Practice leaders must have all the knowledge and skills from the care and support worker role category.

And the supervisor and leader role category.



Practice leaders also need other knowledge and skills.

We tell you about these below.



Being a practice leader

Staff should understand what **practice leader** means.

Practice leader means they are an expert in an area of social care. For example, autism.



Support a good quality of life

Staff should understand what good quality of life means in their expert work.



Lead communication

Staff should understand

- What good communication is
 - How to keep information private
 - How to help people to communicate
- For example, using technology.



Lead inclusive work

Inclusive means being fair and not leaving people out.

Staff should understand

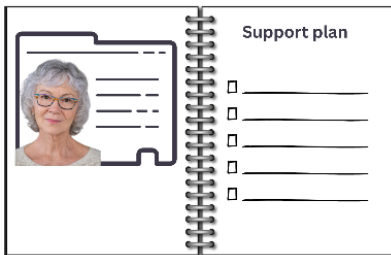
- What it is and why it is important
- How to be inclusive at work.



Lead health and safety

Staff should understand

- How to work safely
- Who does health and safety work
- How to support others to work safely.



Help write good support plans

Staff should understand

- How to make a good support plan
- How to use technology in plans
- How to check a plan is person-centred.



Be professional in their work

This means staff should understand

- Rules and ideas used in social care
- How to keep people safe
- What to do when people do not agree
- How to use the rules and ideas in work.



Keep learning and getting skills

Staff should understand how they can do research at work to learn more about their practice.



Lead training

Staff should understand

- Why training is important
- How to find out what their team needs
- How to plan training
- How to check what people learned.



Mentoring and coaching

This means supporting staff who have less experience to reach goals.

Staff should understand why this is important and how to do this well.



Lead staff supervision

This means making sure other staff are doing their job well.

Staff should understand

- How to give good supervision to staff
- Why good supervision is important
- How to spot signs of bad care work.



Check care work is good

Staff should understand

- What good care looks like
- What gets in the way of good care
- How to check that care is good.



Help make social care services better

Staff should understand

- Why making care better is important
- How to make care better
- How to check care and learn from mistakes.



Support new ideas in social care work

Staff should understand what **change management** is in adult social care.

Change management means supporting people through changes at work to make things better for everyone.



Lead advocacy in adult social care

Advocacy means standing up for people.

Staff should understand

- Rules about advocacy in social care
- How to help people to get advocates
- How to protect people using advocates
- How to help people get what they need.



Lead in information and guidance

Staff should understand

- Rules about information in social care
- Why good information is important
- How to help staff give information in a person-centred way.



Give trauma-informed care

This means understanding why people might get upset.

Staff should understand

- What this means in their care work
- How to give trauma-informed care
- How to help staff learn about this.



Lead healthy and safe working

Staff should understand

- How to help teams with mental health
- How to train other staff to be trainers
- How to check what staff have learned.

Ways staff can learn and get more skills



This section tells you about the training that practice leaders can do.

Staff can do training to get more job skills or change to another job in social care.

Autism and learning disabilities



Staff can do the Oliver McGowan training. This is training to understand more about learning disabilities and autism.

All staff should do Level 1 of this training.

Staff who work with people with learning disabilities or autism should do Level 2.



Dementia

This is an illness that makes it hard for people to remember things.

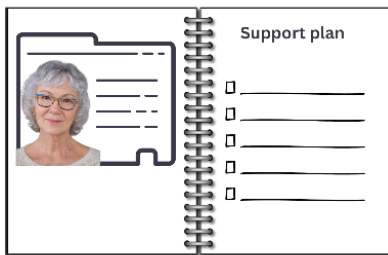
Staff can learn more about dementia.

Digital skills



Staff in this role category should have digital skills to go online or use a tablet or computer.

They can work towards certificates.



Positive Behaviour Support

This is a way to help people get new skills to make their lives better.

Staff can do this training to care for people with dementia or autism.



Skills in the workplace

Practice leaders might want to do more training for where they work.

For example

- End of life care
- Mental health
- **Trauma-informed care**

This means understanding why people might get upset.

- Drugs and alcohol
- More digital skills

- **Sensory impairments**

This means someone's senses do not work in the same way as most people. So they might be deaf, blind or visually impaired.



Kelly's story



Kelly works as a team leader in supported living for people with a learning disability.

She has worked there for 2 years.

She gets on really well with the people living there and their families.



Before she started work there she got a Care Certificate at another organisation. Kelly also did some other courses to help her learn about supporting people with learning disabilities.



Kelly loves learning and enjoys supporting other staff to do great work.

After talking to her boss about her future she decides she does not want to be a manager.



Instead, Kelly chooses to learn more about communication and become a practice leader.

She does another course and helps staff give the best support they can.

Find out more



For news about this guidance you can follow the Department for Health and Social Care on Facebook.

www.facebook.com/DHSCgovuk

If you have any questions you can contact



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