

New EU wide initiative to boost skills in Long-Term Care

Launched on 23 May, the Care4Skills project will provide concrete opportunities for skills development in Long-Term Care (LTC). The EU-funded project will focus on helping LTC workers understand how to apply person-centred care approaches and use digital technologies to deliver better quality care and support across Europe. It is the backbone of the Partnership for Skills in Long-Term Care.

April 2023 marked the beginning of the Partnership for Skills in Long-Term Care. A cross-European coalition to upskill and re-skill professionals working in social care and support for persons with disabilities, and older persons. The Partnership for Skills brings together 6 EU networks, service providers, employers, trade unions, vocational education and training services and universities from over 10 countries. Together, the Partnership aims to shape the future of skill development in the LTC sector and contribute to annual training of at least 60% of the sector's workforce.

One year later, the [Care4Skills](#) project has officially begun, co-funded by the European Union. This ambitious project – coordinated by the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) – will provide the financial foundation for the Partnership for Skills in Long-Term Care and provide a concrete and strategic approach to upskilling and reskilling LTC workers, primarily in the field of digital skills and person-centred care approaches.

Over four years, the project will provide the following:

- The rapid delivery of training on digital and person-centred care skills to LTC workers, using existing training material such as the European Care Certificate.
- National and cross-European research identifying future scenarios for the LTC sector, the impact of these scenarios on occupational profiles and jobs, and skill needs and gaps for the workforce.
- Development and piloting of cross-European curricula on these skill needs and gaps, with a particular focus on digital and person-centred care skills. These curricula will also be made available free of charge through e-learning platforms in multiple languages.

- The launch of a process to validate and certify the curricula at national level.
- Development of a European Strategy for Boosting Skills in Long-Term Care.
- The strengthening of the Partnership for Skills in Long-Term Care to include the maximum number of stakeholders in this initiative and reach as many professionals as possible in LTC.

The 6 European networks involved are EASPD, the European Ageing Network, Social Services Europe, Federation of European Social Employers, European Federation of Public Service Unions and the European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training. The project also includes 21 other national organisations in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain (including many EASPD members).

Celebrating the commencement of the project, Thomas Bignal – EASPD Secretary General – said “People with disabilities and older persons want their support to respond to their individual wishes and needs. They also want to know which technologies can help them live more independently. Yet, long-term care workers tend to be undertrained on how to deliver such services. Care4Skills will change this by developing state-of-the-art cross-European training that can be delivered to hundreds of thousands of workers across Europe. If we achieve our ambitions, Care4Skills will mean better quality care and support and better jobs for those who provide these services.”