Practical approaches to workforce planning

A guide to support workforce planning processes and plans for adult social care support services
Introduction

Workforce planning is an essential part of ensuring that you have the right people with the right knowledge, skills, values and experience providing the care and support your business offers.

There are constant changes taking place within adult social care that affect the way we need to work both now and in the future. It is therefore more important than ever for organisations of all sizes to plan ahead for their future workforce needs.

Truly successful businesses recognise that staff are their most important asset. Motivated, skilled and knowledgeable workers who support the people your service supports to lead their lives in a way which meets their needs and aspirations, will ensure your business thrives.

A good workforce plan will help ensure that you have the right people who have the right skills and values now, and also that you have the plans in place that will ensure you have the right mix of skills in your workforce to meet your business needs in the future.

Workforce planning ensures that your workforce will make your business plan a reality, and that any changes you need to make, either now or in the future, take your entire workforce into account.

This easy to use and effective guide to workforce planning has been produced by Skills for Care. It is intended to support small and medium sized social care business owners and managers. This guide is one part of Skills for Care’s workforce commissioning offer.

The guide has been developed and tested in partnership with employers. It offers a clear way to develop your workforce plan. It will also help you to anticipate how your workforce needs to change and develop as new business opportunities present themselves. There is also an accompanying workbook to support this process.
Who is this guide aimed at?
This guide is aimed at owners, managers and organisational leads responsible for workforce planning in small and medium sized organisations in adult social care.

Skills for Care has published this guide to:

- show employers and workers how they are integral to realising the vision of high quality, personalised and safe adult social care services in the local area, working in partnership with workforce commissioners
- demonstrate to care and support providers that effective workplace planning is both good business and good for the wider market.
Workforce planning: what is it and why is it important?

What is a workforce plan?
A workforce plan sets out your future workforce needs to meet your business objectives as identified in your business plan.

Why workforce plan?
Effective workforce planning ensures that you have a workforce of the right size with the right attitudes, values and skills organised in the right way within the available budget. This underpins the delivery of quality, personalised and safe services meeting the needs and aspirations of the people you are supporting.
What employers are saying about workforce planning and this workbook

“At the Muscliff Nursing Home we found that workforce planning has numerous benefits to the business. It has helped us to ensure that we have the right number of people in place and that they have the right skills to deliver a high standard of care. It also helps us to improve communications and makes staff feel closer to the decision making process. It has also helped us to prepare and plan for changes within our sector. We really feel that good workforce planning gives us a competitive advantage over other care providers.”

Deirdre Charles, Manager
Muscliff Nursing Home, Bournemouth

As a service provider you will typically spend 80-85 per cent of your budget on workforce costs.

“This tool enabled the director to begin to plot and plan for the future delivery of services across Rochdale. It was a firm base in which to develop thinking and subsequent plans.”

Carol Toner, Community Services Director
Alternative Futures Group, Rochdale

Alternative Futures Group, a large charitable organisation passionate about providing person centred support to adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs, were part of the pilot to develop and trial this guide.
What are the principles of workforce planning?

This approach to workforce planning is underpinned by a number of key principles:

- There must be commitment, support and participation from everyone involved in the process; including leaders, all levels of management, the workforce, people who are being supported, families, carers, communities, commissioners and other professionals.

- Effective communication with everyone internally and externally is crucial and should be ongoing throughout the process.

- Strong leadership, support and active participation in the process is essential.
Have you got the right people involved in every stage of the process?

Your organisation has the right people with the right values, skills and attitudes, doing the right things in the right places and basing them on needs and aspirations of people being supported.
Gaining detailed information about your workforce is the first step to planning your recruitment needs.

The National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) is one way to see how your workforce compares with that of similar local businesses.

It is free to sign up and can help you to make informed business decisions by providing tools and information for workforce planning.

There are other benefits for those organisations signed up, including the ability to apply for funding to support staff training.

