

Bild & VPA survey regarding Social Care Knowledge & Skills Framework

Background

The Adult Social Care Reform White Paper (published in December 2021) sets out the DHSC commitment to social care workforce having high quality training, qualifications, and professional development to ensure social care workers can become experts in their field and ensure best practice in meeting the needs of the people they support. In addition, the paper highlights the commitment to ensuring career progression opportunities and addressing skills gaps through a 'Knowledge & Skills Framework' that will ensure career progression pathway is linked to learning and development including apprenticeships and qualifications (eg diplomas).

In September Bild and the Health and Wellbeing Alliance hosted a webinar regarding the Social Care Knowledge and Skills Framework. The webinar was attended by over 70 people across the sector. The recording can be found at: <https://bit.ly/BildKSFWebinar2709>

Bild and the Health and Wellbeing Alliance then conducted a follow up survey to gain the views of the sector to inform the KSF. Over three-quarters of people who took part in both the webinar and survey were from social care providers and employers. Other contributors included VCSE, Health and Wellbeing Alliance, Care Quality Commission and local authorities. The survey results are summarised below.

Summary of findings

97% of participants thought that social care staff would benefit from training that specialises in the populations they work with (eg people with dementia or people with learning disabilities).

At least 86% of people supported each of the following specialisms:

- Learning disability
- Dementia
- Mental health
- Drug and alcohol
- Autism
- End of life care
- Visual and hearing impairments

At least 80% of people thought that Active enabling support was important for people with:

- Learning disabilities
- Mental health conditions
- Autism
- Dementia

However, people also highlighted it may not be as helpful for palliative care.

95% of people thought the Practice Leadership should be part of the new Social Care Knowledge and Skills Framework. 83% of people thought that staff who want to become practice leaders should have a relevant qualification. 91% thought Practice Leaders should be paid more.

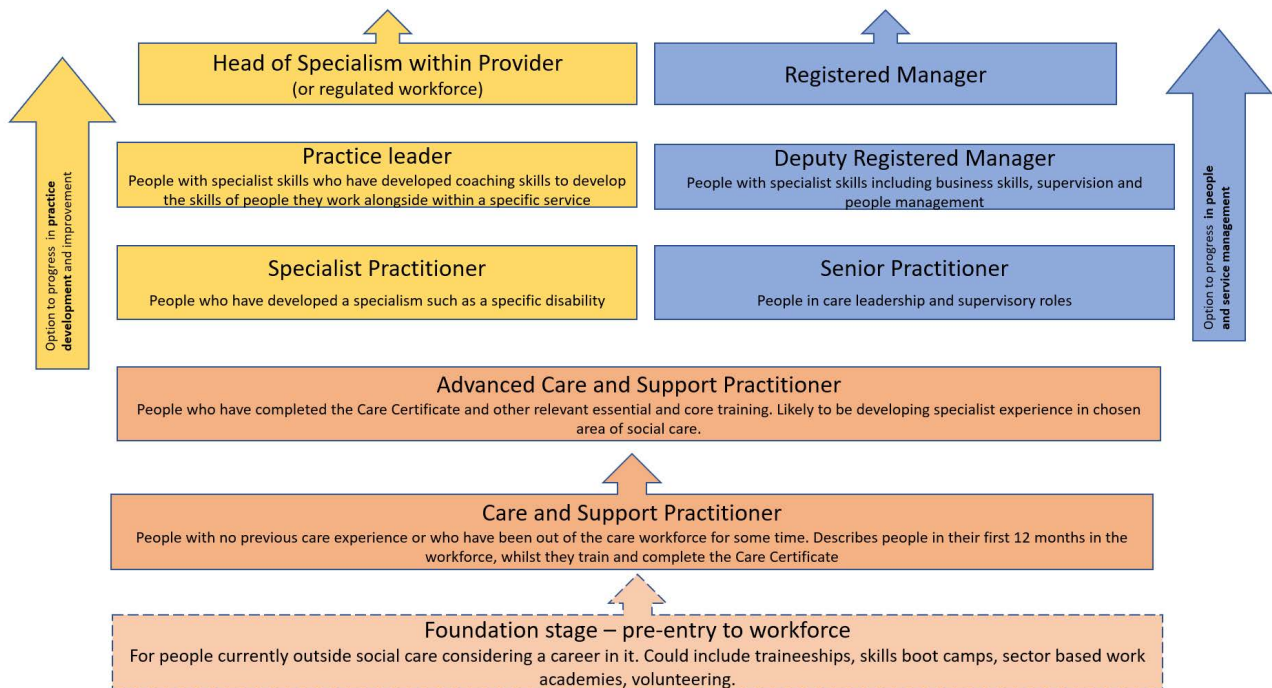
Everyone agreed that there should be clear career progression pathway and clear qualification pathways in social care. This is 'absolutely paramount in attracting

