

Registered managers: briefing one

Who are registered managers and what do they do?

“I would start with the explanation that you have a team of caring and considerate people supporting others, who have a range of needs due to disabilities or age. My role is to organise and motivate that team, ensuring they provide the best possible care they are capable of.” – Philip Nightingale, Registered Manager

As of June 2018, 92% of providers rated ‘good’ and 100% of services rated ‘outstanding’ were also rated as ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ for ‘Well-led’. Supporting the 20,000 registered managers in England¹ is key to providing quality care.

Introduction

Skills for Care is the membership organisation for registered managers in England. Through our day-to-day work with managers, as well as specific research and consultation activities we understand and respond to the workforce, leadership and management challenges and opportunities facing registered managers.

This is the first of two briefings sharing some of the key messages from exploratory research² carried out by Skills for Care with registered managers in 2017 and 2018. In this briefing we focus on:

- how being a registered manager is demanding and requires a varied skill set
- registered managers not always getting the recognition they deserve
- other registered managers being the best source of support in this unique role.

Skills for Care wants to raise the profile of the registered manager role, growing people’s recognition of its importance and complexity, whilst ensuring registered managers have access to specific support tailored to their needs.

We are committed to working with registered managers to ensure they have the support and skills they need to deliver outstanding care.

This briefing maps the key messages above to Skills for Care’s support for registered managers, as well as examples of some of the great work being done by managers and their employers.

¹ Registered managers in adult social care, Skills for Care, 2016

² This briefing draws on the report ‘What do registered managers do, and who are they’ prepared by Research Partners UK Ltd for Skills for Care. This exploratory research was carried out through an online survey with 860 registered managers in October 2017 and follow-up interviews with 17 of these managers in February 2018.

Being a registered manager is demanding and requires a varied skill set

Registered managers are highly committed individuals and the personal rewards of the role can be great. However, there's very little that lies outside of their remit. They work hard in an often challenging operating environment.

- Almost 80% of managers felt the registered manager role had changed since they first started the role, reporting that it's more varied (71%), with a greater focus on management (72%), but also more pressured (83%).
- 87% of managers reported splitting time between: management of day-to-day operations; involving families and residents; building/maintaining external relationships; leadership and culture; business strategy and management.
- Common development needs for managers include confidence and understanding around governance and regulatory processes; performance and staff management; working with commissioners and business skills.
- Over a third of registered managers (38%) performed tasks not included in their job description.
- The majority of managers provided some degree of direct care (71%) alongside their other responsibilities.

“Caring is not just a job, it's a passion” – Beth Cheffings, Registered Manager

Read more from Beth [here](#)

Skills for Care understands that a register manager's role is challenging and diverse. Through our core offer of registered manager membership, research and pilots, we support managers at each stage of their career to lead their services and develop their skills.

Skills for Care's offer and activity in 2018

[People performance management](#) – this free, practical toolkit offers comprehensive guidance and templates in a 'how to' format, helping managers to performance-manage their staff.

[Well-led](#) – Skills for Care's flagship leadership programme, developed in partnership with registered managers familiar with the day-to-day challenges of leading a care team.

[CQC and improvement offer](#) – including the Good and outstanding care guide, CQC seminars and bespoke support, tailored to the needs of providers.

[Skills for Care offer](#) – resources on topics including recruitment, core skills and supervision.

CQC Safe staffing guide – a new guide showcasing best practice from good and outstanding providers (launching October 2018)

Registered managers do not always get the recognition they deserve

The first two years of the CQC's new inspection process found more than nine out of ten services getting 'good' or 'outstanding' in 'Well-led' were rated 'good' or 'outstanding' overall. Despite this, registered managers do not always get the recognition they deserve.

