

Registered managers



skillsfor
care

Cut out and keep

Acas – Addressing workplace problems in adult social care

About Acas

At Acas, we are committed to making working life better for everyone in Britain. Conflict in the workplace carries a cost. This cost is financial, but it's emotional too. At Acas, we exist to reduce both.

Healthy working relationships are critical not just to the success of workplaces and the economy but also because they allow people to flourish and find meaning and purpose at work.

At Acas, we help people resolve workplace problems. We do this by thinking first about the people involved, helping them to have open, honest conversations. Whenever we can, we prevent disputes before they happen, through training and advice. But where they cannot be avoided, we resolve them, working impartially with all those involved.

Acas provides support that is:

Expert - We have been providing advice and conciliation to Britain's workplaces for over a century. While work has changed beyond recognition, our insight and experience ensure we give the most up-to-date advice.

We have deep insight into the health and social care sectors, and have worked with partners to support them on issues as varied as introduction of mandatory Covid vaccines, changes in flexible work legislation, and support around mental health and burnout.

Impartial - We work with all sides to resolve conflict, treating each side equally. We can be relied upon to give confidential advice and to be frank and honest.

We work with partners in the health and social care sectors on both collective and individual disputes which might lead to an Employment Tribunal. We are successful in finding agreements in the vast majority of cases.

Independent - We are publicly funded and have been independent from Government since 1974. We act only to promote a better future at work.

At Acas, we lead the way in promoting good work and reducing disputes. Our success relies on our people working in partnership with employees and employers, academics and policymakers, trade union and business leaders.

Our approach means we have a unique perspective on workplace relations, seeing issues from both the employers' and employees' side, and can provide support to get policies, processes and behaviours right and build skills for effective workplaces. We have worked with organisations across all industries and sectors and as a result have built a wealth of knowledge and experience in dealing with workplace relations and best practice.

Adult social care sector

Acas has been working with the adult social care sector and colleagues in Skills for Care for some time.

There are various ways we can help and support you including:

- attending registered managers meetings in your area
- work with you on particular workplace challenges, for example changes to policies or structure, bullying or culture change
- provide advice on upcoming changes in the law which will affect you
- visiting your workplace, or other networks and attending meetings or meeting people in your organisation
- provide you with tools and materials, posters and top tips to help you get it right for great workplaces.

Helpful resources:

- [Managing holiday, sickness and leave](#)
- [Making reasonable adjustments around mental health and wellbeing](#)
- [Managing work related stress](#)
- [Managing flexible working requests](#) [the law will be changing in 2024 and this page will be updated]
- [Effectively managing discrimination and bullying](#)
- [Managing the menopause](#)

If you would like some advice or need to speak to us please email James Brown: jbrown@acas.org.uk and we can arrange a call.

Case study: Leeds City Council and the social care sector

In 2018, a significant number of the 200 Leeds City Council care homes were failing to achieve ratings of either 'Outstanding' or 'Good' in the area of "well-led". This was causing problems with staff morale and retention. Drastic changes were required to upskill managers working in these important roles in order to provide a good service.

Trevor Hewitt, from the Adults and Health Directorate in Leeds City Council reached out to Acas for advice. He wanted to understand what wasn't working, why it wasn't working, and what the City Council could do to support its workforce in the care homes.

James Brown is a Leeds based Senior Business Adviser at Acas. He works with organisations across Yorkshire and Humber, and beyond, to understand their workforce challenges and give them the tools to find solutions which work for them. He has a particular interest and background experience in working in the health and social care sectors.

Trevor explained to James the root of the problem, and the impacts it was causing. Together they developed a 'Line Manager Skills Passport' for registered managers and supervisors across Leeds City Care Homes, which focused on skills gaps and priorities. This meant that managers could attend specific bespoke training which was relevant to them, and get the support when and how they needed it.

Ten modules were offered over a 12-month period, covering topics including good line management practices and employment law, and attendees could 'pick and mix' as they needed.

People who took part reported that they had developed their management skills and their understanding on good practice and employment procedures, with many delegates attending the full programme of 10 modules to further enhance their knowledge and skill set.

The programme was congratulated for the impact it had on people within the adult social care homes in Leeds at a Skills for Care Accolades Awards ceremony in February 2020. The City won the 'best employer for registered managers' award, the panel citing the Council's commitment to improve the quality of social care services in the city by supporting registered managers through the Acas Leadership Academy.

The scale of the success can be further seen in the respect it is now held in Leeds. The Council has expanded the programme further adding modules on: 'Understanding the Menopause' and 'Building Personal Resilience', and 'Conducting Workplace Investigations' to ensure fairness and legal compliance.

The City Council have also extended it: to date they have run eight programmes (that's 90 training events to over 800 delegates and counting), run back to back since September 2020, which have all been free for care home managers to attend.

In 2023, Leeds City Council Care Homes has now seen a substantial increase of care homes achieving 'outstanding' or 'good' status in the area of "Well-led." The programme was available to all care homes across the City region; and has seen demonstrable improvements in quality of care.

If you would like to find out more about the programme in Leeds, talk about challenges you are facing, or invite an Acas expert to attend a registered managers meeting, get in touch with James Brown: jbrown@acas.org.uk

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