

Cook

Job description and
person specification

Job title: Cook

Reports to: Catering Manager/Home Manager

Cook

As a Cook with Exemplar Health Care, you'll use your creative cooking skills to help us achieve our mission of making *every day better* for adults living with complex needs.

This is an extremely rewarding role in which you'll provide delicious, healthy and nutritious meals for our service users.

Creating a positive dining experience

For many of us, meal times are an important part of our daily routine. As well as satisfying our appetites, it provides a time to sit down with loved ones and catch up on the day's events.

For people who live in care homes, mealtimes can be even more important. In this role, you'll ensure that everyone has a positive dining experience, to increase nutritional intake, promote social interaction and build a sense of community.



Making a difference every day

Life with Exemplar Health Care is all about choice. We put our service users at the heart of everything we do.

In this role, you'll empower people to have a say in what they eat and when they eat. You'll chat to them about their favourite foods and dietary requirements, and incorporate them into your cooking.



I made the move from the hospitality sector to the care sector because I wanted to make a difference in people's lives with my cooking. When my Mum lived in a care home, I saw the impact that food had on her health and wellbeing. I've always wanted to do something meaningful with my skills – which I'm able to do in my role with Exemplar Health Care.

Ross – Tyne Grange

About Exemplar Health Care

Exemplar Health Care is a leading provider of specialist nursing care for adults living with a range of complex needs.

Our homes tend to specialise in supporting people with specific conditions and disabilities such as Huntington's disease, brain injuries, spinal injuries, mental health needs, learning disabilities or dementia.

Across all of our homes, one thing remains the same - our Cooks play a vital role in supporting people to stay healthy.

Exemplar Health Care's mission

Our mission is to make *every day better* for the people we support and our colleagues.

Exemplar Health Care's vision

Our vision is that adults living with complex needs can access outstanding specialist care and support, in a community-based home that's close to their family and friends, and that's focused on their personal goals and outcomes.

Exemplar Health Care's values

Our values express what it's like to work at Exemplar Health Care and our colleagues should make them a part of everything that they do. We're looking for people whose personal values match our values of:

- fun
- integrity
- responsive
- success
- teamwork.

[Read more about our values here.](#)



The key responsibilities of a Cook

As a Cook with Exemplar Health Care, you'll prepare and serve delicious, healthy and nutritious meals for our service users.

This is an exciting opportunity to use your cooking skills to make a real difference!

One of our values is fun, and we expect our Cooks to get involved in all aspects of care home life. There'll be lots of opportunities to use your creative flair to make tasty treats for activities, events and parties in the home.

The role is varied, but as a general guide your responsibilities will involve the following.



Preparing and cooking nutritious meals and snacks



Promoting choice and independence through meal times



Ensuring health and safety



Working as part of a team



Preparing and cooking nutritious meals and snacks – good nutrition is an important part of staying fit and healthy, especially for those living in care homes.

Our Cooks prepare and serve delicious and nutritious food throughout the day.

You'll create a relaxed and welcoming dining experience in your home to promote good nutrition, and support our 'protected meal times' policy.



Promoting choice and independence through meal times – life with Exemplar Health Care is all about choice.

The people who live in our care homes may have complex dietary requirements due to a medical condition.

Our Cooks take the time to understand people's likes and needs, and provide suitable food and drink choices. This may involve preparing food for people who are vegan or vegetarian, who follow religious guidelines, or who require a soft food diet due to dysphagia.

You'll update dietary forms and keep records, as required. You'll escalate all compliments, comments and complaints accordingly, and use them to improve the meal time experience for our service users.



Ensuring health and safety – as a leading care provider, we're responsible for keeping everyone who lives and works in our care homes safe.

Our Cooks carry out their duties safely, having regard for the health, safety and welfare of themselves, their colleagues, service users and visitors in the home.

You'll follow all policies and processes including around 'best by' dates, chemical and equipment storage, food storage, fridge temperatures, food temperatures, uniform and waste disposal.

You'll complete the relevant checks and records, including temperature checks and hazard analyses, and act upon any findings. You'll monitor all equipment and report any defects, damage, thefts, breakages or hazards that have the potential to cause harm.



Working as part of a team – you know what they say, team work makes the dream work!

Our Cooks work as part of a Catering Team and with the wider Care Team to make *every day better* for our service users.

You'll follow instructions from the Catering Manager and/or person in charge and inform them if you have any concerns regarding the kitchen or your duties.

This job description may be subject to review. You may be required to undertake other appropriate duties as reasonably required.

What we look for in our Cooks

Our values

First and foremost, our Cooks live and breathe our values of fun, integrity, responsive, success and teamwork.

Our first value is fun, and no matter what role you're in, we expect you to make life fun for our service users and colleagues. Check out our [Facebook page](#) for all of the fun activities that we get up to!

You can read more about our values and what they mean on our website:

www.exemplarhc.com/careers/our-values.

If your values match ours, then we're off to a great start.



