



The care exchange – Series 5

Episode 6: It's good to connect

Hosts

Pia Rathje-Burton and Wendy Adams

Guest

Kam Gill, Registered Manager, Walfinch Oxfordshire

Pia Rathje-Burton 00:08

Welcome to the Care Exchange, Skills for Care podcast for managers in social care. I'm Pia Rathje-Burton,

Wendy Adams 00:14

and I'm Wendy Adams. So today we're talking to Kam Gill. Kam is the registered manager for Walfinch Oxfordshire and Whitney, and they're an organization that provide home care. Walfinch is part of the Walfinch franchise, which is actually owned by Kam's brother, Amrit.

Pia Rathje-Burton 00:32

So Kam started working in care 12 years ago, initially just to help her brother out being a PA for someone, but also help with recruitment. But within 18 months, she caught the social care bug and became a registered manager, a role she's held since. In 2024. Kam won the dementia care registered manager award at the dementia care awards, and Kam is also the co-chair of the Oxford registered manager network. So looking forward to catching up with Kam today, on with the show. So welcome to the care exchange Kam

Kam Gill 01:16

Thank you. Thank you for having me. Great to have you here.

Pia Rathje-Burton 01:19

I wanted to start by asking you, we heard in the introduction there that you are the co-hair of the Oxford registered manager network. What? Why? Why did you decide to become involved as a co chair?

Speaker 1 01:33

Well, actually, I bumped into Rachel a couple of times, a couple of events and stuff, and then I received an email from her, you know, asking me whether I'd be interested. So then I said I'd like to know a bit more about it. And, you know, because I like information, and you know what's involved, etc. So yeah, we had a chat, and I thought, well, you know what? Something new, I haven't done something, and I like to try new things. And, and, yeah, I went with it.

Pia Rathje-Burton 02:00

So you're, you were recruited, yes, so just so for listeners, Rachel is the locality manager for for your area a network.

Speaker 1 02:13

Well, I think, I think it's, it's good to connect with, with other registered managers, especially in your area as well, because obviously, you know, you can share information, contacts, etc. And also, I think it's a, you know, an area where everyone can come in and because you know, we're sort of facing the same sort of issues, etc, so share ideas and challenges and just feel like you're not alone. Because obviously, you know, as a registered manager, it can be quite a lonely job, because a lot of times the providers or nominated individuals are not really involved in the day-to-day. So it's it's good to and then in the you learn, like, you know, our last meeting, one of the registered managers told us about an app that you can use for certain things and stuff. So, you know, we're all sharing ideas, and then, yeah, so you meet new people. You do get to see a wide variety of people.

Wendy Adams 03:10

That's just sounds great to hear that you get so much out of that. One of the challenges, I think, sometimes with the registered manager networks is lots of people sign up and then aren't able to attend on the day because we know that the registered manager role is so busy. Why do you think that managers should take time out to come to the registered managers networks when they've got so much else to do?

Speaker 1 03:35

I think it's important for them to get out from the office because and recharge. Because, I think it's a way of, you know, when you come out, you're talking, it's a nice environment. And it's a social sort of, you know, event as well, because, you know, you get to have a coffee and network and stuff and, and I think it's really important for registered manager get out the office, because they don't. And I think it's, it's, it's just, it's just a nice way of, it's a safe space to share experiences, ideas. And I've we actually had more people turn up than we were expecting. So we put regular reminders that I made a little video, because initially we didn't have many people responding. And I said to Rachel, well, it's RM's. I think they're going to probably wait till the last minute, because, you know, as we know, you know, things can happen last minute. So a week or two beforehand, I sent a little, you know, video inviting people, and just made it, you

know, a bit light hearted and stuff, and we had a really good turnout. So it was good. And also sharing, you know, the agenda, you know what, what's happening, what speakers are coming, what we're covering, because they might think, actually, that's a really interesting topic, you know. So I think, I think sharing the agenda also helps.