My NMDS-SC dashboards – making your data work for you

My NMDS-SC dashboards provide instant access to your workforce data. They act as a diagnostic tool to shine light on issues affecting your business.

For more information and to register visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/nmds-sc
What does a good workforce plan need to be?
A good workforce needs to be:

**Specific**

**Measurable**

**Achievable**

**Realistic**

**Timely**

A good workforce plan helps you effectively recruit, retain and develop workers and:

- ensures you are doing what you need to do to stay in business in the future
- is affordable
- is informed by your National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) and other relevant data sources
- demonstrates resources invested in staff development
- takes account of Care Quality Commission (CQC) standards, the law, regulation and requirements of commissioners (where appropriate).
How does workforce planning fit with workforce commissioning?

**Workforce commissioning** describes systems and processes used by the directors of adult social services (DASS) working in partnership with people being supported, families, carers, social care providers, the voluntary sector, health and well being boards, health, housing, leisure and others; to assess and predict the demand for the current and future workforce mapped against supply and the needs of the local population. It identifies priorities, plans and secures the workforce needed, and regularly reviews requirements through workforce planning.

**A workforce strategy** sets out the long-term objectives, and how in broad terms, an organisation aims to accomplish those objectives. It gives the overview and vision.

**A workforce plan** is where your plans are recorded and can be shared with everyone and then used for review and evaluation.

**A workforce development plan** is the mechanism to equip workers with the education, skills, values, knowledge and behaviours they need to effectively deliver and improve services, both now and in the future. It aims to support the service by providing workers with the right skills.

**Workforce planning** is the system and process used by employers including leaders, owners, managers and people employing their own care and support, to ensure they have identified and planned for the workforce to meet their business objectives and personal care plans.

**A workforce strategy** sets out the long-term objectives, and how in broad terms, an organisation aims to accomplish those objectives. It gives the overview and vision.
By starting to think about the questions in this guide, you can construct your own workforce plan. This can be informal notes or a more formal plan depending on your organisation’s requirements.
How do you do it?

There are many approaches to workforce planning; however, this guide uses the practical **Analyse-Plan-Do-Review** approach. This is in line with Skills for Care’s workforce *commissioning* model.

This guide will take you through this practical approach to workforce planning. An accompanying workbook provides recognised business tools and templates, hints and tips.
Analyse

Understanding the national vision for adult social care, employment initiatives and legislation.

Do you know and understand the latest government thinking on care and support services? Are you aware of the national workforce development strategy prepared by Skills for Care? How will government trends and legislation affect you in the future?

Our Practical approaches to workforce planning resources workbook includes a template to record your findings in to help you to identify your priorities – see page 26 for more information.
Local policy and priorities
Do you have a clear idea of the social care policy and the priority needs of your local area? Are you engaged with your local commissioners, other employers and community groups in discussing workforce priorities? Is there a local health and well being strategy or a joint strategic needs assessment yet? Are you engaged with local employer engagement networks?

Organisation/business priorities
Have you considered your current business plans and identified your vision, values, and priorities? What are the significant internal and external opportunities and challenges that will affect your business in both the short and long term? How would your organisation deal with the changing expectations of people who need care and support, their carers and employees and how are those expectations changing?

Data, Information and Intelligence
Have you used National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) and the NMDS-SC dashboards to record your current workforce information, benchmark your organisation and review local demographics? Are you aware of other data sources that might be useful when looking at the future needs of your organisation?

Analysing what this means for you
How does this information impact on your current business planning – are there changes you need to make? Does this give a clear picture of what your organisation’s current and future workforce should look like? What, attitudes, behaviours, skills, values, knowledge, capabilities and competences might they bring to the quality of your service?

Recording where are you now
You may wish to record what you have discovered so far.
Plan

What is it you need to consider?
Are you clear about where you would like to position your organisation to meet your identified needs? Is this in your business plan? Is this financially viable? Are your proposed changes manageable? Which current services are going to be affected and what time-scales do you want to achieve this by?