About you

Here are some of the other characteristics that we look for in our Cooks.

As a Cook you'll:

- be **creative** in preparing food
- be **enthusiastic** about cooking delicious and nutritious food for people with varied dietary requirements
- understand what **person-centred care** means and how to treat people with compassion, dignity and respect
- show a commitment to **caring for others** and ensuring that our care is the best it can be
- be an **excellent team player**
- be able to **communicate** with a range of people, including those who use communication aids
- have good **written communication skills**
- follow **policies, processes and regulations** relevant to your role (training will be provided)
- understand what '**safeguarding**' is and your role in supporting people to keep safe.

Working in a care home can sometimes be a challenging environment, so the ability to **think on your feet** and be **flexible** is also important in this role.

Qualifications and training

To apply for this role, you must have a food hygiene certificate. We'd also like our Cooks to have a first aid in the workplace and relevant catering qualification, such as an NVQ or diploma, but these aren't necessary.

When you start, you'll do a four day welcome induction which covers mandatory and statutory training including safeguarding, person-centred care and infection prevention and control.

After that, you'll do a role specific induction in your home.

Throughout your employment, you'll have regular supervisions and Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) with your Manager. During your PDR, you'll review your progress, celebrate your achievements, address any issues and identify your career aspirations.

There are lots of opportunities to continue your learning and progress in your career if you wish.

For example, our eLearning platform hosts a number of specialist training modules, including about specific conditions such as dementia, diabetes, dysphagia and learning disabilities.

We ask that you:

- attend and complete your induction
- attend all planned training that Exemplar Health Care offers, including eLearning and face-to-face training
- continue to learn on-the-job, especially during your first few months with us
- attend your supervisions and Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) when invited by your Manager
- show a commitment to learning and keeping your skills and knowledge up-to-date.

Person specification – Cook

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Food hygiene qualification	Y		Certificates
Good general education		Y	Certificates
Relevant catering qualification e.g. NVQ or diploma		Y	Certificates
First aid in the workplace		Y	Certificates
Your skills	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Interpersonal skills	Y		Application, interview
Verbal and written communication skills	Y		Application, interview
Creative thinking	Y		Application, interview
Great team player	Y		Application, interview
Attention to detail	Y		Application, interview
Excellent observational skills	Y		Application, interview
Ability to build trust and rapport with people	Y		Application, interview
Demonstrates continuous improvement		Y	Application, interview
Time management and organisational skills	Y		Application, interview
Job specific skills and knowledge	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Relevant experience in a similar role and/or working environment	Y		Application, interview
Working knowledge of cooking	Y		Application, interview
Flair and enthusiasm for cooking with fresh ingredients	Y		Application, interview
Understanding of dietary and nutritional needs of service users		Y	Application, interview
Open to feedback and able to respond to requests and preferences	Y		Application, interview
Understanding of relevant legislation and regulations	Y		Application, interview

Personal qualities and behaviours	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Demonstrates the Exemplar Health Care values	Y		Application, interview
Enthusiastic about cooking	Y		Application, interview
Motivated with a can-do attitude	Y		Application, interview
Flexible	Y		Application, interview
Approachable	Y		Application, interview

Health and safety

As an employee of Exemplar Health Care, you have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to:

- take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of all other persons who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work
- co-operate with your employer to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures
- observe and follow all health and safety rules, regulations and codes of practice
- recognise the rights of our service users to take risks to promote their own recovery
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, or misuse, anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare, in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions
- report all accidents, dangerous occurrences, incidents and hazards in line with company policy
- respect confidentiality relating to information gained through employment with the organisation and ensure information is not disclosed to any unauthorised person/agency.

Safeguarding

Exemplar Health Care is committed to safeguarding all children and vulnerable adults, and expects all colleagues and volunteers to share this commitment.

As an Exemplar Health Care employee, you have a duty to protect our residents and colleagues from any form of abuse or neglect.

When delivering care and support, colleagues are required to comply with the requirements of legislation relating to care in the UK, including the Care Act (2014), Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

You'll learn more about safeguarding in your induction, but it might be helpful to do some research before you start working with us.

To comply with Exemplar Health Care's safeguarding children and adults policies, all colleagues (paid or unpaid) have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This requires you to:



- familiarise yourself, and comply with, local child protection procedures and protocols for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people
- familiarise yourself, and comply with, local multi-agency safeguarding vulnerable adults plans and procedures
- familiarise yourself, and comply with, protocols and systems for information sharing
- know how to report safeguarding concerns
- participate in required training and supervision
- comply with required professional boundaries and codes of conduct.

You'll learn more about safeguarding during your induction and will be shown all relevant policies and procedures.

Data protection

At all times, you must respect the confidentiality of information in line with the requirements of the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018.

This includes, if required to do so, obtaining, processing and/or using information held on a computer in a fair and lawful way, holding data only for the specified registered purposes and using or disclosing data only to authorised persons or organisation's as instructed.

You'll learn more about data protection as relevant to your role, during your induction.

every day better

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