

Broken ankle gives Lara her career break

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During a nine months of convalescence for a broken ankle, thirty-seven year old Lara from Southend, thought about changing her career. She saw Jobcentre Plus Southend who recommended her for an Introduction to Health and Social Care course at South Essex College of Further & Higher Education, allowing her to gain both a qualification and a job.

- Prior to this scheme she had found it a very difficult to gain employment due to a lack of work experience, but her course helped bridge that gap.
- She used life experiences as evidence to help her get her foot in the door, which made her realise that she would be good at following a career in the care profession. She had gained care experience first hand from looking after relatives.
- Lara has progressed on NVQ Level 2 Health and Social Care at the College and has gained employment at a local care home, The Salvation Army's Bradbury Home in Southend. She feels that she wouldn't be where she is now without the help and support from the College, Jobcentre Plus – and from The Salvation Army who believed in her potential.
- Lara said: "I'd 100% recommend that people should take up the offer of training if they've been out of work. You do get a helping hand on the course but there is a lot of work to do yourself...it really helped me achieve my end goal of gaining a qualification and a job.
- Jobcentre Plus Southend have been supportive in getting Lara started on her road to success. Brian Menzies, from Jobcentre Plus Southend, added: "Care sector roles can offer a way into an industry that is creating jobs, and Lara is a great example of how a customer can find a rewarding career by being open minded about opportunities that come up."

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- Lara has completed her probation period at The Salvation Army as a Care Assistant and the team at Bradbury Home have been impressed with her progress and attitude. Mr Lawrence Taylor, Home Manager, said: “We've been really pleased with Lara and the progress she has made. She really stuck out at interview and she has been a real credit to the team. We have been absolutely delighted with her attitude and willingness to work.”
- Lara is already looking at bettering her prospects as she is interested in progressing onto NVQ Level 3 in Care.

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