

TITLE OF REPORT: **Integrated Adults and Social Care Pressures**

REPORT OF: **Steph Downey, Service Director Adult Social Care,
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Summary

Social Care workforce recruitment is recognised as a National, Regional and Local challenge, and when combined with rising demand, changing demographics and the competing recruitment challenges in the NHS and other sectors generally, has proven very challenging for Local Authorities and Social Care providers.

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee regarding the approaches taken by Integrated Adults and Social Care Services to address the challenges in social care recruitment.

Background

2. Recruitment and retention into social care roles has been recognised as a national challenge by successive Governments for decades; whilst the employment market across all sectors has struggled post pandemic, the impact on health and care workers has been acute and comes on the back of these historical challenges.

Current Position

3. Whilst the challenge is universal, the sector is varied, wide ranging and encompasses multiple roles and organisations. Consequently the issues affecting recruitment and retention are also multifactorial and the potential solutions equally so.
4. The types of social care roles reflected within this report and associated presentation includes:
 - Qualified professionals such as social workers and occupational therapists
 - Registered managers of care services
 - Specialist support workers (e.g. for adults with a Learning Disability)
 - Care Home workers
 - Home Care workers

5. As a region, the North East Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) have worked collectively on a regional workforce strategy; pooling and combining resources and capacity, and sharing good practice and ideas.
6. Gateshead have been heavily influential in this work with the Service Director for Adult Social Care chairing the regional group, and have pioneered the work on training models for professionally qualified roles, utilising the apprenticeship levy.
7. The regional strategy has focused on areas such as:
 - Career pathways/career development opportunities
 - Retention strategies
 - Understanding data/workforce planning
 - Apprenticeships – upskilling the existing workforce and recruiting new talent
 - Comms and marketing
 - Hyperlocal recruitment
 - International recruitment

The presentation details case studies showcasing a number of the approaches taken.

8. Whilst both the local and regional work has considered the impact of terms and conditions in the sector, the fundamental issues with the pay of care workers is not something that is within the gift of the Local Authority or ADASS. However, we have utilised the Government temporary (2 year) Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund to stabilise pressure points within the sector related to workforce, focusing on front line workers, especially those supporting people in their own homes, and as a consequence helping more people to stay out of institutional care.¹

Presentation

Impact

9. As outlined in the presentations, the approaches taken are enabling the Service to bring new people into the organisation, and the of interest in these roles has been significantly higher than our traditional roles/methods of recruitment.
10. The Service has been keen to share the good practice and learning with other parts of the Council, partners in Gateshead and other Adult Social Care departments regionally. The work on trainee roles has been highlighted with the Department of Health and Social Care; the service has delivered a number of webinars regionally and nationally and was referenced by DHSC as an example of good practice, and by Social Work England as part of their Sector Led Improvement offer.
[Grant to Streamline Local Authority Adult Social Care Assessments - 2022 to 2023: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
[Sector-led sessions - Social Work England](#)

¹ Cross reference with September 2023's OSC report on Adult Social Care Demands and the Performance Management Information Framework update that will be presented in December 2023.

11. The learning from the recruitment for Sr Winifred Laver Promoting Independence Centre has been assimilated to ensure that it can be carried forward into subsequent recruitment activities; recognising that having a large building in the community that residents were very sighted on, which acted as a “physical draw” for prospective employees.
12. The work with the Local Government Association in respect of the social care workforce data is being piloted in Gateshead as an early adopter of the model, meaning that we are benefitting from senior advisory support from a workforce expert funded by the LGA to develop our strategy and approaches.

Recommendations

13. Care, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny committee is recommended to:
 - (i) Comment on the content of this report and the work undertaken by the service to develop innovative approaches to recruitment.
 - (ii) identify any areas for further scrutiny.

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