Wendy Adams 04:47

Yeah, I think sometimes as well, it's, it's helpful. You know, we can send people can. You can receive information via email and but whether or not you then get time to read it, and I suspect. For a lot of registered managers, they just, you know, file stuff, and think I'll read that when I've got time, but then don't ever get round to it. Whereas I think coming along to the registered managers network almost it, it saves you time in the long run, because actually, that's, that's knowledge that you've taken in that would probably have taken you as long, if not more time to to read it, even if you manage to find the time to do so,

Speaker 1 05:26

yes, definitely, yeah. And

Pia Rathje-Burton 05:29

I think the other thing about it is it's, you're sort of kind of role modeling, aren't you, really? So, you know, we want to, you know, if you see it as a rather than seeing it, oh, it's just another meeting I go to, it's, it's a development opportunity. And you were saying about sharing good practices and sharing, you know, things that you've learned, you know, seeing it as a development opportunity. And if you're now, get a lot of registered managers say, oh, you know, my really, it's really difficult sometimes to get my staff engaged in training and development, or in the, you know, learning new things and attending training courses. So if you almost see it like that, that, you know, if you're showing, well, I take my development important, you know, really, it's really important to me, and isn't important, important to my career and my ability to do my role. Well, then, by going to this developing, you know, network, or I'm going to be developing my skills, you know. So I think, think that's another way of doing it. And as the chair, how do you think you ensure that members feel, you know, they're part of the network and feel welcomed? So

Speaker 1 06:41

I'm at the meeting, I sort of make a point of, you know, chatting to everybody. And you know, when we go for breaks, going and talking to each individual, you know, we took some pictures, we shared them on our LinkedIn and stuff, and, you know, things that maybe they haven't done before. So I think it's trying to get to know each individual, and then trying to get people engaged, because we have a WhatsApp group get people engaged on the WhatsApp So trying to just prompt like, oh, you know, and mentioning at the meeting as well that, you know, that that's a safe space for us to share ideas. Obviously, no sensitive information. But, you

know, because it's good to seeing well, you know, when I was in this scenario, you know, this is what I did. What do you think I could have done differently, or whatever? So I think, I think that that's really important, and sometimes people are quite quiet, or you might want, not want to talk with everyone, or, you know, bring a point up. So maybe just saying that if anyone wants to catch up after the meeting, you know, feel free or in the break. Yeah,

Pia Rathje-Burton 07:41

and do you do anything at the start to sort of, kind of get everybody Yes, yeah. That is not just another meeting. It is different. I

Speaker 1 07:50

think, you know, when everyone arrives, everyone's sort of quite rushed. They've probably dealt with some, you know, firefighting in the morning. So we have tea, coffee, pastries. So everybody, you know, take their time, get everyone to settle in, and then we have an icebreaker. The first meeting I did, we did a Punjabi dance. So I hadn't really standing, because in Walfinch, we like warm ups and exercise. And, you know, get the brain cells going so in between a meeting so people don't start falling asleep, especially after lunch, because I get everybody up and do a bit of a warm up. So I did a Punjabi dance. So I bought my my Alexa got some music on, and I had everybody doing Punjabi Bangra moves. So that was good fun. And I think this time we did a word association game. So everybody had a bit of a giggle. And it sort of just, you know, eased everybody in.

Pia Rathje-Burton 08:41

Yeah, it's a really good way of of starting a meeting, because people, people then start feeling connected, don't they with each other, and, you know, put their phone away Exactly. It's really, you know, it's difficult sometimes to focus, isn't it? I can, I can see when in my networks, that sometimes people are like, you can see them kind of, you know, glancing in their phones, there's clearly something happening in their service. And it's, you know, really important to sort of stay in the moment, isn't it? Yeah, of course. So I wanted to ask a little bit more about Walfinch and your, you know, your two locations. So sometimes the feedback we get from home care providers is they do find it quite tricky to be part of the local community. What are the things that you do to be connected to your local community?

Speaker 1 09:25

So we, we hold quite a few events. So whether it's, you know, an exercise class or an activity class. So we get involved with village village halls and and those sort of things when we're out and about. You know, you know, we might hold a there's an event, for example, in Oxford. We've always signed up for these sort of things. Try and meet people and meet new groups, you know, like the stroke group or whatever. So try and try and ask if we can come and attend and have a talk, and, you know, share what we do. And you know. Vice versa. They ask us

questions we can answer and whatever. And if there's a speaker that we can take in, you know, invite them in. So I think it's just about engaging and learning about, you know, the people around you that your community and how we can help. You know, raising money. We did. We raised, raised some money after we stood, we did a cake, cake sale for Marie Curie. So we got people involved in that, getting the team involved as well. So getting the carers out. So it's not just about the day to day. Try and get them involved in some of these community exercises. So yeah, and building, you know, relationships with GP's and your district nurses and stuff. Because, you know, you we always need them. And you know, if you've made connections with the receptionist or or the practice manager, when there is a problem last minute, you know they're like, oh, you know, can you ask so and so and or the pharmacies? Because, you know, there's always drama with collecting medication, or the dosset boxes not ready, or whatever. So I think building those little relationships are quite helpful.

