Reimagining the Adult Social Care Workforce

Reimagining Adult Social Care Partnership Conference

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Some familiar headlines

Care sector faces crisis as huge new care workforce gap revealed

The care worker crisis
21 July 2015 0:00 am | By Julie Penfold

Voices › Comment

The shameful exploitation of care workers must end

Many home care workers aren’t being paid for the travel time that’s essential to their jobs. Over 200,000 are paid less than the minimum wage.

ever-increasing demands for services and limited resources,
Context

- Cutbacks
  - So-called ‘perma-austerity’ (Needham and Mangan 2014)
- Rising employment costs
  - New National Living Wage of £7.20 for people aged 25 and over not on apprenticeships from April 2016
- Rising demand
  - There would be 36% more people using social care in 2012/2013 if service levels had remained what they were in 2005/2006 (Fernandez et al, 2013)
- Certainly fits definition of ‘challenging’!
How can we make improvements?

- Recruitment
- Training
- Support
- Retention
One recruitment strategy

We have to go a LOT further afield to get staff these days!
Better recruitment

Values based recruitment and retention

Find and keep people with social care values

Our values based recruitment and retention toolkit can help you to find the right people to work for your organisation.

Values based recruitment and retention is about finding and keeping people who have the right attitude to work in care and know what it means to provide high quality care.

The toolkit includes a guide and poster to help you identify strong values and show how they can be used in your recruitment process.

It also includes templates, videos and websites to give you all the information you need about values based recruitment and retention.

This section also provides information to help you and your staff invest in your workplace values.

Our values based recruitment and retention toolkit

Assumption that we can identify people who will enjoy working in social care and want to stay
Motivations

• Intrinsic or extrinsic?
  – To achieve a reward or avoid punishment (for instance, to develop career)
  – To do something that you personally find enjoyable

• Instrumental or integrative?
  – To be in paid work and earn money
  – To have a sense of fulfilment

• All may co-exist but intrinsic/integrative seen as more likely to be sustained
Range of motivations in our Longitudinal Care Work Study

From looking after my Nan and Granddad … I felt a bit like I wanted to do something for other people to help them as well … My mum used to be a carer (sic) as well …

(Worker)

I used to work in an office and then I worked on a production line … but because of health I had to stand down so I was off work and was unable to return to the same sort of work which I did previously. So the only other option was support work which is an easy to get job … I don’t know whether I’ll carry on doing [it], I might look for something different …

(Worker)
Thinking outside the box

Activities Co-ordinator, Craig Edser
39 year old Craig Edser was born in Essex but grew up in the United States. He returned to the UK in 1995. He was a martial arts instructor for 20 years and also worked as a publican and owned his own small removals firm. When his business ventures stalled, Craig applied for a maintenance job at Galanos House. He didn’t get the job, but manager Jo-Anne noticed the natural flair he had with the residents and his ability to put everyone at ease. So instead she offered Craig the full time role of Activities Co-ordinator, a position he has held for nearly three years. They offer a unique approach to working with the residents who live there. Craig says “Each time I come into work, I have absolutely no idea what I’m going to find........my job is to delve into the past lives of thirty very different human beings”

Atypical in terms of:

- Gender
- Hours of work
- Previous employment or personal experience
Contrasting service user involvement in recruitment

- Social work education
- Direct payment recipients
- But rarely other users and carers
- Not everyone wants to/can recruit own workers
Training that reflects changes in support needs of people eligible for social care

Access to training is very variable

- Needs to be tailored to different, often complex, health needs
- Evidence personal assistants more likely to lack training

Training needs to consider relationship to safeguarding and ‘whistle blowing’

- Understanding what is poor care
- Understanding how to raise concerns

Many free resources but who will pay for other training?
Reducing mismatch between skills and support needs

Used National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) to compare those working in dementia care with the rest of the adult social care workforce.

42% worked in settings that supported people with dementia

Less likely to hold a social care qualification

More likely to work for an agency

Twin problems of lack of continuity and access to training
Simple strategies help communication with people with dementia

• Explaining what is going to happen
  – e.g. helping you to get dressed
• Using short sentences
• Giving people additional time to respond
• Avoiding ‘elderspeak’
  – Reduces confidence as being talked down to
• Understanding people’s personal histories
Support

• Social Care Workforce Research Unit Longitudinal Care Work Study (LoCS)
  – Mixed methods study
  – Interviews with care workers, managers, people using services and family carers
  – Three rounds of data collection
  – Funded by Department of Health Policy Research Programme
Recognising centrality of relationships to user satisfaction

The way [care workers] talk to you, and they treat you like an adult, instead of looking down and talking down at you ... If I’m respected, I respect back in the same way. But if I’m spoken to like grumpy or “You don’t do this, you don’t do that” well I’m afraid I speak back in exactly the same way...

It’s a very weird mixture of not quite friends but very close and intimate, but as well maintaining your distance
Well, I do work in a person centred way as much as I can. But I haven't got the time to build up a relationship with somebody now. I haven't got, as I say, it's kind of made me look, it's made me realise actually how much the job has changed
Being able to take pride in work

I think what I am most happy with is knowing that [residents] are happy. And that they are supported appropriately and they get all their needs met makes me go home and sleep a little bit easier of an evening.

People say, ‘it’s only care work’. I take [my job] very seriously. I take pride in my care work. I enjoy it.
Outcomes-led care and support: more tea, fewer tasks!

How to achieve improved quality of life

Retention

• Emerging evidence of variable retention rates in social care
  – Not all negative
  – Need to identify how some organisations have better retention rates than others
  – Ways that are about making the job better – combination of poor pay and poor job control is especially problematic
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Disclaimer & thank you

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Thank you for listening

I tweet as @aspirantdiva