

The Good Care Group

Recruiting care workers with resilience

The Good Care Group (TGCG) mainly provides live-in care and employs over 500 care workers. They do not use agency staff and exclusively employ and train all their care staff.

What we wanted to achieve

Live-in care demands particular skills from care workers, who need to be sufficiently trained and self-reliant to be able to function with less supervision than a daily care worker. TGCG was finding that, despite its employment model with a focus on caring for care workers, some were leaving within the first three months as they didn't feel able to cope.

The recruitment team wanted to find out what separated their highest performing and longer-staying care workers from those who left. If they could recruit more of the type of carers that were succeeding, those showing strong levels of resilience, then perhaps they could reduce the number of employees leaving.

What we did

TGCG had traditionally used a top-down approach when developing their recruitment strategy. In 2012, they changed their approach entirely; to find out what made a good live-in care worker they decided to profile their existing employees (both care workers and managers) through psychometric testing and face-to-face interviews.

This new approach provided both a completely new perspective and fresh insight. Results showed that their highest-performing care workers scored highly in areas of tenacity, resolve, self-discipline and emotional stability and resilience.

It was decided that these values, attributes and behaviours would be specifically targeted in the recruitment process and, as a result, they re-wrote their competency framework.

All prospective new employees now complete psychometric testing and are asked situational questions at both telephone and face-to-face interview stages designed to reveal these attributes. If candidates pass these stages they are put forward for an induction programme which includes a selection day. The day's exercises, tests and scenarios are designed to reveal care workers who are self-assured and emotionally stable.

What we achieved

As a result of this and other changes to their recruitment and retention practices, TGCG have seen employee turnover reduce by roughly 20% each year since 2012, increasing continuity of care and improving client outcomes.

TGCG uses the stability index to measure their employee retention rate. As a result of changes to their recruitment practices, they have observed their stability index increase from the mid-40's to high-50's. When taken in the context of the live-in sector, where temporary employees working for less than one year is a more common trend anyway, this shift is a significant achievement. What's more, TGCG include employees who leave within the first three months of employment within this calculation (often excluded) making it an even more impressive shift.

What we learnt

Whilst TGCG recognise that psychometric testing is a small part of the wider recruitment process, they feel it has made a large contribution to truly understanding what makes a good live-in carer and what to look for in the recruitment process. TGCG learnt that investment at the beginning of the process saves time downstream and prevents unnecessary churn and client dissatisfaction. TGCG take fewer risks and place much more emphasis on ensuring that both the company is right for the individual and that the individual is right for the company.

Understanding the 'make-up' of a 'live-in' carer and what makes for real success in this role was critical in improving carer churn and setting up our team for success

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Skills for Care Recommends

Skills for Care produces a wide range of products and services related to recruitment and retention within the adult social care sector including;

Finding and keeping workers online

We have a wide range of practical recruitment and retention resources from Skills for Care and other organisations are available.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/findingandkeepingworkers

Resilience

We have a guide for employers to support them to develop the resilience of their workers. There is also a pull out section for workers.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resilience

Values based recruitment

Recruitment people with the right values is essential for care organisations. These resources explain how it can be done.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/values

The Social Care Commitment

The Social Care Commitment is the adult social care sector's promise to provide people who need care and support with high quality services.

www.thesocialcarecommitment.org.uk