

MEET ERNY FEBERINA

Senior Practitioner

City Locality Team

Adult Social Care, Herefordshire Council



What is a Senior Practitioner, what does the role involve?

There are many different career progression paths available for Social Workers and one of them is Senior Practitioner. I chose to progress as a Senior Practitioner as I believe one of the ways to improve our Social Work practice is through supporting staff in management capacity.

As a Senior Practitioner, most of my time would be spent on supervising and managing staff within my supervisory group. This includes providing support and mentoring system, monitoring the performance, monitoring and reviewing systems are in place for clients on their caseloads, producing data and information for report and analysis, in consultation with team manager, identifying needs within the team, etc. This, therefore, gives me the opportunity to contribute to the team that I will be working with.

How did you get into this role?

Since I started as a Newly Qualified Social Worker with the council in March 2019, I was given the opportunity to enrol to the ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year of Employment). When I completed my ASYE, the council did not stop to offer other professional development courses, such as Practice Educator, AMPH and BIA training.

After Covid-19 lockdown eased. I planned to enrol to Practice Educator course, but decided to postpone it as I was about to go on maternity leave at the time. After I came back from maternity leave, the council clearly provides me with an opportunity to progress in my career. When I applied for the job, my line manager was very supportive and assured me that if I got an offer for the job, they will support me throughout my initial Senior Practitioner journey.

Now that I have been offered the Senior Practitioner role and am about to embark on the journey in September 2023, I am looking forward to it and feel assured that I have all the support from my colleagues, line manager and team manager.



Being a Social Worker means that I have a first-hand experience to make a real change and difference in people's lives. Ever since I enrolled on the course back in September 2016, I knew that social work is extremely challenging and hard work. However, this is also a very rewarding career to see how I can contribute to the society and help some people to make a real and positive change to their lives.

For instance, I had an experience working with a gentleman who was in his mid-60s and was diagnosed with early Dementia. It was a sudden and rapid change in his life. He was admitted to the mental health unit, alone, and did not have contact with his ex-wife and children. At the time, due to his cognitive impairment, he was not able to communicate what outcomes he would like to have in his life. The only information we could gather was through his friend who was unable to provide sustainable support.

After many months of hard work to gather all information and careful consideration to the client's wellbeing, I made a best interest decision together with all other professionals and involving the Court of Protection (COP). It was decided in his best interest to be moved permanently to a care home to manage the presenting risks. During the initial move period, with support from his deputy, we had to manage some teething problems, such as visit access to this gentleman's property to get his clothing and some personal belonging to make his new placement to be more personalised.

Two years since he was placed in the care home, I had a chance to see him again when I visited the care home to see another client. He looked really well and remained cheerful as he used to be; that was such a rewarding moment for me as I feel proud doing my job.

This is just one of many wonderful stories that I had with my clients throughout my social work journey. I would like to encourage people to consider Social Work as their career path if they are looking for real job satisfaction. Social Work is hard, but it is worth it!

What advice would you give to others?

Come and work with Adult Social Care in Herefordshire Council. This is a place to grow and thrive. Everyone in this directorate is here because they believe in what they are doing.

Whether you start as a Business Support Officer, Social Care Assessor or Social Worker, there are clear career progressions within the directorate.



“The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope.

Barack Obama