



Putting the care in career

→ By **Isobel Moran**

It's no secret that working in care is one of the most rewarding, yet at times, challenging careers that anyone can have. It comes with a responsibility to care for our most vulnerable in society and to help maximize their quality of life. This is why working in care requires a special type of person - the type of person who has an innate need to care for others. But why intrinsically do some people want to care for others?

These types of people are born to care, born with a natural passion for wanting to help others – it's in their DNA. Caring for another person gives these people internal satisfaction, better than any feeling or gain. And simply knowing they can make a positive difference in someone else's life, is worth it. "Every time I clock out of work, I know that I've made such a difference to

people's day - you don't get that anywhere else." Says Amy Hutton - Administrator at our Heatherdale home. And if these people don't become a care worker, they're likely to go on to work in other similar roles for the greater good – teachers, nurses, doctors, firefighters or police officers.

Not only are they improving someone else's life immeasurably, but they're also adding more meaning and fulfilment to their own. It's a hard task to find a sector that offers so much reward. And with an ageing population, it's estimated that by 2041, there will be over 3 million people aged 85 or over - more than double of that today.

Which means there's no escaping the fact that the care sector will need a huge intake of new recruits, that both want to work in the sector and possess the necessary

traits. To face the unique demands and challenges of working in care, certain personality traits and characteristics are required. But what exactly are these traits?

A caring and compassionate nature

A good carer has empathy and genuinely cares about residents' comfort, happiness and that they're getting the best out of life.

Patience & understanding

A good carer puts themselves in the shoes of the people they care for, being sensitive to each resident's needs and understanding their preferences is essential.

Supportive & encouraging

A supportive person will provide positive messages to a resident and to their colleagues, through their body language, the way they conduct themselves and behave around people, as well as verbal acknowledgement and encouragement.

Resilience

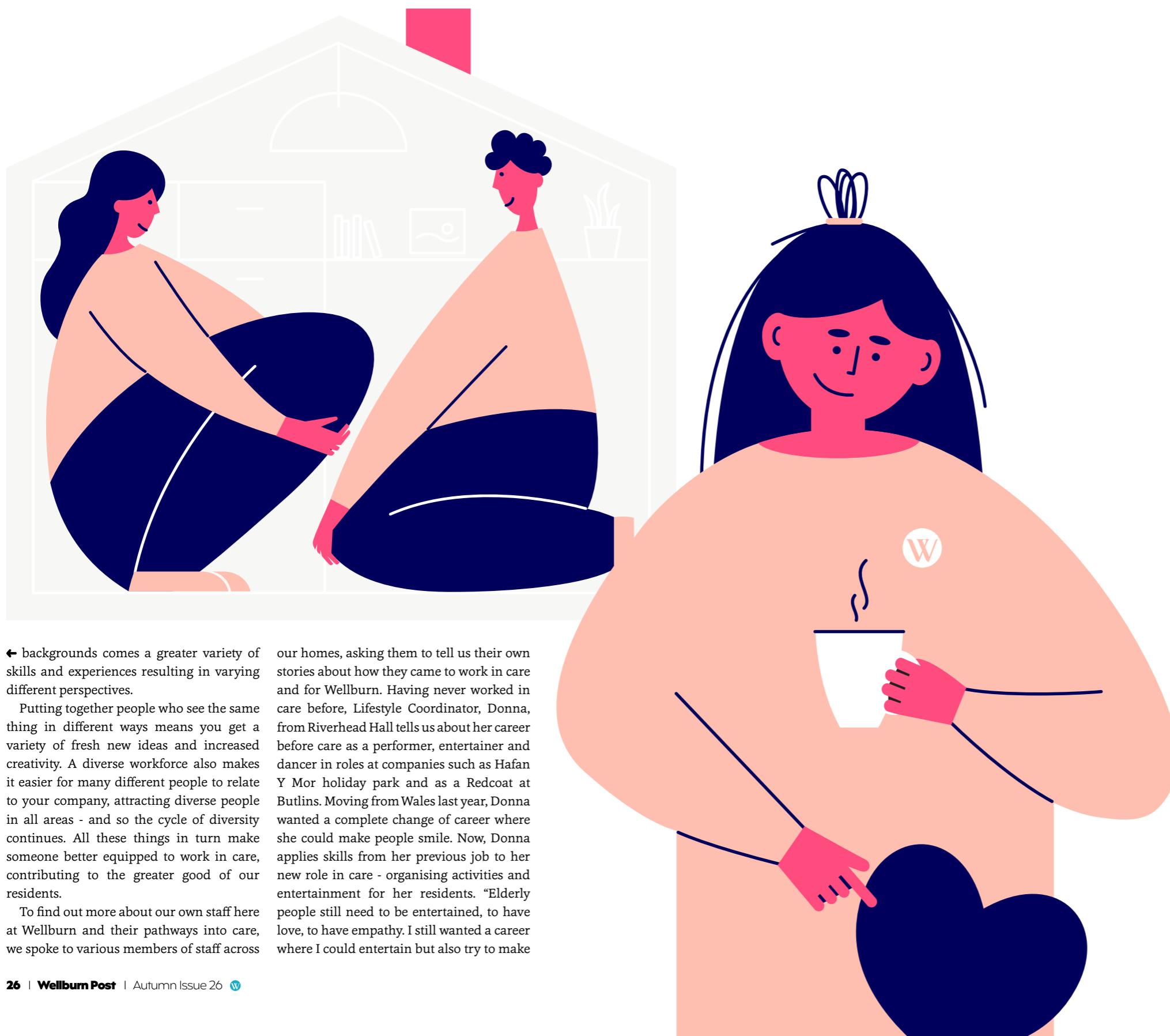
Whilst working in care, special relationships and bonds are formed. For some residents, it may be their final home – which can be difficult to deal with, so resilience and emotional strength are hugely important.