graduates/retain people through opportunities to progress and specialise'. 97% supported specialist diplomas and apprenticeships. This is 'essential as people are supporting different populations so require different skills.'

Key Recommendations:

The Social Care Knowledge and Skills Framework must include:

- Specialisms linked to key populations
- Active support
- Practice leadership
- Career and qualifications progression pathway that reflects above

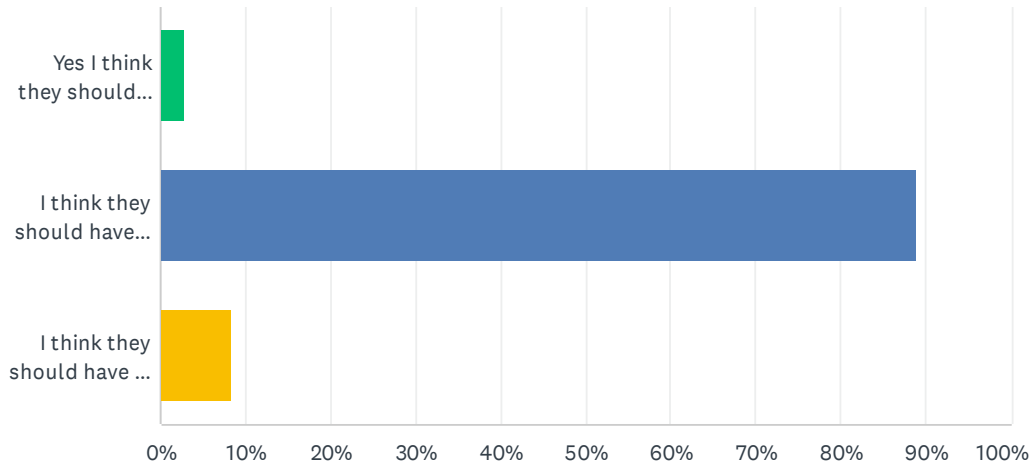


Detailed results

Please see below for detailed results of the survey.

Social Care Knowledge & Skills Framework Survey

Q1 Do you think all social care staff should have the same training whatever population or setting they work in?
 (For example learning disabilities, older people, mental health, drugs and alcohol)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes I think they should have the same training	2.78%
I think they should have some training that is the same and some training that relates to the population or setting they work in	88.89%
I think they should have all specialist training	8.33%

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

there is some generic information needed by all and then specialist training that you need depending on where you work

Because the needs of people we support are so diverse and in depth knowledge is required to work with specific populations

I think it gives a basic foundation it also means that people can change their specialists during there career

It is important that all social care staff have strong core knowledge and training and then the opportunity to build more specialist skills and expertise to support specific population needs in the settings that they work in.

