



South West London Social Care Academy Hub

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"Representing and connecting"

South West London Social Care Academy Hub presents...

Step into Care

Careers with Purpose. Opportunities for All.





On the 30 June 2025, The South West London Social Care Academy Hub celebrated the success of partners and individuals who acted or inspired people into good jobs and training in the social care sector. The Step into Care awards ceremony, honoured individuals and teams across various categories for their outstanding contributions to social care within South West London.

Ayo Akande, Assistant Director of Skills and Employment Greater London Authority, referenced that "Together Together" we can build collective strength, shared vision, and unwavering support which are essential for achieving great victories.

Simon Robson, Director of Social Care Operations London Borough of Croydon, emphasised the crucial role social care plays in the well-being of the community and the lives of individuals and families and delivered a message of inspiration and hope for the future of the social care workforce.

The day was about showcasing what's truly possible when we invest in people and act with purpose. Step into Care was created to shine a light on the potential within the adult social care sector – and the people who empower it.
The event was hosted by Sheryl Brand, Social Care Workforce Development Lead – South West London, with all awards and presentations delivered by special guests – Ayo Akande (Greater London Authority), Michelle Dumont (Homecare Association), Stephen Hopkins (London Borough of Croydon), Zuhab Ur Rahman (Optimize Lens) and Tom Richardson (Palace for Life Foundation).
The Social Care Academy hub would like to thank all the remarkable award nominees who each demonstrated exceptional commitment to the sector. See below for a full list of winners;

- Excellence in Training & Development Award – Richmond Hillcroft and Adult Community College
- SWL Social Care Training Provider of the Year Award – Croydon Adult Learning and Training (Calat)
- Social Care Ambassador Award – Accolade Care
- Innovation in Social Care Award – Avant Health
- Making an Impact Award – Richmond/Twickenham, Kingston, Wandsworth Sutton, Merton and Croydon Job Centres
- Rising Star Award – Lou Iga Marie Gro
- Against All Odds Achievement Award – Mfon Udofia
- The Game-Changer Collaboration Award – Vicki Blinks
- The Unity in Social Care Award – Skills for Care

'I want to say a huge thank you to Wendy, Sheryl, Stephen and your whole team. If anyone told me 2 years ago when I got into the UK I was going to be celebrated and honoured like this, I would have thought it impossible. Thank you for giving me the opportunity, platform and voice. You are all angels on earth, helpers and opportunity givers, selfless individuals making champions of us all, catapulting people from Zeroes to Heroes, from Despair to Hope, and from Obscurity to multiple Opportunities!' Mfon Udofia

This both uplifting and emotional morning was followed by a vibrant and energetic careers fair in the afternoon with over 100 attendees having the opportunity to connect directly with employers and training providers, gaining first-hand insights into current job opportunities and professional development pathways and attend free workshops providing CV and interview tips and advice on starting a career in care.