

Skills for Care - offer to the social care sector during COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 has created an extremely challenging time for the social care workforce. Skills for Care is working with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and has agreed a revised work programme for 2020/21, with a focus on COVID-19. Additionally, Skills for Care is sharing feedback to DHSC on the challenges the sector is facing, so this can be picked up in future guidance, where possible. This document provides an overview of Skills for Care's offer to the social care sector and our work with other sector-specific stakeholders. Our work is changing rapidly as new needs and requests emerge, and our eNews will provide details of any new additions to our offer.

1. Updated Skills for Care [website](#)

Our website has been updated with a focus on COVID-19; here, you will find information on the following:

- i. Essential training, delivered by Endorsed Providers and supported by WDF
- ii. Support for regulated professionals
- iii. A 'one stop shop' for key guidance from the government and other agencies in the fight against COVID-19
- iv. An opportunity for the sector to provide feedback on the challenges faced

We hope to add a section on our website based on themes, such as regional initiatives, employer guidance and population-specific guidance e.g. dementia, learning disability soon.

2. COVID-19 communication and engagement framework (internal working groups)

We have created a new framework, which consists of four new sub-programme working groups to respond to calls for resources, support and intelligence from the sector, focusing on the following areas:

- i. Sector-specific advice, guidance and resources
- ii. Informing and promoting our existing offer to the sector
- iii. Market and sector intelligence
- iv. Communication plan

3. Programme of support for registered managers

We have opened up our members' Facebook group to other registered managers, and front-line managers in similar roles. Registered Manager Networks can offer local support and are establishing WhatsApp groups to allow registered managers to stay in touch. More info is available [here](#), along with updates on an advice line Skills for Care is setting up.

4. Rapid induction for new staff and training for existing staff

This includes the Care Certificate (easier to use [Care Certificate self-assessment](#)), assisting and moving people, basic life support, fire safety, food safety, health & safety awareness, infection prevention & control, safeguarding (specifically around isolation) and medication. More info can be found [here](#).

5. Training for volunteers

This includes an introduction to adult social care, role & responsibilities, whistleblowing, equality, diversity and person-centred values, telephone support &

communication, pain & discomfort, infection prevention and control, food safety, fluids and hydration, health & safety and stress. More info can be found [here](#).

6. Return to Practice - nurses into social care

Our new dedicated [website](#) for registered nurses provides guidance and support for nurses who are looking to return to practice, in adult social care. We also have a dedicated [page](#) for registered nurses in social care, including the most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19. We are participating in NHS workforce cells on redeployment of nurses into social care.

7. Safe and rapid recruitment

Our new dedicated [website](#) on safe and rapid recruitment lists our guiding principles for employers of all sizes to address their additional workforce recruitment challenges; this page will be updated regularly.

8. Individual Employers (IE) and Personal Assistants (PA)

Our dedicated IE and PA [website](#) has been updated in response to COVID-19.

9. Ongoing support to managers and staff

Our support to managers and staff continues during the COVID-19 crisis. For example, we recently uploaded a series of [webinars](#) on infection prevention and control. This page will be updated regularly with recordings of forthcoming webinars with Public Health England, NHS England and NHS Improvement.

10. eNews and social media

We have increased the frequency of our eNews from fortnightly to weekly; here, we regularly signpost to support and resources from our existing offer and updated government guidance on key priority topics. We will continue to provide newsletters for specific workforce groups such as nurses, carers and social workers. We are also actively updating our social media accounts ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#)). If you don't receive eNews already, you can sign up for it and other newsletters [here](#).