To ensure we are able to meet the unique needs of every person supported

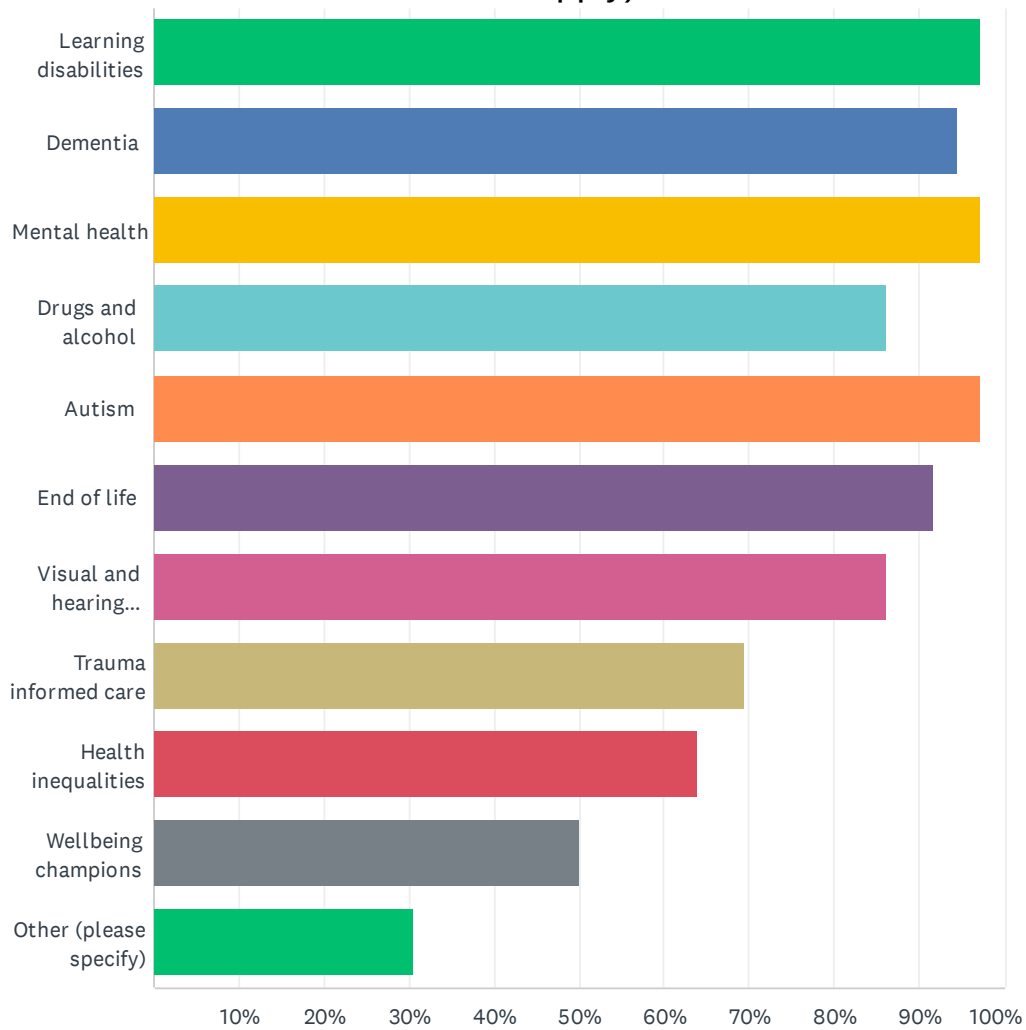
They are supporting very different populations with very different needs. Social care is not one size fits all.

It's important to have a bases in skills across the profession as they will be transferable, but I think specialist training allows for further specialism, pathways and attention particular to the needs of the group they work with

Some knowledge and skills will be applicable to care, but some skills and best practices will apply to the needs of specific populations.

Supporting people should person centred so you need to develop skills with different client groups, settings etc

Q2 What specialisms do you think should be recognised in social care? (tick all that apply)



