

NEWS RELEASE

21 October 2015

**NEW PROGRAMME LAUNCHED FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE  
WANTING TO WORK IN SOCIAL CARE**

75 unemployed or economically inactive people will have the opportunity of taking part in the 'Getting Started' initiative; an innovative project facilitated by Association for Real Change (ARC), Northern Ireland.

An 8 week training programme which will include information on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers will be delivered, alongside observational visits to providers of learning disability services.

ARC, an umbrella organisation supporting the learning disability sector, is working with members including Positive Futures, Praxis Care, The Croft Community & Triangle Housing Association to support those furthest removed from employment. The Getting Started Collaborative is providing the opportunity to gain a sustainable career in social care without the need for previous paid work experience or qualifications.

In response to its member's request ARC liaised with Ingeus, who deliver the Department for Education and Learning's employment programme, Steps 2 Success, across Greater Belfast, North Down & Newtownards.

Louise Hughes, Training Coordinator ARC says:

*"In response to members needs we have developed this innovative project which offers opportunities for a more diverse workforce in the social care sector. A sector which offers flexible working conditions, including 16 hour contracts may better suit someone who has been unemployed for a long period, or evening/weekend shifts which may suit people with other responsibilities."*

At a time of 44,330 unemployment claimants as of May 2015, it is also an opportunity of assisting individuals that have a natural skill, or an interest in caring to secure employment.

Colm Conway, Chief Executive NISCC says:

*"The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is delighted to be involved as a partner agency in the Getting Started initiative which aims to recruit people with the right skills and values into this complex and rewarding area of work. This innovative project presents a perfect opportunity to introduce the NISCC Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers at the pre-recruitment stage. This will ensure that knowledge of those fundamental principles and requirements is embedded in practice from the outset."*

Following completion of the training programme, participants will be guaranteed an interview with participating organisations. The first cohort of 15 participants is due to start in November.

For further information on the Getting Started Project, visit [www.arcuk.org.uk/northernireland/contact-liaise/projects/](http://www.arcuk.org.uk/northernireland/contact-liaise/projects/) or call 028 9038 0960.

The Getting Started Project is part funded by Ulster Garden Villages Ltd. and Bombardier.

## **Ends//..**

For all media enquiries please contact Leslie-Anne Newton, ARC (NI) Director on 07817 211995 or email [stephen.walker@arcuk.org.uk](mailto:stephen.walker@arcuk.org.uk)

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**Association for Real Change (NI)** established in 1999 is an umbrella organisation supporting the learning disability sector. With over 30 cross-sector members ARC exists to improve the quality of life for people who have a learning disability by supporting anyone who is involved in the planning or delivery of services. For more information visit [www.arcuk.org.uk/northernireland/](http://www.arcuk.org.uk/northernireland/)

**Positive Futures** supports people with a learning disability, those with acquired brain injury and people on the autistic spectrum. Support is individually tailored so that it enables people to have as much choice and control over what they do as possible. A range of services are provided including supported living services; peripatetic housing support services; residential short break (respite) services; family support services for children and families; long-term and short break (Shared Lives) adult placement services; family support services for older carers; inclusive community support services; day activities. For more information visit [www.positive-futures.net/](http://www.positive-futures.net/)

**Praxis Care** is a leading charity providing accommodation and support services for adults and children with mental ill health, learning disability and acquired brain injury in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and England. For more information visit [www.praxisprovides.com/](http://www.praxisprovides.com/)

**The Croft Community** provides a range of people centered services that enable adults with learning disabilities to live meaningful and fulfilling lives within their community. Our services, located in Bangor include Supported Living, Residential Care, Respite and Day Care services. Currently we care for and support 37 full time residents / tenants and have a 7 bed respite unit supporting approximately 100 families in the North Down area. For more information visit [www.croftcommunity.com/](http://www.croftcommunity.com/)

**Triangle** is a registered Housing Association and charity. Triangle provides supported accommodation, family housing and specialised care and support services for tenants across Northern Ireland. Triangle is a progressive service provider, promoting social inclusion through a range of strategic partnerships. For more information visit [www.trianglehousing.org.uk/](http://www.trianglehousing.org.uk/)

**The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)** is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (NI) and founded under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001. Through workforce registration and regulation we are helping to raise standards in social care and strengthening public protection. For more information visit [www.niscc.info/index.php](http://www.niscc.info/index.php)

**Ingeus UK** is a leading provider of people-centred services, such as employability programmes, skills training and health-related support, which help people to reach their full potential. For more information visit [www.ingeus.co.uk](http://www.ingeus.co.uk)