

Social, Caring and Advisory Services

Do you want to help and support people with their physical and mental wellbeing? Do you want to make a difference to the lives of people who are experiencing social and emotional problems? If you love working with people and are caring, calm and patient, then you might find working in the social, caring and advisory area a rewarding career.

What areas can I work in?

You could be working in advisory services, childcare and education, community education, psychology and counselling, social work or social care. You might specialise in working with adults or children, or help and support people of all ages.

To see the routes to getting into each of these sectors, take a look at our [Career Pathway](#).

What kind of companies can I work for?

You might work for:

- advice centres and services
- playgroups or nurseries
- community education centres
- the National Health Service (NHS) or private health companies
- local authorities
- health and welfare charities.

What's the job market like?

It can be quite difficult to get a job in advisory and counselling services, although there are lots of voluntary opportunities.

Community learning and development work includes adult learning, youth work and a wide range of other community support and development jobs.

Job prospects are good in social care services, with an ageing population leading to more demand. In 2022 there were 51,040 people employed in care homes for adults. ³

Between 2021 and 2022 job postings for care workers and home carers increased by 64% and demand continued in 2023. ⁴

The largest three subsectors are still housing support/care at home, care homes for adults and day care of children. Collectively these account for 79% of the social services workforce. ³

The increase in free childcare hours has meant the Scottish Government has been increasing training opportunities and routes into Early Learning and Childcare. As a result 8,000 professionals have been recruited in

2023/24 taking the total workforce to over 46,000 people. ¹

Currently around 4% of the day care of children workforce is male. In an effort to increase this the Scottish Government has introduced a £50,000 Men in Early Years Challenge Fund, aiming to increase the number of men enrolling for childhood practice courses. Men in Childcare (MiC) (www.meninchildcare.co.uk) promotes training and recruitment for men in early years. ⁵

The Scottish Government hope to increase the childminder workforce in Scotland by 1,000 during 2024-2025 through a recruitment drive with 16 local authorities. A £1m funding scheme will offer £750 start up grants for new childminding businesses, as well as support and training to encourage people into the business. Find out more at childminding.org/getstarted. ²

Facts and figures

- The care sector accounted for 7.2% of the workforce in Scotland in 2023. ⁴
- The private sector was the largest employer for social services at 39%, followed by the public sector at 35%, and the voluntary sector 26%. ³
- 15% of the workforce is male, but it is almost double in the criminal justice and residential children's services subsectors. ³
- The average working age in public sector employment is 46, and in the private sector 40. The average age of early years workers in the private sector is 28. ³
- There were 211,510 employed in social services in Scotland in 2022. ³

Want to find out more?

The [Scottish Social Services Council](http://www.scottishsocialservices.org.uk) website has a section called 'Careers and Education', with lots of resources, including downloadable careers leaflets.

The Sector Skills Council, Skills for Care and Development, has the [A Question of Care](http://www.aquestionofcare.org.uk) website with information on careers in care.

Sources

¹ Early years workforce including childminders, [Scottish Government](http://www.scottishgovernment.gov.uk) (June 2024)

² Scottish Government News: [Recruiting and retaining childminders](http://www.scottishgovernment.gov.uk) (June 2024)

³ Scottish Social Services Sector: [Report on 2022 Workforce Data](http://www.scottishsocialservices.org.uk) (November 2023),

⁴ [Sectoral Skills Assessment: Social Care](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk), October 2023, Skills Development Scotland

⁵ [Flexible Childcare Services Scotland](http://www.flexiblechildcare.org.uk)