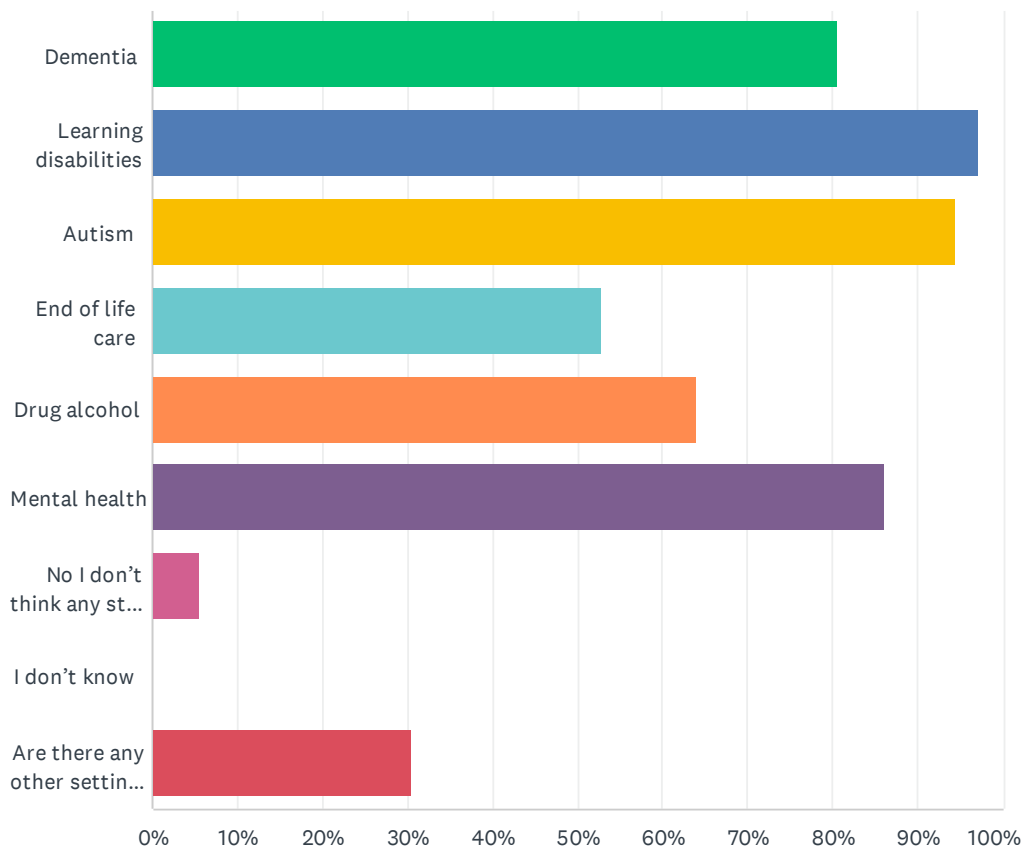
Social Care Knowledge & Skills Framework Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Learning disabilities	97.22%
Dementia	94.44%
Mental health	97.22%
Drugs and alcohol	86.11%
Autism	97.22%
End of life	91.67%
Visual and hearing impairments	86.11%
Trauma informed care	69.44%
Health inequalities	63.89%
Wellbeing champions	50.00%
Other (please specify)	30.56%

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	
I think frailty and growing older should be grouped with dementia.	

Q3 This question is about Active Support. Active support aims to change social care support from caring for which can be disabling to supporting and working with which can be more enabling. It can help maximise people’s independence and help people to lead good ordinary lives.

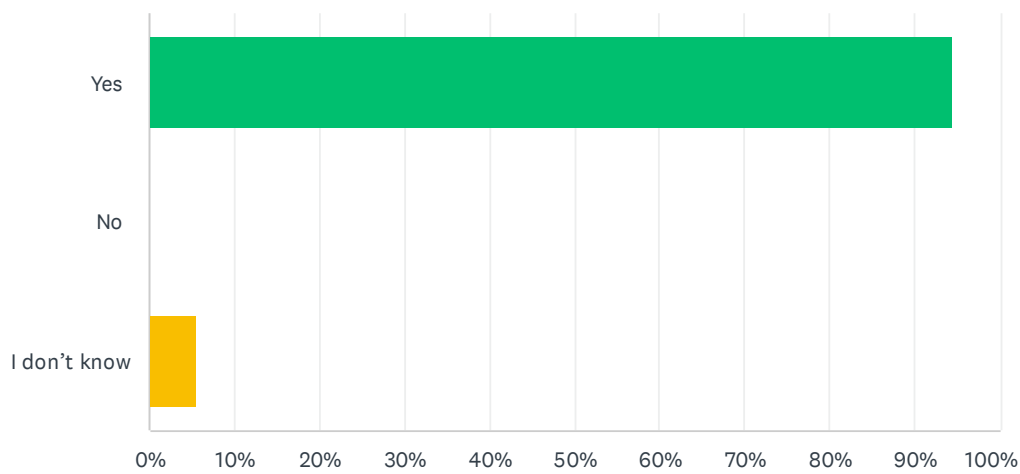
Which of these settings do you think staff and ultimately people they support would benefit in training in active support? (Tick all that apply)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Dementia	80.56%
Learning disabilities	97.22%
Autism	94.44%
End of life care	52.78%
Drug alcohol	63.89%
Mental health	86.11%
No I don't think any staff should be trained in active support	5.56%
I don't know	0.00%
Are there any other settings in which you think staff should have training in Active Support (please specify).	30.56%