Passion for the job

Being a carer goes way beyond it being just a job. It's a calling and an opportunity that most won't get to experience, so it's vital that people in this role are passionate about the work they do, and enter the care sector for all the right reasons.

These are all common traits in which people within the care sector and across Wellburn possess, however, the common theme stops here. And that's because every person in the care sector is so diverse, not just in where they have come from, but in their journey into care. At Wellburn, our diversity stretches company wide.

We understand the importance of diversity in the workplace and the many benefits a diverse workforce can bring. Through different characteristics and →



← backgrounds comes a greater variety of skills and experiences resulting in varying different perspectives.

Putting together people who see the same thing in different ways means you get a variety of fresh new ideas and increased creativity. A diverse workforce also makes it easier for many different people to relate to your company, attracting diverse people in all areas - and so the cycle of diversity continues. All these things in turn make someone better equipped to work in care, contributing to the greater good of our residents.

To find out more about our own staff here at Wellburn and their pathways into care, we spoke to various members of staff across

our homes, asking them to tell us their own stories about how they came to work in care and for Wellburn. Having never worked in care before, Lifestyle Coordinator, Donna, from Riverhead Hall tells us about her career before care as a performer, entertainer and dancer in roles at companies such as Hafan Y Mor holiday park and as a Redcoat at Butlins. Moving from Wales last year, Donna wanted a complete change of career where she could make people smile. Now, Donna applies skills from her previous job to her new role in care - organising activities and entertainment for her residents. "Elderly people still need to be entertained, to have love, to have empathy. I still wanted a career where I could entertain but also try to make

a difference to people's lives, and they make a huge difference to mine too." To watch Donna's story and stories from other staff across our homes, simply visit our careers website where you can find our staff talking about their different routes into care, their role and what it's like working for Wellburn.

The message we want to get across is that it doesn't matter where you've previously come from in your working life - you can always start a career in care no matter what stage of life you are at. It doesn't matter if you've never worked in care before - if you have the right personality traits and key qualities, you will succeed and have a fulfilling career. Anything else can be learnt. And when it comes down to caring for our most vulnerable in society, your personality becomes a lot more important than how many qualifications you have.

At Wellburn, we look for people with certain qualities and values that match our own and focus less on previous experience. Most importantly, we value respect, compassion, and a willingness to learn and work hard for the good of our residents. So, if you think you display these qualities, you will fit right in.

If you are considering a career in care but still aren't sure you have what it takes - you would be surprised at just how many transferable skills you do have which you can apply to a role in care. Some of the key transferable skills needed in the care sector are:

Adaptability & flexibility

No two days are the same working in care and many people love that variety within each day. However, this also means juggling multiple tasks at the same time whilst dealing with unpredictable scenarios. For example, no two people receiving dementia care will require the same care so it's important to be flexible in cases like this.

Communication/listening skills

Being easy to talk to and a good listener. Not only the ability to hear what people are saying but to understand what they actually mean.

Organization

Care workers can have a range of activities to coordinate in their typical day in addition to careful planning and coordination with colleagues to make sure residents receive the appropriate care at the right time.

And there are a huge variety of roles within the care sector, which people often don't realise. From working in the home right through to roles available in Head Office, there are so many options - it's not only about being a carer. Some of the many roles within the care sector include home manager, deputy manager, admin, lifestyle coordinator, team leader, domestic assistant, handy person and gardener. In addition to this there are roles outside the care homes within departments such as HR, marketing, finance and operations.

Career progression in the care sector is highly valued as well. Many of our own staff have progressed from carer to team leader, often going on to pursue managerial positions. If a staff member would like to work towards a specific goal or role, accumulating the right training and experience, we will help and support them.

Hiring internally is highly valued too, with it being not uncommon for staff at Wellburn to take on a completely different role within Head Office, after working in one of our homes.

Now you know there are plenty of different jobs available within the care sector and the type of skills needed, but how do you know which role is right for you? To anyone considering a career in care who is unsure which role would suit them best, we have put together a list of all the different roles available across Wellburn detailing exactly what each position entails from the qualifications and characteristics needed right through to what your typical day to day might look like in that particular job. This may differ slightly from company to company but generally each role in care will be similar wherever you choose to go.

If you'd like to take a look at the different roles available in care and across Wellburn, simply visit our careers website. And if →



← there is a job that particularly takes your fancy, you can view all our current job openings for it across our different homes.

Working in the care sector you meet wonderful people, you develop relationships with residents that become part of your family and they see you as their family too.

You are a part of the last chapter of their life, a hugely important one and to be a part of that is very special indeed. You will help them reflect back on their lives, on all they have achieved and all they will leave behind. It's easy to forget sometimes, just how much our residents have experienced and the wisdom they have to share.

You will not only be building real and genuine relationships with them, but with their families and loved ones too. Working in care means you'll make friends for life with your colleagues – all of which adds up to a distinct feeling of family that goes beyond a typical workplace environment. An environment that is wonderfully unique to the care sector.

To anyone considering a career in care, Wellburn's Chairman, Rachel Beckett, says

"Let's not forget, you've got a career here waiting for you at Wellburn. We want to really harness that empathetic, energetic, passionate nature in people to come and look after our residents. Because they need your help, and I know you're out there and I want you to come work for us, so just come give it a go!" ■

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Life

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