



South East Region

East Kent Pre-Employment Programme

Background

We set up a pre-employment programme to run for 3 weeks aimed at recruiting local unemployed people in East Kent who were considering employment in social care. The programme included giving candidates a level 1 qualification and opportunities for work placements in 5 different social care settings.

What they did

The project was a partnership between Skills for Care, Kent County Council, Pre-employment Manager at Health Education England, Kent, Surry and Sussex, (HEE KSS) and 5 Social Care employers.

The 5 Social Care employers were a nursing home (Older People), Residential home (Dementia), Learning Disabilities services (Residential and Support living), Domiciling Home Care (Older and Physical Disabilities) and a Childrens' home.

We held initial information sessions at Dover and Folkestone Job Centre Plus (JCP) where prospective candidates found out more about the programme to decide if was right for them.

Following this we held a taster day at Folkestone JCP where interested candidates found out about more about the course and the opportunities available in the sector.

The 5 Social Care employers did a presentation on their organisations and the training provider did a presentation on the level 1 introduction to health & social care qualification that candidates would achieve as part of the programme.

All interested candidates took part in an informal values based interview.

Candidates then completed a 3 week programme where they had 10 days of work placements in the 5 different Social Care settings and achieved the level 1 Qualification.

At the end of the programme candidates indicated which Social Care employers they would like to work for and were offered jobs

What they achieved

We had 13 people that attended the Taster day (out of 24 people who had originally expressed interest). The presentations that the Social Care employers did were very inspiring and following the value based recruitment interviews 12 people were offered to take part in the pilot.

11 people completed the programme. 10 gained the level 1 introduction to health & social care. All 11 had opportunities to have a 1 or 2 day placement in each social care setting (10 days in total). This gave the candidates an opportunity try various types of social care and to find out which type suited them. At the end of the 3 weeks the candidates indicated which social care employer they felt suited them. The Social Care employers offered jobs to the individuals who had indicated them wanted to work for them and they felt were right for their organisation.

In total 6 candidates have taken up roles (2 are currently waiting for pre-employment checks) in all 5 Social Care settings.

Lessons Learnt

We were disappointed that 46% of the people who originally had expressed interest in the project in the information sessions didn't attend the taster day. It's difficult to speculate why this is but in the future we would consider not having information sessions. Instead we will hold 2 taster days and have them as open events as an initial expression of interest. We feel that people who may not have considered Social Care would find the presentations from the Social Care employers inspiring.

The Social Care employers indicated that many of the candidates needed more employability skills so this will be built into future level 1 training.

Future programmes will also have more support at the end of the programme. We are aware that 5 people took part of the programme and were not offered jobs and we want to ensure that any additional support is provided if needed. 100% of the candidates indicated in the end of programme survey that they agreed or strongly agreed that 'This course has given me the skills and knowledge I need to gain employment in the care sector' so we feel that additional support particularly in employability skills would support them to gain employment.

What is next?

We are planning on having another programme in the same area with the same Social Care employers in early 2019. We will be making changes to the taster day format. We will use another training provider so that the training includes employability skills and additional support is provided at the end of the programme. We also have plans to run the programme in 2 other areas in Kent in the spring of 2019.

For more information please see below:

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