Wendy Adams 11:01

I think that that is so important. Because I think some domiciliary care providers this, they look at that and think, Well, that's time that haven't got to, you know, to spend. But I think what you're saying is that actually this really benefits you as a service, because you've got those relationships, which maybe, you know, does mean that you can offer better services going forward. Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Pia Rathje-Burton 11:31

And I think sometimes when you, if you do somebody a favor, or you, you know, you put yourself out, they are much more likely to do the same as you're saying those key people, they, you know, the receptionist, the GP practice of pharmacists, you know, they, they're good people to have to be in your good books, aren't they, really?

Speaker 1 11:50

Yeah. I mean, we've, we had, I had a GP contact me saying that a client, a patient of theirs, has complained. And, you know, can you remind me about scenario, you know, this situation, you know, it was like probably three, four months ago. The doctors obviously forgotten about what the situation was. And I, you know, I keep, you know, these sort of things I keep in my mind. Obviously, I have less patients than she did anyway. So I told her about, this was what happened. This is why you got involved and stuff so refreshed her mind about all of the little, little details that she may not have recorded. And she was, like, very grateful. And obviously, if I call her now, I'm sure she will be very helpful for me as well. Yeah. So it sort of works both ways doesn't it?!

Wendy Adams 12:34

Yeah. And this must be really nice for the staff as well, because one of the things that we know from the Skills for Care, adult social care workforce data set is that most of our carers live

within a couple of miles of where they where they live. So I'm guessing that you know, if they're getting involved in things through work, in their community, it actually is their community.

Speaker 1 12:59

It is their community. Yeah, that's it. So we're recruiting locally. So when clients are asking us, oh, are the carers local because they don't want to, they worry that, oh, if they're traveling like, you know, 40-50, miles, you know that they're not going to get to me in time. So having recruited carers locally, that's really helpful, and it gives them that sort of comfort that they're, you know, they're around here. If I needed them, I can call them

Pia Rathje-Burton 13:23

absolutely. And you do things like exercise classes and things like that as well, don't

Speaker 1 13:28

you? Yes, yes. So we're doing exercise classes and activity classes. So we're sort of building that obviously Walfinch, we're, you know, talking about the longevity of people and their health. So before they get to the stage of having care. So if people are sort of, you know, exercising, you know, and also mentally, you know, you know, a lot of people are isolated, especially in the little villages and stuff, trying to get the local people out. So these sort of classes, we don't, we do more for the community, rather than for our clients. So we want to get them out and about, so that, you know, they're engaging. And it's something you know, especially now when the weather's better, reason to get out. And you know, in the winter, days where people are not going out so much, we do like a soup lunch after one of our classes once a week. So that that's been quite successful.

Pia Rathje-Burton 14:21

So is that something that you're offering, you know, a paid service that you're offering to

Speaker 1 14:27

it's paid by us. It's so we, we do have a donation jar if somebody wants to donate, but generally, that's all paid by us. So we rent the venue, we provide the food and drink, the activity. So the PT rehire is a big cost implication, but we've seen such a good response that we've got to just keep going,

Wendy Adams 14:49

Okay? And, I mean, I'm guessing it's a really nice, I mean, it's a nice thing to do in your community of course. I guess that it's it's also quite a good business model because if somebody has come along to your art class or your exercise class, or your your you know, had some of your lovely soup, and then in a year's time, are looking for a care provider. Why are

they not going to come to you? exactly Well, hopefully, yes, exactly. I mean, that would be an obvious Yeah, an obvious assumption, wouldn't it?

