

Care in Scotland it's life changing work

Scott Mitchell, Social Care Officer

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Scott served in the Army before working in social care.

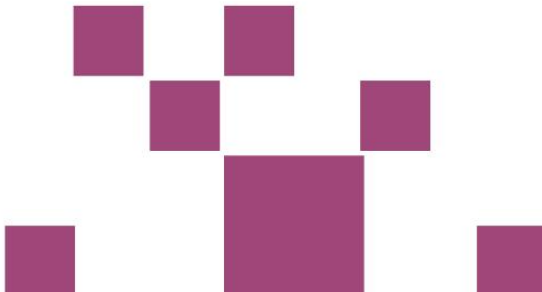
Tell us a bit about the service do you work in


I work in the Rapid Response Team at Perth and Kinross Council. Our main remit since launching in April 2011 has been to prevent unplanned, unnecessary or short admissions to hospitals or residential establishments. This has proved to be a very broad remit, encompassing most aspects of health and social care.

Keeping people at home under often challenging circumstances has highlighted the need for better integration between health and social care services, as it only works well when the services work well together.

Have you always worked in social services?

I only came into social care in 2008, before this I served in the Army.





What made you choose the career you have now?

The need to do something positive in society and try to make a positive change wherever I work.

Can you tell us more about your job?

We support all walks of life and every section of the community has been represented in the Rapid Response spreadsheets. We work a 12 hour shift pattern, service provision covers 24 hours a day, 356 days a year.

We support palliative clients to remain at home, and can arrange this at very short notice. We support social work out of hours with child protection issues. We support older people who experience urinary tract infections to remain at home until it has cleared, we support those experiencing the effects of substance misuse.

Crisis response work can be as interesting as it is varied.

What are you working on at the moment?

I have just completed an SVQ 3 in Healthcare and Social Services and I'm about to undertake a degree in Sociology with the Open University.

Who else is in your team?

Our team comprises of people with a wide range of experience, in line with our client base.


We have people who have worked in homecare, residential homes, education, learning disabilities and mental health/substance abuse.

Do you work with other professionals in other sectors?

We work very closely with doctors, nurses and mental health officers in our primary role of prevention of admissions.

What part of your job motivates you and why?

Meeting people and the human condition in all its forms.





What are the best bits about your job?

Seeing people recover from crisis situations and the sheer diversity of the work.

What are the challenges, good and not so good that you face in your job?

As the team is temporary, we are constantly striving to evidence our work as strongly as possible. This uncertainty can take its toll. I think any other challenge, on the client contact side, can only be good. As practitioners we need to be challenged regularly or we stagnate and become apathetic.

In what way is your career in social services rewarding?

Being in a position to aid in the provision of social justice in any shape or form, I find very rewarding indeed.

Can you explain the skills and qualities you think are needed to do the role you're doing?

Gerard Egan's three core conditions sum up some of them perfectly. Congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard.

You must be able to communicate effectively on many levels when dealing with such a broad client base. Recording and reporting skills will also go far, but I do not believe skills which can be learned easily are as important in social care as a person's natural qualities.

Has your job opened up new learning and development for you?

Without doubt. I only wish I had started my career in social care when I left school.

The only qualifications I have worth anything are my social care ones. My job allowed me to attain SVQ3 and be able to further my career, if I so wish.

How do you see your career progressing?

I would like to work as a social work assistant or community care assistant.

What would you say to someone thinking about a career in social services?

Just do it, you won't regret it.





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