- Over 90% of registered managers responding to our research reported that their current role was more challenging than their last role in another sector.
- However, only 43% of those managers reporting their current role was more challenging than their last in another sector, felt that other people would share this view.
- Whilst almost 80% of managers felt the registered manager role had changed over time, only 20% of these managers reported that the role is better recognised than it was.
- In 2012, research by the National Skills Academy for Social Care found that just 20% of registered managers felt their role was sufficiently recognised outside of the social care sector.

"Their role is absolutely critical for providing high quality support services and enabling the people we support to achieve outcomes. Registered care managers set the culture and quality for the services they manage – from the recruitment and support of person-centred teams through to their focus on continuous improvement and development of their services." Jonathan Monk, Head of Quality, Sense

Read more from Jonathan [here](#)

It's important that the pivotal role registered managers have in the provision of quality care is recognised and understood. We are working to ensure that registered managers receive the praise and status they deserve.

Skills for Care's offer and activity in 2018

Membership – we are the membership organisation for registered managers in England. Alongside receiving regular, practical and relevant information through resources, newsletters and other activities, membership is also about professional identity. When registered managers become members of Skills for Care they are joining a community of managers committed to delivering great care.

Sharing best practice – it's important that we continue to challenge negative perceptions of the registered manager role and the sector. That's why we place an emphasis on sharing the great work managers do, for example:

- [It's all about people and time](#) – Shirley Steeples
- [How do you like your toast? I like mine burnt](#) – Gail Godard
- [The importance of culture](#) – Anne Wilson

Other registered managers are the best source of support in this unique role

“Confidence, reassurance, knowing you’re in the same boat as others and having someone to share problems with...” When registered managers share memories of their early days in the role they talk about how vital their links to other managers were or how beneficial they would have found this support.

It isn’t just new managers either; reports of isolation amongst registered managers in England are common.

Peer support is invaluable for all registered managers. Alongside professional and personal support, meeting peers provides information, professional identity and opportunities to engage with stakeholders like local authorities or the CQC.

When we asked registered managers about the value of local networks for registered managers across England, supported by Skills for Care, we found:

- 74% agreed or strongly agreed that they have a better knowledge of legislation and policy relevant to the role
- 68% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more confident and prepared for CQC inspections
- 70% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt less isolated as a result of attending network meetings
- 73% said they had shared ideas and good practice with other managers as a result of networks.

“I think networks have lots of benefits. It’s a great place to come and have another registered manager to speak to away from the office. Managers receive support and reassurance in a confidential environment and it helps you to realise that you’re not alone.” – Laura Hambridge, registered manager and network chair

Read more from Laura [here](#)

Our ambition is to ensure that through our networks, membership and local activity, every registered manager in England has the opportunity to meet with, and learn from, other managers.

Skills for Care’s offer and activity in 2018

[Networks](#) – we support networks for registered managers across every local authority area in England. Networks offer peer support and opportunities to engage with stakeholders such as local authorities, CCGs, the CQC and NICE.

[Membership](#) – we are the membership organisation for registered managers in England.

Summary

When we asked registered managers, many tended to view the role as a vocation, and often expressed how much they personally got out of it, despite its challenges.

None-the-less it's important to recognise that, in a sector often characterised by change, registered managers hold a complex role with a high level of responsibility, which is not always understood or well recognised.

Therefore it's imperative that we continue to provide registered managers with the support they need, with the recognition they deserve and with opportunities to meet and talk to other managers.

Finally...

We know that registered managers need support and development opportunities to grow their confidence and leadership; engage with peers and more experienced managers; develop new skills / problem-solve; increase their knowledge / awareness.

- We publish full details of our support for registered managers including membership at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/registeredmanagers.
- If you're a registered manager you should find your nearest registered manager network [today](#).
- Keep up-to-date with Skills for Care's work via [Enews](#).
- Contact your Skills for Care locality manager to find out about the work we are doing [in your area](#).
- If you're a registered manager, or you employ a registered manager, take a look at [Well-led](#), Skills for Care's flagship leadership development programme, developed in partnership with registered managers familiar with the day-to-day challenges of leading a care team.