AI IMPACT REPORT NO. 178 · REVISED 5 OCTOBER 2026 · 250 ROLES COVERED

Residential Support Workers

AI assisting with documentation, safety monitoring, and scheduling; core care remains deeply human.

EXPOSURE	WINDOW	ADOPTION TODAY	READING
27 Low exposure	5–10 yrs until change lands	Low for direct care tasks); Low-Medium (for administrative/monitoring tools	AI assists; the work stays human-led. Exposure is the share of today's work AI can plausibly take on within the window.

§ 01 WHAT IS HAPPENING

What is happening to residential support workers

Impact

AI tools may be used for electronic record-keeping, staff scheduling, basic safety monitoring (e.g., door sensors, some fall detection), and potentially providing simple reminders or engagement activities for residents. The core of providing direct personal, emotional, and behavioral support is human-led.

Risk

Limited task augmentation; focus on direct client well-being, relationship building, and complex needs.

The Residential Support Worker role will see AI primarily as an administrative and safety aid, not a replacement for core caregiving duties. AI might streamline documentation or alert to specific safety concerns, but the essential tasks of providing direct personal care, emotional support, building trusting relationships, managing challenging behaviors, and facilitating daily living activities remain fundamentally human and require nuanced interpersonal skills.

Sector readiness

Emerging in Administrative & Safety Monitoring Tools

Adoption is cautious and focuses on tools that support staff rather than replace direct interaction. AI for electronic health records (EHRs), staff scheduling, and basic environmental sensors is seeing some uptake. Direct AI interaction with residents is minimal and carefully considered.

§ 02 POSITION

Where you stand

i The core of the Residential Support Worker role, centered on direct human interaction, empathy, and skilled personal/behavioral support, is highly resistant to AI automation.

ii AI will primarily function as an assistive technology, helping with administrative tasks, safety monitoring, and optimizing staff schedules, rather than performing direct care.

iii The demand for skilled and compassionate Residential Support Workers is expected to remain high. Familiarity with basic care technologies and AI-driven monitoring tools will be beneficial, but the irreplaceable human element is paramount.

§ 03 ACTIONS 15 POINTS

What this means for you

Concrete changes to how the work gets done, in the order you are likely to meet them.

01 **AI-Assisted Electronic Record Keeping & Note Taking.** Using digital care planning software or apps, potentially with voice-to-text AI, to document resident activities, observations, and progress notes more efficiently.

02 **Smart Safety Monitoring Systems.** Working in environments with AI-enhanced sensors (e.g., for falls, wandering, door openings) that can alert staff to potential safety issues or emergencies.

03 **AI-Optimized Staff Scheduling & Rota Management.** Care agencies or facilities using AI to help create fair and efficient staff schedules, considering resident needs and staff availability.

04 **Accessing Resident Information via Digital Systems.** Using EHRs or care management platforms (which may have AI search features) to quickly access resident care plans, medication lists, and histories.

05 **Facilitating Resident Use of Simple AI Engagement Tools (Supervised).** Potentially assisting residents with using simple AI-powered tools for entertainment, communication (e.g., voice assistants for calls), or basic cognitive activities, under supervision.

06 **Medication Administration Reminders & Tracking (AI-assisted).** Using systems that provide reminders for medication times or help track administration records (human verification is key).

07 **Focus on Direct Personal Care & Activities of Daily Living (ADLs).** The core of the role – assisting residents with bathing, dressing, eating, mobility, and personal hygiene – remains entirely human.

08 **Providing Emotional Support & Companionship.** Building rapport, actively listening, offering comfort, and engaging residents in social interaction are irreplaceable human functions.

09 **Behavior Management & De-escalation Skills.** Managing challenging behaviors and de-escalating situations requires human empathy, judgment, and established techniques.

10 **Observing & Reporting Changes in Resident Condition.** Your nuanced human observation of subtle changes in a resident's physical or mental state is critical and often precedes what AI might detect.

