****

**Claire Dutton Support Worker**

**Claire Dutton is a support worker with the STAR unit assessment and treatment centre for people with a learning disability who are mentally unwell.**

**Have a read of Claire’s insight into her work and then complete the task at the end**

I had a ride in a bath chair today – A service user was feeling down and I was trying to persuade her to have a nice bath and wash her hair to make her feel better - she’d only go if I tried it!

I’ve been a support worker since I was 15. My work experience placement just happened to be at a special needs nursery. I knew from then that was it for me. After volunteering with young people and those with a drug problem and learning disabilities in Texas I knew it wouldn’t be simple but it was all I wanted. I studied Learning Disability Studies and Education studies at Liverpool Hope University.

Now Mersey Care is supporting me to study for a Health and Social Care degree at Chester University to become an Assistant Practitioner. Combining studies with working is challenging but I'm lucky, I work with a brilliant team.

We’ve a patient in segregation - he always eats alone. I’ll take him to our snoezelen room so he can have some company.

I’m planning a pizza night with non alcoholic cocktails – quite a few of our patients are around my age, 24. Before I leave I’ll go and say goodbye to every patient, it must be hard for them to see me going home when they can’t. But we share things; I tell them about my wedding plans, they tell me about their lives. It’s about making life as normal as possible while they’re here.

I can plan tomorrow’s activities but what happens will depend on what people want to do. Whatever it is I’ll try to make it something good…

|  |
| --- |
| What qualities do you think Claires displays above, please list them below: |
| 12345 |
| Why are these qualities important for this job, please explain below: |