

Who is a carer?

The people who make the best carers are those who are interested in the wellbeing and welfare of vulnerable individuals. Being a professional carer is more than a job for which you simply possess a certain set of skills, it is a way of life. Caring for someone can be extremely fulfilling, however, at moments it can also be physically and emotionally demanding.

Here are some of the most important traits to look for in a carer:

Compassion

Compassion is a gift that all great carers possess. Being able to not only sympathise but empathise with a client and their needs, worries, and struggles is paramount. As mentioned, carers must have a genuine interest in the wellbeing of a client to provide top quality care.

Communication

Communication is key to being a fantastic carer. Positive communication and building a rapport with clients is crucial. Positive communication includes but is not limited to:

- Positive body language
- Good eye contact
- Communicating confidently
- Understanding what medium of communication works for each client

Also working to build a positive relationship with clients, nurturing that relationship and spotting the signs if something is not quite as it should be, are also key to success.

Empathy

Empathy connects the carer to the client. It is the basis of understanding what a client is going through and being able to deliver what they need. The ability to understand a client by putting yourself in their shoes and seeing things from their perspective will help foster the respect a client-carer relationship needs.



Carers Guide

Commitment

Commitment is central to the continuity of care for clients and, occasionally, means going the extra mile to ensure that clients are happy. Elderly people need someone they can count on for support, therefore, being committed and consistent is key to being a great carer.

Person Centered Approach

Person centered care is fundamental to being a great carer. Each client will have different needs and a unique personality, being able to cater to both is an art carers must learn. A person centered approach is based in promoting client independence. This means that carers must be able to encourage a positive, risk-taking attitude in clients to allow them to lead as full a life as possible.

Demands Of Caring

Caring is physically demanding due to the fact that carers become clients' support systems and, in many cases, facilitate each part of a client's life. From moving and handling, to delivering personal care and helping with housework, the list of a carer's responsibilities is endless.

We often talk about 'professional boundaries', 'switching off' and 'not taking your job home when your day is finished'. For carers, it is not that simple. The emotional demands associated with caring can make the job emotionally draining. However, the nature of caring for an individual who truly needs and values you, also makes the profession emotionally satisfying.

The aim of a carer should not be to take over a client's life but instead to encourage and support a client in their daily routine, and potentially, increase their independence.