Speaker 1 15:22

Yes, yeah, definitely, definitely. And also they're going to tell two or three other people, aren't they? That are you know, I know this provider. They do this in the community. But it's not easy, not everyone you know, with the with the stresses of of work and in the work we do, it's not something easy to do. So it's, you know, you know, it's taken us years to get to this point where we can, you know, get an Events Coordinator. Because obviously you get events coordinators in care homes and stuff, not so much in DOM care. So, you know, putting that time aside. So obviously we're paying this events coordinator just to do these sort of activities as well. So a lot of work and planning goes into it as well.

Wendy Adams 16:04

Yeah, it's such a nice idea, though, because I think you know, if you're looking to, you know, care for your relative in the community, and you get a list of possible domiciliary care organizations, if you don't work in the sector, you know, you look at that list, and really, how do you know you know? How do you know one's good, one's not so good? And yes, you can look at the CQC rating, but actually, if you hear about a provider doing something like the sorts of things you're doing in the community, you know that that might well make you feel a bit more reassured about engaging in that organization? Yeah, you know, and

Speaker 1 16:44

it's about working with the other providers in your local community, because we can't, all, you know, fill a care package requirements, you know, any phone call that comes in, it's not necessary that we're all going to be able to say yes. So for me, it's always having knowing what the other providers in the area are able to cover so if I can't do it, I'd like to be helpful to the person who's called me and give them the information. Well, I can't, but I can put you in touch with, you know, somebody who can so that obviously they're spending a lot of time on the phone, searching, and obviously a lot of people that initially do call don't have any idea, or it's a family member, have no idea about care. Don't know what they're looking for. So I think it's important to be as helpful as possible in that phone call, because it's a stressful time looking for care, isn't it?

Pia Rathje-Burton 17:29

Yeah, absolutely. You mentioned earlier about your your team, and how you get, you know, get people to stand up and do do stuff. So tell us a little bit more about how you create that good team spirit.

Speaker 1 17:42

I think about recruiting the right people. So I think, you know, a lot of work goes into recruitment. So, you know, not everyone is from a care background, so, you know, but that doesn't mean that they wouldn't be a good care so I think it's recruiting the right people, developing them. So we do a lot of personal development, you know, we put people on qualifications because we want them to think of this as a career, not just a job. So, but not everybody wants to take that career pathway. So I think that's important, yeah. So I think, I think, and then getting everybody involved in all the different activities, or whatever you might be doing. So it's not just that the same person does it all the time. So I think getting everybody involved in all the different things that you're doing, making them feel like part of the team. I think that really is helpful, and they enjoy it. So, you know, we try to do team building exercises like take them out, whether it's a bowling activity, or just go for drinks, or there's a bunch of us who've got birthdays together, so we all go for a meal or something. So I think you know, just finding different things to do because it is busy. But we do also try and our working hours are a bit different. We sort of start at eight, our last minute visit finishes by eight, so that people still can go home and have a nice evening with the kids, etc, and have an evening as well, rather than finishing very late. So I think those sort of things help us keep our staff happy as

Wendy Adams 19:11

well. I was just wondering about how you promote diversity in your service. Do you have a very diverse team?

Speaker 1 19:18

Yes, I think we do. So I think obviously no two people are going to be the same. So different people have different strengths. Come from different backgrounds, so I think that works in each other's, you know, benefit. So we've got, for example, we've got a client who needed a Spanish speaking carer. So we managed, obviously, in the team that we have, we were able to provide that service. Or we had somebody who once wanted somebody Italian, because she wanted this, you know, cooking done a certain way and stuff. So we've got that I've in the past, had helped somebody Punjabi speaking she wanted to be taken to a temple. And. Stuff, but she wanted somebody to speak the language and know what process is, etc, and and people with different, you know, education background. So I think it's just trying to because we all have different skillsets, don't we? So, but I think it's having a broad team,

Wendy Adams 20:20

and I think that's that that's important, isn't it, when we're thinking about person centred care, because what you're describing is almost matching the carer to the person who is requiring that care and support, rather than simply who can be in the right place at the right time. Yeah,

20:39

of course,

Pia Rathje-Burton 20:42

and there are things that you do as a team to really acknowledge that diversity you have within your within your team. So

Speaker 1 20:50

we have had a we've had a an event where we asked everybody to cook something from their native background, and we all share it. And, you know, obviously they had to write down, you know, exactly what was inside, because, just in case there's something that we've not heard or might be allergic to, etc. So I think those sort of things are quite good fun. I've been to an event. I think I can't remember who held it and that, and they had, you know, clients. Then everybody bought something in from cooked of their choice from their backgrounds and stuff. So that was quite good fun. Yeah, and I think, you know, we've, we've done, sort of tried out different dancing, so everybody's sort of danced with different music and things like that. You know, we don't always get enough time to do these sort of things. So, but, yeah, but I think that you know, whatever you can you gotta try and fit in that thing.