11 **Implementing Individualized Care Plans.** Following and adapting care plans based on your direct assessment of the resident's evolving needs.

12 **Advocating for Resident Needs & Rights.** Ensuring residents' preferences are respected and their rights are upheld, a key human role.

13 **Collaboration with Healthcare Professionals & Families.** Communicating observations and concerns to nurses, doctors, social workers, and family members.

14 **Maintaining a Safe & Supportive Living Environment.** Ensuring the physical environment is safe and conducive to the well-being of residents.

15 **Ethical Considerations of Monitoring & AI with Vulnerable Individuals.** Being mindful of privacy, dignity, and autonomy when any AI-powered monitoring or assistive tools are used.

§ 04 CAUSES 10 DRIVERS

What is pushing this change

01 **Need for Enhanced Safety & Security for Vulnerable Residents.** AI-powered sensors can provide an extra layer of safety by detecting falls, wandering, or other emergencies, especially during night shifts or when staff are attending to others.

02 **Desire for More Efficient Staff Scheduling & Resource Allocation.** AI can help create more balanced and efficient staff rotas, considering resident needs, staff qualifications, and working time regulations.

03 **Requirement for Accurate & Timely Care Documentation.** Digital care planning with AI assistance (e.g., voice-to-text) can improve the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of care notes.

04 **Staffing Shortages in the Care Sector.** AI can automate some administrative tasks, potentially allowing existing staff to focus more on direct care in situations of understaffing.

05 **Advancements in Smart Home & Sensor Technology (for monitoring).** IoT devices and AI analytics are making remote or ambient monitoring more feasible for certain safety and well-being indicators.

06 **Integration of AI into Electronic Health Records (EHRs) & Care Management Software.** Modern care management systems are embedding AI for smarter documentation, alerts, and potentially insights from resident data.

07 **Focus on Person-Centered Care (AI as a data tool).** AI can help collate data about resident preferences and needs, supporting (but not delivering) more individualized care planning.

08 **Regulatory & Compliance Demands for Record Keeping.** AI-assisted documentation can help meet the stringent record-keeping requirements in the care sector.

09 **Family Expectations for Communication & Oversight.** Some AI-driven communication platforms can facilitate easier updates to family members regarding a resident's well-being or activities.

10 **Potential for AI to Support Staff Well-being (reducing admin burden).** By streamlining paperwork and scheduling, AI aims to reduce some stressors on care staff, allowing more focus on care.

§ 05 VARIATION 5 SECTORS

Impact by sector

The headline figure is an average. Where you work changes the picture.

Support Workers in Homes for Adults with Learning Disabilities	AI for communication aids, personalized activity schedules, safety monitoring. Core focus on behavioral support, skill development, and fostering independence.
Support Workers in Elderly Care Homes / Assisted Living	AI for fall detection, medication reminders, remote health monitoring, simple companionship tools. Core focus on ADL support, dementia care (if applicable), and social engagement.
Support Workers in Children's Residential Homes	AI for educational support tools (supervised), safety monitoring. Core focus on emotional support, behavioral guidance, child development, and safeguarding.
Support Workers in Shelters (e.g., Homeless, Domestic Violence)	AI for administrative intake, resource matching, safety alerts. Core focus on crisis intervention, emotional support, advocacy, and connecting residents to services.
Support Workers for Individuals with Complex Physical Health Needs	AI for monitoring vital signs, assisting with assistive technology, medication management. Core focus on complex physical care, skilled health procedures (as permitted), and coordination with medical teams.

§ 06 PREPARATION 8 SKILLS

Skills to build

The skills that keep the human part of this work valuable as the routine part is automated.

01 **Empathy, Compassion & Patience.** Fundamental ability to connect with, understand, and provide caring support to vulnerable individuals. Irreplaceable by AI.

02 **Interpersonal & Communication Skills (Verbal & Non-Verbal).** Effectively communicating with residents who may have diverse communication needs, as well as with their families and other professionals.

