

What is a support worker?

A support worker is someone who looks after the emotional and practical wellbeing of a vulnerable person in their care. This could include people living with different physical disabilities, those struggling to manage their mental health, or individuals living with serious medical conditions, for example.

What does a support worker do?

At StillCare the job of a support worker is tailored to the vulnerable person in their care, so the role can be incredibly varied. However, typical duties will include providing general assistance to people and helping them to live independently, improving their quality of life, encouraging and supporting personal development, and providing them with a positive and impactful presence.

It can be an incredibly rewarding position, although it can also be fairly demanding – both physically, and mentally. As a result, passion, adaptability, and resilience are critical candidate attributes for anyone looking to become a support worker at StillCare.

What to include in a support worker description?

Support worker duties will vary according to individual needs of the client. For example our clients will include young people, the elderly, those with varying disabilities.

- Meal preparation
- Personal care assistance
- Assistance with housework
- Providing support at medical appointments, and administering medication
- Teaching life skills such as managing finances, life administration, and shopping trips
- Providing access to community facilities and services
- Social trips and days out – meeting friends and family
- Help in finding and applying for jobs and work experience
- Anteral feeding management including PEG feeding, NG/NJ feeding
- Bowel management
- Continence management

- Seizure management
- Apnoea management
- Laundry assistance

What day-to-day duties and responsibilities does a support worker have?

As a personable, hands-on role, a support worker should expect to provide emotional and practical help daily. Whether it's working within someone's home, or within a care home environment. However, the specific needs will often vary throughout the day, and may change at a moment's notice – so support workers will need to be fairly adaptable.

Wherever they are working, a support worker's daily duties and responsibilities may typically include:

- Meal preparation
 - Personal care assistance
 - Assistance with housework
 - Providing support at medical appointments, and administering medication
 - Teaching life skills such as managing finances, life administration, and shopping trips
 - Providing access to community facilities and services
 - Social trips and days out – meeting friends and family
 - Help in finding and applying for jobs and work experience
 - Mentoring and emotional support – for the individual and their families
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- Anteral feeding management including PEG feeding, NG/NJ feeding
 - Bowel management
 - Continence management
 - Seizure management
 - Apnoea management
 - Laundry assistance
 - Hydration monitoring
 - Nutrition monitoring

How much experience does a support worker need to have?

There are different types of support workers, including family support workers, community and mental health support– enabling everyone from young people through to the elderly to live fulfilling lives.

At StillCare experience isn't always necessary, however candidates will naturally stand out if they have previously worked within the health and care sector, SEN schools, or completed volunteer work or a work placement within care. By doing so, support workers also demonstrate that they have experienced, to some extent, the challenging nature of the role and have done their research into finding out if support work is the right career for them. In addition, paid work experience from care assistant roles and other healthcare and specialist education sectors are very useful to gain relevant experience

Ultimately, a candidate needs to demonstrate that they can help people with a diverse range of issues and needs and maintain support while doing so. This experience may also come across in transferable skills, with resilience shown in other high-stress roles, empathy and compassion demonstrated in caring for relatives.

What education, qualifications, and training does a support worker need?

Qualifications and further education relevant to support work include NVQs, Diplomas, and apprenticeship programmes in Health & Care.

On-the-job training will usually also be provided for candidates that may not have previous experiences or need refreshing and those with no qualification background.

Support work is, however, as much about personality, caring and mentoring as it is planning, and so a focus on soft skills and personality is a must.

Essential competencies and personality traits for a support workers should include:

- A passion for helping people
- Patience and level-headedness
- Punctuality and organisational skills
- Enthusiasm

- A calm and caring nature
- Empathy and understanding
- Emotional resilience, no matter the situation
- Confidence and the ability to instil confidence
- Kindness and compassion

What's the right salary range to include in a support worker job description?

Support worker salaries will depend on a number of different variables – whether they work in the public or private sector, for example, level of qualification, seniority, etc.

Based on the above the premium hourly rate will be £10.75/hr – 12.00/hr

In addition to the above rate, we offer access to high quality training and support to make sure you are comfortable and confident in your role, access to further learning search as care certificate, complex care and NVQ.

We provide full PPE to ensure your safety at work.

We listen, value and appreciate everything you do.

Do support worker job descriptions vary?

Support work is such a varied role that no two days are the same. That said, there are differences in who the support worker will be caring for and working with – a mental health support worker job description will have different requirements to a family support worker job description, for example.

So aside from any hierarchical differences, it will come down to tailoring it for the individual or team – maternity, SEN, community, family, and mental health, for example. However, the common denominators will be shift patterns, general expectations of a care practitioner, and the non-negotiables of the legal and regulatory conditions they must meet and abide by.

Ultimately, the job description for a support worker needs to tell a story of compassion, tenacity and drive to help a person in their care to thrive, not just survive. Salary will not be the main driver here; instead, a calling and desire to help another person and the reward comes by celebrating their progress and success – which is a very privileged position to be in.