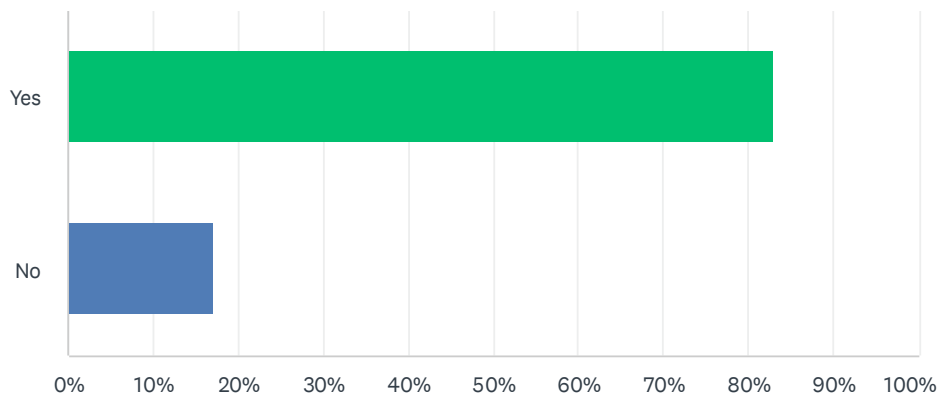
Q4 This question is about Practice Leadership. Practice Leaders are staff who are good at the job and they work alongside others to show them how to do a good job. They share their expertise through modelling and coaching. There is strong evidence that practice leadership is the most effective way to improve practice and apply learning. In addition Practice leadership provides carer progression. For more information on practice leadership see our infographic here.

Do you think practice leadership should be included in the new Social Care Knowledge & Skills Framework?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	94.44%
No	0.00%
I don't know	5.56%

Q5 Do you think staff who want to become practice leaders should have a qualification?



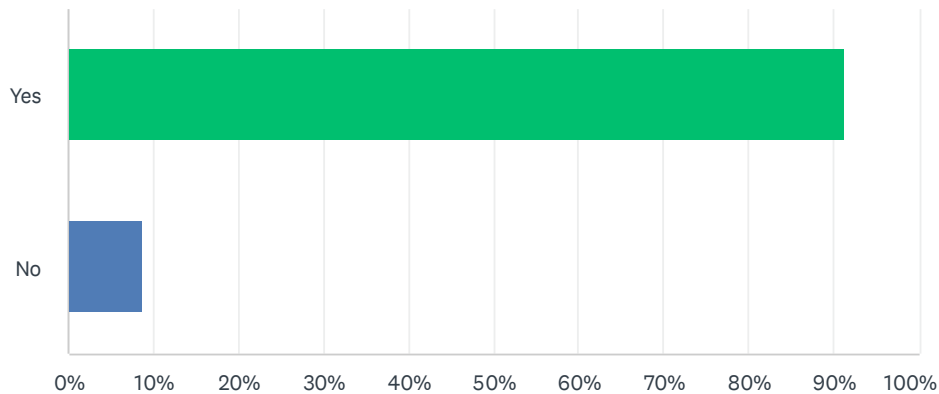
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	82.86%
No	17.14%

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

There should be evidence of knowledge before becoming a practice leader to ensure that practice is correct - the role of practice leader could be the next step on a career pathway for staff and could encourage retention and people being valued

it is a skilled role and recognition of this would help value the skills and training staff have undertaken. It should be part of a career pathway in social care

Q6 Do you think staff who are practice leaders should be paid more?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	91.18%
No	8.82%

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

People should be rewarded for the work they do. This role could fill the gap between support staff and management enabling a better career pathway

it is a skilled role and recognition of this would help value the skills and training staff have undertaken

this is a skilled role which needs to be recongised and valued

They are the Key to quality and proper implementation-- and this would be cost effective

To recognise their further experience and their responsibility in coaching and supporting others

This can support motivation but also recognises that this is a safety critical workforce supporting vulnerable people and how best to support complex needs.

If they are given extra responsibility above and beyond a support worker role then yes as this recognises their value within their role and provides a role for support workers to aspire to work towards in their own development.

