

Research Impact Brief

Evaluating the Care Certificate (ECCert): a cross-sector solution to assuring fundamental skills in caring



This is a summary of research undertaken by the Institute of Mental Health. It is part of a series of 'Research Impact Briefs' published to disseminate research findings and the implications for practice.

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Study title: ECCert: Evaluating the Care Certificate

The Care Certificate was introduced in 2015 as a new common training standard for unregistered care staff across health and social care in order to improve the safety and quality of care provided by this workforce. This research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Care Certificate in achieving its intended outcomes of improved experience of induction, training and job readiness for care workers, improved care for patients, and improved training provision and career development pathways offered by care organisations.

What were the key findings / outcomes?

The uptake of the Care Certificate has been good, and it is widely welcomed as providing a standardised approach to improving the skills of those new to care, enabling staff to feel better-prepared to provide high quality care. However, there is a proportion of smaller organisations where it has not been implemented, largely due to lack of resources and capacity.

There has been considerable variation in how the Care Certificate is delivered, ranging from group-based programmes combining teaching and activities, to short online courses completed individually. This inconsistency has undermined the credibility and portability of the Care Certificate, and its use as a transferable qualification supporting the movement of staff between organisations was not widely reported.

Research Support and Consultancy Services



How should this influence practice? Summary of significant implications

- (a) **For practitioners:** Care Certificate training is most effectively delivered using participatory and experiential approaches and incorporating practical and classroom components to facilitate the transfer of learning into everyday practice.
- (b) **For services:** Organisations should recognise Care Certificate completion through such things as certificate presentation ceremonies. Care staff should be encouraged to 'own', value and be aware of their continued professional development through regular mentoring and peer support.
- (c) **For workforce development strategists:** Guidelines on the implementation of the Care Certificate should be updated to incorporate greater clarity on a number of aspects of provisions. Guidance and support should be targeted at small care organisations on how they can implement the Care Certificate standards.

Further information

Dr Louise Thomson, Academic Lead for IMH Research Support and Consultancy Services

Email: louise.thomson@nottingham.ac.uk

www.institutemh.org.uk/x-research/evaluating-the-care-certificate

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Website: www.institutemh.org.uk

Email: info@institutemh.org.uk

Phone: 0115 823 1294

Twitter: @InstituteMH



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