03 **Observational Skills & Vigilance.** Keenly observing residents for subtle changes in their physical, emotional, or behavioral state that might indicate a need for intervention.

04 **Behavior Management & De-escalation Techniques.** Skillfully and calmly managing challenging behaviors, using de-escalation strategies, and maintaining a safe environment.

05 **Personal Care Skills (Assisting with ADLs).** Providing respectful and skilled assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, mobility, and feeding.

06 **Problem-Solving & Crisis Intervention.** Responding effectively to unexpected situations, emergencies, or resident distress with sound judgment.

07 **Teamwork & Collaboration with Colleagues/Families.** Working effectively as part of a care team, sharing information, and collaborating with family members and external agencies.

08 **Basic Digital Literacy & Familiarity with Care Tech (including AI alerts).** Comfort using digital care planning systems, communication apps, and understanding alerts from AI-powered monitoring devices.

§ 07 INSTRUMENTS 11 ENTRIES

Tools in use

KINDS OF TOOL WORTH KNOWING

01 **AI-Powered Remote Monitoring & Alert Systems (Sensors, Wearables).** Systems using AI to analyze data from in-home sensors or wearables to detect falls, wandering, or significant changes in activity/vitals.

02 **Digital Care Planning & EHR Software (with AI features).** Electronic record systems for documenting care, with AI potentially assisting in note-taking, identifying care plan deviations, or flagging risks.

03 **Smart Medication Management Systems.** Smart pill dispensers or apps using AI for reminders and adherence tracking, often with caregiver alerts.

04 **Staff Scheduling Software with AI Optimization.** Software used by agencies to create staff rotas, with AI helping to optimize for resident needs, staff availability, and travel time.

05 **Voice Assistants & Simple AI Companionship Tools (Supervised).** Voice assistants for environmental control or basic engagement, and emerging AI companion robots (use is still limited and requires careful consideration).

06 **Communication Platforms for Care Teams & Families.** Secure messaging and update platforms, sometimes AI-enhanced, for sharing information between care staff, managers, and residents' families.

NAMED TOOLS ALREADY IN USE

CarePredict / Aloe Care Health / Uniper (for remote monitoring & engagement)
AI-powered systems using wearables and ambient sensors to learn resident patterns, detect anomalies, and predict risks like falls or UTIs.

Amazon Alexa (Echo devices with features like Care Hub or skills for seniors)
Voice assistants can be used for reminders, controlling smart home devices, communication, and accessing information, beneficial for some residents.

Hero Health / MedMinder (smart pill dispensers)
Automated medication dispensers that provide reminders and can alert caregivers if doses are missed.

Nourish Care / CarePlanner (Care Management Software with scheduling)
Digital care planning and management systems used in residential and domiciliary care, some incorporating AI for scheduling or analytics.

Various lone worker safety devices with fall detection (often AI-enhanced)
Devices designed to ensure the safety of lone workers, often incorporating AI for fall detection and automated emergency alerts.

§ 08 EXAMPLES 5 EXAMPLES

In practice

Ways people in this role are already using AI, and what they get from it.

Respond to Alerts from AI-Powered Fall Detection Systems

EXAMPLE 1

HOW: If a resident wears a device or has ambient sensors that detect a fall using AI, you receive an immediate alert, enabling a swift response.

GAIN: Enhances resident safety by enabling faster intervention in emergencies, potentially reducing injury severity.

Use Digital Care Planning Apps for Efficient Note-Taking

EXAMPLE 2

HOW: After providing care, use a mobile app (possibly with voice-to-text AI) to quickly and accurately document observations, activities, and any incidents in the resident's digital care plan.

GAIN: Improves the accuracy and timeliness of care records, reduces paperwork burden, and facilitates better communication within the care team.

Assist Residents in Using Voice Assistants for Simple Tasks

EXAMPLE 3

HOW: Help a resident set up or use a device like Amazon Alexa to play music, call a family member, or get a weather update, promoting their engagement and independence.

