Scottish Social Services Council

Care in Scotland it's life changing work

Louise Barclay, Support Worker

"Enabling an individual to live as full and independent life as possible is really rewarding"

Louise has worked in social services for 20 years. Read more about her role as Support Worker at Banff Supported Living Project (BSLP).

What's the role of your service?

We support people with learning disabilities to live as independently as possible within their own home. BSLP provides 24-hour care delivered by a team of support workers, like myself.

As a support worker what does your job entail?

My role is to assist people using our service with their personal care and support plans. I help them get up in the morning, have breakfast, organise the day's medication and get ready for the day ahead, whether that be at Banff Day Services, a home day activity or simply enjoying a day at BSLP. If they attend day services, it's my responsibility to help them onto the morning bus and greet them when they return from their day away.

Alternatively, the person may prefer to attend a home day activity such as a pottery class, horse riding, visit their parents, pop along to the bank or pick up their groceries. As a support worker it is my role to assist service users in all day care activities (which also includes activities in the evening, such as dances, club nights and many more).

On average, I work 25 hours a week although this can vary from week to week. Under the BSLP, I am responsible for three services users ranging in ages from 36 to 62 years old.

What are you working on at the moment?

Each service user has a tailored day care plan. With the responsibility of three service users, I am constantly updating each care plan to make sure selected activities best match the user's needs, abilities and wishes.

Activities range from music, touch screen computer classes and visits to the local rugby club to therapeutic sessions, trampolining, arts and crafts, walking groups, knitting and sewing to name a few.

Who else is in your team?

Relating to the work I carry out with BLSP, I have a manager and one assistant manager in my direct team. They oversee the work carried out by the social service care officer, myself and seven colleagues.

What part of your job motivates you and why?

To know that a technique or an idea that you have suggested has been implemented across the service and has proven to help service users live as independently as possible.

What challenges do you face in your job?	One of my biggest challenges is time management and prioritising what is important. For example, one of my service users has to rest 30 minutes after he has eaten before he travels. This is an additional factor that needs to be taken into account when planning the day's activities.
In what way is your career in social services rewarding?	Enabling an individual to live as full and independent life as possible is really rewarding.
What training and development opportunities have you undertaken in your current job?	I've recently carried out training on theory of calm, moving and handling, first aid, food hygiene, sensory awareness, epilepsy, medical management, eating, drinking and swallowing workshop, dementia awareness, SVQ Level 3, adult support and protection, key worker course, respect and diversity, data protection and partners in communication.
How do you see your career progressing?	The next step for me would be management, but I'm happy in my current role and enjoy the hours I work.
What would you say to someone thinking about a career in social services?	If you think you can enable in a positive way, then this is the job for you.

Is a career in care the career for you?

Try our interactive resource, **A question of care: a career for you** to see what a career in care is like. At the end you'll receive a detailed personal profile that tells you if you've got what it takes to join us!

You can hear from people already working in social care, early years or social work as they talk about why they love their job and what a difference they make to someone's life. And find out about the many different types of jobs and areas you can work in.

For more information on careers in social services visit sssc.uk.com

For more job profiles from across the social service sector visit ssscnews.uk.com