What does your workforce need to look like in the future?
What are you going to do differently? What new roles and new ways of working will be needed for the future? Will this include volunteers or freelance workers? What impact will this have on your current staff? How are you involving your staff in planning to encourage ownership of the plan?

Are there any gaps?
In order to deliver your services now and in the future, are there any gaps in numbers, knowledge, skills, values, behaviours and attitudes in your workforce? How might your organisation and your workforce need to change?

Cost
Do you know what your workforce costs? Are there any ways in which your workforce could become more productive and cost-effective? Are your rates of pay competitive for your local area?

Risk
Have you identified any risks within the changes you want to make? Have you considered ways you might mitigate these risks?
Measuring the achievements
How will you know that you’ve achieved what you set out in your plan? How will you measure, monitor, review and evaluate?

Record the actions you are going to take
What actions are you going to take and with whom? How are you going to do it? What will it cost? When are you going to achieve this by? How will this be communicated?

Resources
What resources do you have available? What additional resources will you need?

Our Practical approaches to workforce planning resources workbook provides more guidance on what to think about to help you to understand how your workforce looks now and needs to look in future – see page 26 for more information.
Do – implementation

Develop and manage the implementation plan
How will you coordinate the actions that everyone has planned and contributed to? How will you make them happen? What time-scales have you given yourself?

Communicating and engaging with all those involved to ensure effective implementation
How have you communicated the plan? How are you continuing to communicate during the implementation of your plan? How are your staff, leaders, all levels of management, the workforce, people being supported, families, carers, communities, commissioners and other professionals kept involved and informed?

Monitor and review your plans
Are you reviewing your implementation plan regularly with everyone it affects? Is it on target? Are there any issues? What surprises have emerged? Have any opportunities or barriers arisen that have come out of the review? Are they being addressed?

Adjust your plans if needed
Does your monitoring indicate that you need to revise your implementation plan?

Our Practical approaches to workforce planning resources workbook provides useful tools for laying out your plans, helping you to implement and communicate these – see page 26 for more information
Review and evaluate

**Results and impact**
Did the changes you implemented achieve the desired results? Did the new ways of working and new roles help to meet your business plan priorities? What are the outcomes of the workforce changes and is there an impact on the people supported by your service?

**Key achievements and lessons learned**
Have you gathered evidence to identify your key achievements, what you have learned and what you would differently, if at all, next time?

**Report your findings**
Have you shared your findings with your staff, leaders, all levels of management, the workforce, people being supported, families, carers, community, commissioners and other professionals?

**Celebrate success**
How will you celebrate your achievements, reward where appropriate and put forward nominations for any local or national accolades and share your success with others?

**Rethink, refresh and redefine**
To continuously improve the quality of your service and sustain your organisation, use what you have achieved and learned to rethink the process, taking into account the needs of people supported by your service.

The implementation plan monitoring template in our Practical approaches to workforce planning resources workbook helps you to see the progress being made towards your planning outcomes – see page 26 for more information.
The Accolades - celebrating and rewarding the best of the best in adult social care.

The Accolades are awarded to organisations and employers who are committed to delivering high quality care and developing their workforce.

To achieve an Accolade proves an organisation’s success in achieving the highest standards of workforce development within social care. As well as celebrating best practice, the Accolades provide an excellent platform on which to showcase new initiatives and innovative ways of working to the wider sector.

For further information visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/accolades
## Acknowledgements

Skills for Care would like to thank the organisations that have worked with us to produce this guide.

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<td>Volition, The voice of Leeds mental health voluntary sector</td>
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Resources to support workforce planning

Visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk for lots of useful information and resources to support your workforce planning process.
Resources to support workforce planning processes and plans for adult social care and support service

Practical approaches to workforce planning

Helping you through the workforce planning process and offering you a clear way to develop your workforce plan.

By giving you key questions to answer and practical tools to assist you, you can construct your own workforce plan.

To order your copy visit: www.skillsforcare/workforceplanningguide

Copies cost £27.50