For them to take the additional responsibility and put it into practice, by creating a pathway linked to salary shows value for the team members commitment and role

It is carer progression. If they are the experts why should they be paid thee same as those they are coaching? we need to value their expertise. This will help with retention.

It is the key to raising the standards of care/enablement across the sector, it is a skill and a huge responsibility to coach and invest time, it is an addition to 'just doing the job' and involves some management of people - supervising and progressing others. It will support people to fee valued in their roles and happier in their work.

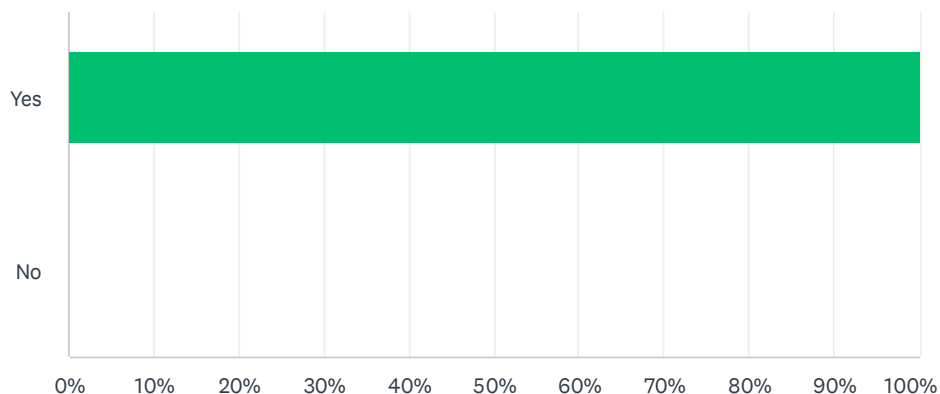
They are taking responsibility for coaching, working with and developing other staff

AS they are supervising and teaching ,therefore have more responsibility

To recognise and reward their skills as would happen in other areas of work. Why wouldn't skills be recognised? We need to be proud and value the level of skill effective care staff have

If you are looking at PLs as an example of setting high standards which will bring through other staff members, I also think they should be invested in both qualification and salary wise.

Q7 Do you think there should be a clear career progression in social care like there is in health and education?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00%
No	0.00%

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

to make it into a credible and desirable career..not one that people get experience in so they can go into NHS or other careers

Highlight the profession and encourage retention

Valuing staff and social care as a profession. Clear pay structure matched with skills and roles is needed as there is disparity.

will aid recruitment and turnover and give more value to the role

the social care workforce is vast and multi skilled. the social care workforce has long been undervalued for the skills required to provide effective, person centred social care and social care impacts significantly on peoples life and health outcomes and experiences even more holistically than Healthcare

this will be important to increase the value of social care careers and provide a pathway which enables people to develop these vital skills

It would help improve quality and staff retention

Despite the transformative role of social care, the care workforce suffers from a lack of parity in esteem with the NHS workforce. Steps to professionalise the workforce – including the introduction of clear career progression – would help to bring social care closer to parity of esteem with the NHS. It would also help to improve recruitment and retention in the sector. Sense finds that the lack of career advancement opportunities in the sector a career in the social care sector a less competitive option than a career in the NHS or even in unrelated sectors like retail and hospitality. The introduction of clear career progression, along with opportunities for continuing professional development and gateways into more senior roles, would therefore make a career in social care a more attractive option.

The current crisis in recruitment and retention, is in part driven by a lack of obvious career pathways and development for individuals working in social care. A clear pathway for career progression in social care would encourage individuals to join and stay in our sector. It would serve to illustrate the professional nature of work in social care, and overall drive up quality and improved outcomes for the Individuals we support.

Absolutely paramount in attracting graduates/retain people through opportunities to progress and specialise

Absolutely. This is a safety critical workforce and progression opportunities would value the skills and expertise needed. This would also place more value on a career in social care

Social Care Knowledge & Skills Framework Survey

Yes I think this would support staff retention and reduce staff turnover, often there is no progression for staff to aspire towards or if there is there is no good quality training which means that staff have the skills they need to become leaders. In my experience within an adult residential service support workers become team leaders, deputy care managers and care managers but the training provided to them is limited and their knowledge of person-centred care and support, positive behaviour support and practice leadership is poor usually because they advance into roles that others have left with no good quality mentorship to support them to develop.