GAIN: Can improve a resident's quality of life, reduce loneliness through easier communication, and provide them with more control over their environment.

Follow AI-Optimized Staffing Schedules from Management EXAMPLE 4	HOW	Your work rota and specific client assignments for the day may be generated by AI software used by your agency to optimize coverage and travel.
	GAIN	Ensures adequate staffing levels, fair distribution of work, and can reduce travel time for domiciliary carers, leading to more efficient care delivery.
Utilize AI Medication Reminder Systems with Residents EXAMPLE 5	HOW	Support residents in using smart pill dispensers that provide timed reminders and can alert you or family if a dose is missed.
	GAIN	Increases medication adherence, reduces the risk of medication errors, and provides peace of mind for residents and their families.

§ 09 CONTEXT

How this role compares

Three neighbouring roles chosen to show the direction of travel.

Administrative Clerks in Care Homes (Basic scheduling, record filing) MORE EXPOSED	AI IMPACT	High (AI can automate staff rota generation, basic record keeping, digital filing of care notes, and standard communications)
	WORK MOVES TO	Role may significantly contract or evolve to managing AI admin systems, complex coordination, or direct resident support.
Care Technology Specialists / AI in Social Care Implementers DIFFERENT SKILLS, GROWING	AI IMPACT	Foundational/Enabling (They select, customize, implement, and train staff on AI-powered monitoring, scheduling, and care management tools)
	WORK MOVES TO	Technical skills in IT, AI software, data privacy, understanding of care sector needs, and training abilities.
Social Workers / Registered Managers of Care Homes (Strategic & Complex Casework) COMPLEMENTARY, LESS EXPOSED	AI IMPACT	Moderate Augmentation (AI for data analysis on resident populations, resource allocation insights, risk flagging), but core functions of complex case management, safeguarding, strategic planning, and leading care teams remain human-led.
	WORK MOVES TO	Advanced assessment skills, crisis intervention, legal/ethical expertise, leadership, and managing complex multi-agency collaboration.

§ 10 VERDICT

Closing judgement

> For Residential Support Workers, AI is an assistive partner that can enhance safety and efficiency in specific areas, but it will not replace the fundamental human connection, empathy, and skilled personal care that are the essence of the role. The focus remains on high-touch, person-centered support.

§ 11 BASIS REVISED 5 OCTOBER 2026

Evidence and revisions

What the exposure figure rests on, what changed when it was last revised, and the published work cited for this role.

SCORE

25 to 27

WINDOW

5-10 years (unchanged)

The 5 October 2026 review moved the score up by 2 points.

Exposure Index v2. Inputs: task applicability 31/100 (Microsoft AI applicability score 0.15 for Social and human service assistants; Home health and personal care aides); observed usage 0/100 (Anthropic observed exposure 0.00); official exposure tier 55/100 (BLS: high / moderate); labour-market trajectory 18/100 (BLS projects employment to grow 12.8% over 2025–35); published adoption rating 25/100 (low adoption (for direct care tasks); low-medium (for administrative/monitoring tools)). Weighted base 27.3. Final score 27. The previous figure of 25 was raised by 2 points, a small change that comes from moving off scores rounded to the nearest five. The change window is unchanged.

HOW THE FIGURE IS BUILT (EXPOSURE INDEX V2)

Task applicability — Microsoft Research, AI applicability score	31 × 35%	10.7
Observed usage — Anthropic Economic Index, observed exposure	0 × 20%	0.0
Official exposure tier — US BLS AI-exposure category	55 × 20%	11.0
Labour-market trajectory — US BLS projected employment change 2025–35	18 × 10%	1.8
Published adoption rating — This report's adoption level	25 × 15%	3.8
Weighted base		27.3
Exposure score		27

MEASURES BEHIND THE SCORE

US Bureau of Labor Statistics · *Employment Projections 2025–35 and AI Exposure Categories* (27 August 2026)

AI-exposure tier: Moderate / High. Projected employment change 2025–35: +12.8%. Matched to Home health and personal care aides; Social and human service assistants.