Wendy Adams 21:44

Yeah. Love the fact that you know your team helping understand the diversity of the team focuses around food. Isn't that the issue, in most ways, is

Speaker 1 21:55

a big issue, like, obviously, you know, obviously, we've got people from lots of different backgrounds and English cooking has been a big problem, and obviously we've recruited people, so we do a cooking class. So our events coordinator also has done the food course as well, so she then supports people with their initial cooking skills before they go out to work, so that they understand the differences, because obviously, in a lot of countries, they don't, can't tell the difference between ham and bacon and stuff like that, or oil paper and, you know, cling film. And you know, when you open a tin, you know, you know how you store the food in the fridge. You can't put the tin in the fridge. And you know, just basic things that might be basic for us. So I think it's about, you know, they're very good. Work ethic is good, but there's certain things that are holding them back. So we noticed that. So that's something that we've been doing, and that is really helpful. And then you just up their skills. So, you know, you keep moving them, and then you make sure you match them. So a lot of people just want to have ready made meals, but if somebody wants wants, you know, a freshly cooked meal, we need to make sure we've got people who are fully trained or able to do that.

Pia Rathje-Burton 23:09

Yeah, I really like that, because it's one of the things that we hear, hear a lot from home care providers that, you know, food is so important to everybody, and the people you're supporting

wants to make sure that they the food they're getting, is exactly how they how they want it. And that could be really difficult for you. For you know, if you haven't grown up in the UK, it takes a long time to understand what you know, how the how the culture is around food, isn't it? So providing actually lessons, sounds like a really good idea.

Speaker 1 23:38

Yeah. I mean, even if you you're born and brought up here, everybody has a different taste in a different way of cooking. You know, my mum wants everything burnt, you know, somebody else might want it rare or something, you know. So, you know, it's just trying to understand and listen to the client and you know what they want, how they want it, because everyone's very different.

Wendy Adams 23:58

Language is is different as well, isn't it? You know, I was talking to a registered manager recently who, you know, the the customer had asked for the pop, ie, meaning, you know, Coke, Fanta and they got a can of beer because, but for the worker, that was, that was a can of, a can of drink. So they really made the difference between, you know, the person was asking for pop, ie, you know, a fizzy soft drink, as opposed to a can of beer.

24:30

Yeah, yeah. It

Pia Rathje-Burton 24:33

sounds to me like you are very good of kind of think there's a problem. How can I solve this problem in a, maybe a way that isn't so obvious? So I'm just sort of thinking about, you know, you've seen an issue with food. You know, being prepared is not, you know, how, how the the people you're supporting are wanting it. You can see how some of your staff are struggling with those skills. Well, I'm going to do something about that. I'm going to provide these lessons. It sounds to me that's that's kind of something that's quite important to you, to kind of identify a problem and then trying to find an alternative way to and

Speaker 1 25:16

I think that's what this that's what care is all about. You know, we don't have the answer. You know, straight away all the time, and we've got to find it or figure something out. And I think, you know, that's what register a lot of registered managers are doing. You know, you're just trying to fire fight all the time and find an answer if you haven't got the answer. I think it's nice to be able to work with a network where you can ask the question or write you Do you know how to do this? Or what would you do in this scenario? I'm thinking, I should do this. You know, there's the groups on the Facebook. I'm always reading some of the comments there, you know, you know, because it is very lonely, and there is so much always going on,

Pia Rathje-Burton 25:53

yeah? So kind of, kind of getting all that and then coming up with, you know, let's try this and see if you see if it works. You know, sounds like a really good idea. I wanted to ask you a bit about so obviously, we heard introduction that you started part, part of your career, and so she has started as a recruiter, you know, which obviously a role you sort of held for for a while. Are there things that you picked up from that you think, well, that's a sort of kind of a top tip around recruitment,