To value the profession and address retention challenges.

retain skilled staff, motivate people to work well, people feel valued and not disposable

People should see care as a career for life and a profession, with opportunities to progress and continue to learn and develop in the way that some nurses and social workers do.

To enable career progression and make the social care industry more attractive to any new comers

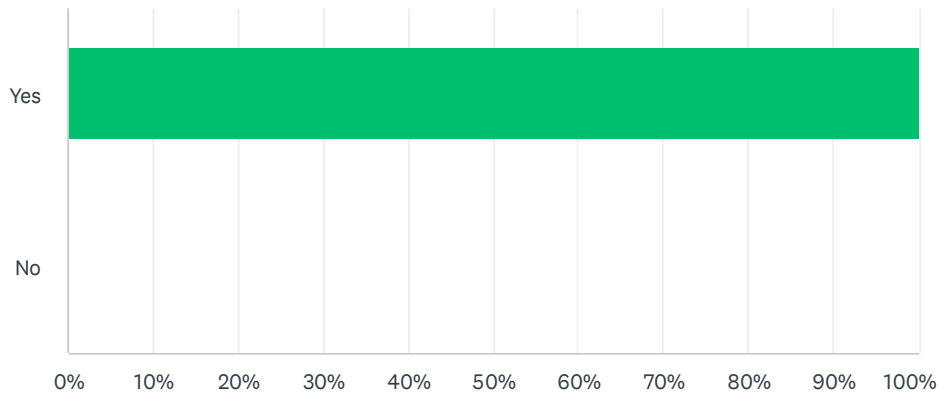
I believe that social care workforce value career progression, not necessarily into management and leadership role however, there is a percentage who like to continue to work directly with people they support and do not want to give that up for M&L roles and who would appreciate recognition for being skilled specialists

It could be part of the answer in raising the profile of care work as a career aa well as a job.

to help with retention and improve motivation

Helps to retain staff when they have a clear progression and to allow them to know what they need to work towards.

Q8 Do you think there should be a clear qualification pathway in social care like there is in health?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00%
No	0.00%

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

the social care workforce is vast and multi skilled. the social care workforce has long been undervalued for the skills required to provide effective, person centred social care and social care impacts significantly on peoples life and health outcomes and experiences even more holistically than Healthcare

Caring is a skilled profession, and more experienced care workers are often more skilled. Yet, as things stand, there not even standardised training across the social care sector, let alone opportunities for the development of key skills. At Sense services, we find that very few staff have the Care Certificate when they begin working for us. And as the Care Certificate is very basic, we supplement it with around 3.5 days of additional training. The introduction of a clear qualification pathway would help ensure that all care workers have the skills they need to deliver quality care. It would also be likely to improve recruitment and retention, as we often that the lack of opportunities for career progression is key reason why people leave the sector or do not take up a role in the sector in the first place.

It would help with the professionalisation of the sector, eg, currently there is no definition for what a 'senior carer' is. A qualification pathway may also attract more people into social care, create more parity with health and opportunities to step over into a career to health -and vice-versa and hopefully creating more integration between the two.

I think this would attract more people to work in social care and would support staff retention.

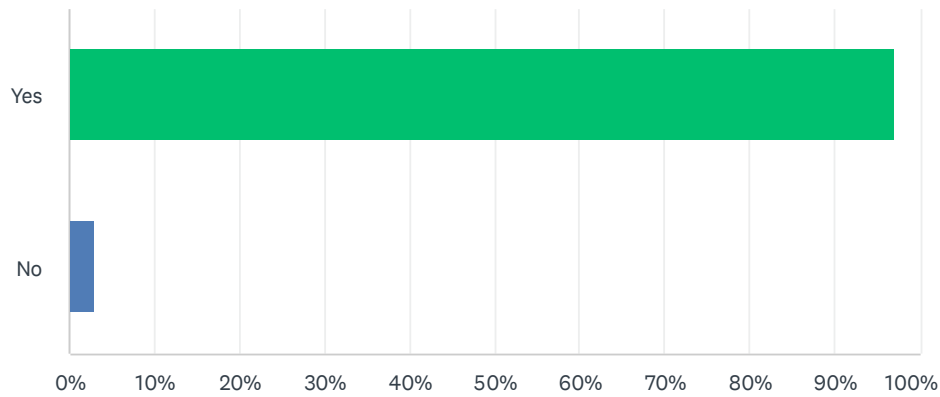
The role is clearly very specialised and a clear career pathway will add value and recognition for the person

Qualification pathways are important and social care is just as important as health

Yes - should be parity with the NHS, social care and NHS should be on equal footing, not one seen as more valued/esteemed than the other.