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Microsoft Research · *Working with AI: Measuring the Applicability of Generative AI to Occupations* (10 July 2025)

AI applicability score 0.15 (percentile 53 of 785 occupations) for SOC 21-1093, 31-1120.

PUBLISHER PDF ARCHIVED COPY

Anthropic · *Anthropic Economic Index report: Cadences* (26 June 2026)

Observed exposure 0.00 for SOC 21-1093, 31-1120 (no meaningful Claude usage recorded on these tasks).

PUBLISHER PDF

UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology · *Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market* (28 January 2026)

UK context: around 70% of UK workers are in occupations with tasks AI could perform or enhance, above the US average; a one-standard-deviation rise in exposure was associated with a 3.9% fall in UK job postings.

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ALSO CITED FOR THIS ROLE

McKinsey Global Institute · *Agents, robots, and us: Skill partnerships in the age of AI* (25 November 2025)

Skills tied to assisting and caring are expected to change least; this is where AI most clearly complements rather than substitutes.

PUBLISHER

International Monetary Fund · *Bridging Skill Gaps for the Future: New Jobs Creation in the AI Age* (14 January 2026)

The IMF places clinical and care roles in the high-complementarity group, where AI raises productivity without reducing headcount.

PUBLISHER PDF

Indeed Hiring Lab · *AI at Work Report 2025: How GenAI is Rewiring the DNA of Jobs* (23 September 2025)

Indeed rates nursing the least exposed major occupation (68% of typical skills minimally affected).

PUBLISHER

Archived copies are served only where the licence permits; otherwise the link goes to the publisher. Full research library: https://www.careerguard.ai/sources

§ 12 APPENDIX

Method and sources

Each report was written from a large body of published research. The exposure score itself is computed, not written: it is the CareerGuard Exposure Index, a weighted average of occupation-level measures from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (AI-exposure classification and 2025–35 projections), Microsoft Research (AI applicability scores) and Anthropic (observed exposure), together with the adoption rating published on the report. The organisations and publications below are the standing literature behind the narrative sections. Every source,

with dates, licences and archived copies where we are permitted to hold them, is catalogued in the research library.

Exposure Index v2 (October 2026). Each input is scaled to 0–100 and weighted: task applicability 35% (Microsoft AI applicability score ÷ 0.5), observed usage 20% (Anthropic observed exposure ÷ 0.75), official exposure tier 20% (BLS very high = 100, high = 70, moderate = 40, low = 10), labour-market trajectory 10% (50 2.5 × projected % employment change), published adoption rating 15% (very high = 85, high = 70, medium-high = 55, medium = 40, low-medium = 25, low = 10). Inputs not measured for an occupation are dropped and the remaining weights renormalised. An editorial adjustment of at most ±12 points is allowed only for automation channels the measures cannot see (robotics, self-service, machine vision, medical imaging, RPA/OCR, generative video) and is always logged with its reason. Scores are whole numbers, not rounded to five. The change window shifts one notch (a year at each end) per ten points of movement.

I GLOBAL AND MACROECONOMIC IMPACT OF AI ON WORK

World Economic Forum

The Future of Jobs Report series — Employer survey of expected job growth and decline, skill shifts and technology adoption (2020, 2023 and 2025 editions); Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Entry-Level Work (2026).
AI governance and transformation reports — Frameworks on ethical AI, talent strategy and industry transformation.

McKinsey Global Institute

AI, Automation and the Future of Work series — Research quantifying automation potential by task, sector and demographic, from "Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained" to "Agents, robots, and us" (2025).
Industry-specific reports — Financial services, healthcare, manufacturing and others.

PwC

Global AI Jobs Barometer — Annual analysis of job postings and productivity by AI exposure (2024–2026 editions).
Upskilling Hopes and Fears survey — Employee perceptions and readiness.

Microsoft Research and Anthropic

Working with AI (2025); Anthropic Economic Index (2025–2026) — Occupation-level usage data from Copilot and Claude conversations, the two observed-usage measures behind the 2026 revision.