Speaker 1 26:24

yeah, well, I think you used to pick a lot up when you do the initial phone call, you get an idea whether somebody is interested in the role. I think when you do call somebody, I think you need to make them feel comfortable and ask them a bit about themselves. It's not just about work, you know, what do they like and their family, what's important to them? How do they relax? And, you know, what do they enjoy doing? So I think about getting to know them, and then when they do come in, making them feel comfortable, and how are we different to another provider. So are we laying out the red carpet for them when they come in? You know? You know, we're putting a, you know, we have, when we have franchisees come in, we have a name stand from the parking and stuff like that. So we try and do that for the carers as well. Because why not? So I think it's just, you know, offer them tea and coffee. Everybody in our office stands up and greets them when they come in, and just, you know, make them feel welcome. And then, you know, just, I think that helps them just to relax and be themselves, and then get to the know them. And I think you can initially, I, you know, been doing this for quite some time, and I think I can always tell whether, if somebody comes in and just says how much money I'm going to get paid, I'm only going to work for this many hours, I know that that person's not going to fit in with my culture and my team, because in this job, if you do need to be very flexible, and we have to be flexible, because somebody says that I'm a single mom, I can only work these hours. We've got, we can, we can accommodate that. But then there might be somebody who only wants to do evening. So it all just, it works out. But I think it's picking those initial bits from interviews and their initial conversations, and if they turn up on time, or if they can't make it, they, you know, sort of communicated that to you, because a lot of people just don't turn up to interviews, and you know that they're not the right person. They haven't contacted us, they haven't said you know that there's a certain reason, or whatever, and then looking after them when you do take them on, you know, just because you you know, they're now recruited, and they've done the shadowing, and they've done the training, and now they're out there. I think it's about checking in with them how they found it. Because no matter how experienced any carer is, when you go to a new company, everyone has a different way of working and making sure that they're happy and picking up any, you know, tips from them thinking, oh, you know, you know, I noticed this, but you know, you know, have we tried, you

know, maybe try doing this. So it's about, you know, feedback as well, and, you know, learning from each other.

Wendy Adams 28:58

And I think that the focus is shifting a little bit. Years we've we've only talked about recruitment, but I think more and more we're starting to now think about it's not just about how do you recruit staff, but it's actually about how do you retain your staff. Do you think there's things that managers could do that would help with that retention?

Speaker 1 29:20

I think, you know, managers, we're very pushed, like, you know, we're, we're short staffed. I think every care company is short staffed because recruitment so difficult. Or, you know, like, now, this the last couple of months, everybody's trying to take that annual leave. So, you know, you're short staffed in that sense. I think it's just checking in with with the carers, if, if a carer or somebody's mentioned, oh, so and so is not happy, you know, don't leave it until they come and tell you that they're not happy, or whatever. I think if you get an indication that there's some something's not right, go out there, take them out for a coffee, find out what the problem is, because sometimes it's really minor, and we can catch things in advance. If you leave things too late, you're going to lose the carer. They may have been, you know, they may have had, you know, you know, been great for a client, or they've got great potential. They might want career progression and and we do personal development plans with our staff, so I think it's, you know, keeping an eye on those right? So this is their route. This is what they want to do. This is what they want to how they want to develop, making sure you're staying on track. If it's something that we you can't provide or help them with, let them know, because then obviously they can, they may be able to find that somewhere else. So I think it's about being honest and communicating well.

Wendy Adams 30:38

And how do you support the staff that want to progress. I mean, you talked about that being important to you is,

Speaker 1 30:43

yeah. So a lot of my team, so people have come into my become a recruit, a recruiter or a coordinator or care manager, have progressed from being a carer. So they've done a level. Started with a level two, done a level three, now doing a level five, or done a level five. I've got somebody who's doing a business administration course. We've got a marketing person. She's going to be doing a course as well, just to progress, I myself have just started a level seven. So I think it's just, you know, making sure that, because they're, you know, there's funding available, but also giving them the time, because, obviously, we need to make sure that they are time to study and fulfill, you know, what they their requirements are, and learn and get

feedback from them. You know, what? How? What are they enjoying? What do they need support on? Or, you know, there might be a certain topic they're doing, so they might want to focus on mental health, so, you know, getting them involved in that, taking them to an assessment, or, you know, just exposing them to lots of things where they can learn.