The QCF in Wales is a good starting point but there needs to be clearer pathways for those who don't want to be managers

Q9 Do you think specialist apprenticeships are a good idea?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	97.06%
No	2.94%

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

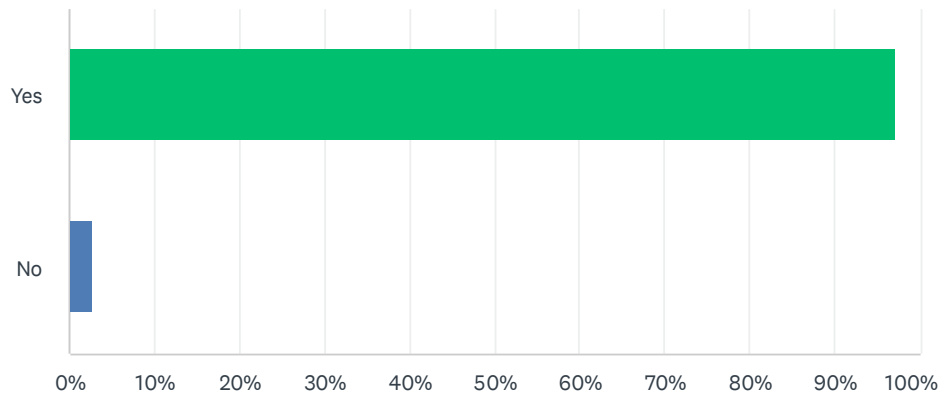
Professionalising the care workforce should be one of the goals of any workforce reforms. Specialist apprenticeships could play a role in this by giving apprentices the skills they need to pursue a career in social care, as well as give them an opportunity to gain supervised experience of the a range of social care settings.

Yes I think this would attract more people to social care especially younger people and then if there was a clear progression path this would support people to maintain careers within social care.

Essential as people are supporting different populations so require different skills.

Developing specialist areas of community knowledge is the key to preventing unnecessary hospital admission's,

Q10 Do you think specialist diplomas are a good idea?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	97.14%
No	2.86%

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

- There is an increasing need for specialist knowledge and skills in social care
- Because quality care depends on good knowledge and understanding of the needs of specific groups of people and to ensure support is based on good practice and evidence based
- Similarly to the answer given above, we would support any measure that would help to professionalise the workforce and standardise training across the sector.
- This would link in to the career pathway and having specialised knowledge for certain areas of care and support
- Essential as people are supporting different populations so require different skills.

Comment from the Department for Health and Social Care

We set out our 10-year vision for the adult social care workforce in our White Paper, 'People at the Heart of Care' which was published in December 2021. This included the commitment to work with our adult social care colleagues, including employers, the workforce and people who draw on care and support, to co-develop a universal framework setting out the knowledge and skills needed to work in adult social care and a clear career structure for the workforce. We also committed to exploring options to embed the framework consistently across the sector so that it becomes a recognised tool for describing all adult social care roles.

The Adult Social Care Workforce Competency Framework will define the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and values at each level of the workforce across all adult social care settings, setting out career pathway and progression routes to and from adult social care. It will distinguish between the different levels of expertise that someone entering the workforce for the first time should expect to have and develop, compared with an experienced member of the workforce who has developed specialist skills and knowledge.

The framework will reflect the breadth and diversity of the social care sector and its contribution to enabling those who draw on care to live with greater choice, control and independence.

We have published a call for evidence to seek views on the framework, including what it should include, how it should be structured and how we can support people working in care and social care employers to use it. Your views will shape the development of the framework, the first part of which we plan to publish in autumn 2023.