Stanford Digital Economy Lab and Stanford HAI

Canaries in the Coal Mine? (2025–2026); AI Index Report (annual) — Payroll evidence on early-career employment in exposed occupations; annual measurement of AI capability, investment and adoption.

Deloitte

Human Capital Trends series — Workforce, talent and HR technology trends.
Tech Trends series — Emerging technologies and their business implications.

Accenture

Technology Vision series — Forward-looking analysis of emerging technology, with emphasis on AI.
Fjord Trends — Design, innovation and human experience in a digital world.

Boston Consulting Group

AI/ML insights and industry solutions — "The AI Revolution in the Workplace" and related research.

EY

AI and workforce reports — Adoption, talent strategy and ethics.

IBM Institute for Business Value

AI and automation studies — Business models, workforce evolution and leadership.

OECD

AI Policy Observatory — International data and policy on AI, labour markets and skills.
Employment Outlook — Labour-market trends including technological impact (2023–2026 editions).

International Labour Organization
Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure (2025) — Task-level exposure gradients for every ISCO occupation; successor to the 2023 global index.

International Monetary Fund
Staff Discussion Notes on AI and work (2024, 2026) — Complementarity framing: where AI augments and where it substitutes.

UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market (2026) — UK occupational exposure and job-posting evidence.

Brookings Institution
AI and automation research — Economic and social implications, displacement and skills.

Yale Budget Lab and Goldman Sachs Research
Tracking the Impact of AI on the Labor Market; AI and the US labour market (2026) — Aggregate labour-market monitoring; macro displacement estimates.

Oxford University (Oxford Martin School)
The Future of Employment — Frey & Osborne and subsequent research on susceptibility to automation.

MIT Technology Review
AI & Work — Reporting on AI research and its implications for industries and jobs.

Gartner
Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence — Maturity and adoption of AI technologies.
Future of Work reports — Workplace models and talent strategy.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Employment Projections 2025–35; AI Exposure Categories; Occupational Outlook Handbook — Ten-year employment projections and, from the 2025 cycle, an AI-exposure tier for every detailed occupation.

Indeed Hiring Lab
AI at Work Report (2025) and posting-market updates — Skill-level transformation estimates and job-posting trends by occupation.

II CORE AI AND MACHINE-LEARNING RESEARCH

OpenAI
Research papers, blog and API documentation — Large language models, generative AI, safety and societal impact.

Google DeepMind
Research papers and blog — Reinforcement learning, AI for science, AGI and ethics.

Meta AI
Research papers and blog — Large language models, computer vision, AI for social good.

Hugging Face
Transformers library and model hub — Open-source state-of-the-art NLP models.

TensorFlow and PyTorch
Documentation and community forums — Core frameworks illustrating practical capability.

arXiv
cs.AI, cs.LG, cs.CV, cs.CL — Pre-print research.

NeurIPS and ICML
Conference proceedings — Top-tier academic research.

ACM and IEEE
Journals and proceedings — ACM Computing Surveys; IEEE Transactions on AI.

Kaggle
Datasets and competition solutions — Applied machine learning on real-world problems.

The Alan Turing Institute
Research and reports — Responsible and applied AI.

III ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE AI DEPLOYMENT

NIST
AI Risk Management Framework — Voluntary framework for managing AI risk.

European Commission
AI Act — Risk-tiered legal framework for AI.
Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI — Principles for responsible development.

Partnership on AI
Research and best practice — Responsible AI development.

AI Now Institute
Annual reports — Social implications: power, inequality, rights.

ACM FAccT
Proceedings — Fairness, accountability and transparency.

Data & Society
Publications — Social implications of data-centric technology.

WIPO
Conversation on IP and AI — Intellectual-property implications of AI.

IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of A/IS
Ethically Aligned Design — Recommendations for ethical AI design.

Center for AI and Digital Policy
Policy briefs — Accountable AI policy.