Pia Rathje-Burton 31:54

And is you mentioned career conversation? Is that something do you have? Is that a sort of standard you have that with everybody or is it just if people have sort of said, I am I would like to progress? No, so we

Speaker 1 32:05

do a personal development plan with everybody. Okay? And it's their choice. If they don't want to continue with that, then obviously that's their choice. We document that, but we want to give everyone a fair chance, and we do check in. So if somebody said, No, I'm not, I don't not interested in I'm happy with what I'm doing right now. We'll check in with them in three to six months when there's next supervision and stuff, and just make sure that that's still and then we update that. Yeah, and,

Pia Rathje-Burton 32:31

and, do you think those kind of things really help retention?

Speaker 1 32:35

Yes, definitely. You've got to stay on track, because we with the type of work we do, we get lost, or, you know, things get missed. So it is about, you know, keeping track on, right, You know, like I will have a meeting with my recruiter who would tell me, right? So this person, you know, this is their career pathway, this is what they want to do, so, making sure that the, you know, the manager is, you know, care manager is, you know, got them enrolled or had their initial meeting, so they know, with the assessor, what's involved in that qualification. And you know is that what they, you know, their their understanding is, but I think it's just keeping, keeping on track, which is hard

33:13

to do. Yeah, how do you do

Speaker 1 33:17

it? Oh, well, we have reminders. Reminders. We have alerts so, but having so, I've had a part time recruiter, which I've now training a full time recruiter, because I need somebody doing this every day, because obviously, with compliance and everything, you know, there's more and more all the time trying to stay on top of, you know, you can do the recruitment, but you've got the current staff that you'll make sure that their their training and everything is up to date and

so so I've got somebody who's doing more check ins with care staff, and then a full time recruiter. Yeah,

Pia Rathje-Burton 33:53

great way of doing it. And I think

Wendy Adams 33:55

that leads us on nicely to our next question. You are an incredibly busy woman. What they work and the engagement in the local community and supporting your staff with their development, and you're doing your level seven. And so with all of that going on, we always have our time to care slot in every episode where we ask our guests what's your most time saving tips that you could share with the listeners.

Speaker 1 34:21

I plan ahead. So my I have a calendar, like everybody does these days, but I plan ahead. And I have recently joined the gym, and I'm doing exercise classes and stuff, which I'm very busy, and I don't know how was going to fit this in but I have made time, because I feel like that, that has helped me just switch off, and then I feel more motivated, and I can get more done when, you know, when I sit down, or you know when I'm back at work, or whatever I feel like, that's really helping me. So I think a bit of exercise, because that's, you know, our time to thrive. Sort of motto as well. So I've really, like, you know, life is really busy. I'm, you know, you know, work a lot of hours, and I'm doing this course, but I thought, you know, something that I really need to do just to help my my own self. And, you know, everybody's always saying, oh, you know, you go to the gym, you feel so much better when you go. I think, Okay, I'm going to try it out. But I have, actually, you know, enjoyed it. I've just started the classes and stuff, so I had a 50 minute Pilates class, and I actually came out really refreshed. And I've booked in for the next month, so I'm doing two classes a week plus a gym session. So we'll see how that goes. But I think that's really helping.

Wendy Adams 35:38

Brilliant. Well, in addition to a time saving tip, I also got a well being tip.

Pia Rathje-Burton 35:43

Fabulous.

Wendy Adams 35:48

So final question is, I want you to imagine that we're on a lift in a lift on the 10th floor, going down with a group of registered managers, and before we get to the bottom, you want to tell them what you think is your most important key message to leave them with. What would that be?

Speaker 1 36:09

I think recruiting the right people and looking after your team. If you look after your team, they will look after everything else. So I think if carers and your team feel valued and they feel listened to, everything else will fall into place.

Wendy Adams 36:28

Brilliant, excellent. That's a good thing to leave people with.

Pia Rathje-Burton 36:31

I think, yeah, absolutely. And a good, good message, absolutely. Thank you so much. Kam, it's been really inspiring hearing you talk about your leadership skills and how you how you manage your time as well as well. Thank you for having me incredibly busy. Thanks so much. Thank you. Bye,

Wendy Adams 36:48

thank you. Bye,

Pia Rathje-Burton 36:59

that was a great conversation we had there with Kam. Wendy definitely

Wendy Adams 37:02

was. Kam had so much to say and so many great tips, I think, of a registered a registered managers, it was good to hear about her involvement with the registered manager network, about how she feels that that benefits her role, because the registered manager networks are available right throughout throughout England, and they're really a local resource for everybody who's a registered manager to be able to access them for all the reasons that Kam talked about, the peer support, the sharing of good practice, that business of feeling like you're you're not alone. And I thought it was also interesting that she was introduced to the registered manager network by Rachel, who's one of our colleagues, one of our locality manager colleagues, and hopefully everybody listening to the podcast today knows who their locality manager is for their area, but for everybody's benefit, there is a locality manager for every local authority area in England. So if people don't know who their locality manager is, if you go to the bottom of the Skills for Care website and to the section that says in your area, then there's a really good way of finding out who your locality manager is. And if people people drop us an email, then we can certainly link them in with their local registered manager network, or other Skills for Care resources as well. So yeah, good stuff, absolutely.

Pia Rathje-Burton 38:40

And I think, you know, being connected to to us as locality managers is so beneficial for register managers, because we often have the local knowledge. So even if it's, you know, if you have a question around, particularly around workforce, even if we don't, Skills for Care, doesn't have a resource locally, we will often know somebody who has the answer to that question, or, as you say, link them to network and get a chance to network with other registered manager who perhaps have had similar, you know, whatever, whatever the question or the challenge or the the issue is, you know, there will be somebody else who've had a had A similar experience and sharing that other on the WhatsApp group, as Kam mentioned, or in the actual network meetings, definitely worth and as I said during our conversation, you know, really seeing it as a this is your development. You know, this is part of part of you improving as a register manager is attending things like the networks, because it will improve your your ability to manage your role ongoing. So yeah, absolutely, if you look at our website, there's a directory as well. You can see where there's local a local network near you as well, if you're not connected. The other thing I thought was interesting, she was talking about how that being able to see other people's challenges, or be able to hear about other people's challenges, and also other people's ideas to solve some of those challenges. You mentioned the Facebook group, so the Skills for Care registered manager Facebook group is available as well. We'll put a link in the show notes about how to join that. If you're not, I think it's something like 4000 people. There's part of that. So it's a big group. And I always say when I speak to a new manager, you know, you can always start by just being a lurker, you know, just sort of lurk in the background and see what people are chatting about. And then if you if there is something, and I had somebody register manager said to me a few weeks ago, I was talking to them, and they, you know, they were a provider that not part of a group just her been a registered manager for quite a while, but still, she said, like, there's still things that I don't know how to resolve. She said, every time I look at that Facebook, there's somebody's asked a question that I've been thinking about, you know, so it's a really good resource of of sharing good practices, sharing those tricky, tricky, tricky questions, you know, and finding solutions together, as well as the network. The other thing I thought was really interesting when she was talking was about progression. And we've talked to a lot about progression on the podcast before, haven't we, and really that's linking to the care workforce pathway, you know. So looking at, you know, having those conversation, those development plans, with every member of staff, and even if somebody doesn't want to do a qualification, you could, they can still develop in lots of other ways, but really having that initial conversation, saying, you know, how do you see your career in social care? What does that involve? Can I help you with it? I think it's a really good, good thing to be doing, definitely.

Wendy Adams 41:48

And how valued does that make people feel? You know, I think people sometimes worry about people doing that progression in case they leave. But I think the reality of the matter is not

offering people the opportunity to progress is probably one of the reasons why people would be more likely to leave. So great to hear that. Kam comes doing that so proactively as well.

Pia Rathje-Burton 42:11

Yeah, and really, sort of, kind of having that as a you know, you're starting to work with us, we will have that conversation to begin with, and then if, if you, if it's something that you're interested in, we'll continue to have that conversation. And obviously she mentioned the funding that's available the LDSS there's available for some of those qualifications, particularly that level three diploma and the level five as well. So really good to hear. And, you know, just a great conversation with Kam. So that's it for this episode. Thank you very much for joining us. Remember all the resources that we've talked about are available in the notes on the Skills for Care website. So bye for now.

42:47

You.