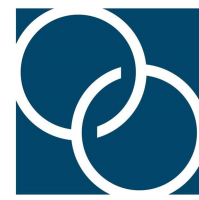


Social Care Solutions



Institute of
Health &
Social Care
Management

BEFORE YOU RECRUIT



You might find yourself in what feels like a constant state of 'recruitment' or you might be on the long search for someone to take a specific role. Either way, recruitment is one of the biggest causes of stress for social care providers. We've created this short, simple guide to help you to think differently about it, and it starts well before placing the advert or holding the interviews.

First steps

The first step is to make an informed decision about exactly who you are looking to recruit, and the answer can't just be 'more care staff'. Take a bit of time over this, it will pay off in the long run.

Talk to the people who matter most, people accessing the service, your staff, and other stakeholders. What is missing? Do you need people with specific skills? Do you need certain roles fulfilled? For example, if you are moving to a more digital service delivery model, it's going to be crucial that new staff are digitally confident.

Also, is it time to think differently about how things are done around there in general? Shift patterns maybe, or models of support? Canvass some opinion on that and remember that change needs to be inclusive.

This might also be a good point to check that all your recruitment policies and procedures are up to date.

Job description & specification

Review job descriptions and person specifications regularly and critically. Get others involved, staff and people experiencing your service will know much more than you about whether they are accurate. Don't be satisfied with standard or mediocre job descriptions, go bold. Your new recruit will be a crucial member of an important team, you don't want average here!

Struggling for inspiration, get onto good old Google. Lots of care providers place job descriptions on the internet – don't be afraid to pinch with pride. Remember though, you then need to spend time making it absolutely perfect for your service. Why not go even wilder and look at job descriptions from organisations that are not in social care? You never know what gems you might find that you can tweak to include in yours.

Always think inclusive - inclusive recruitment is the process of connecting with a diverse set of people through understanding and valuing different backgrounds and opinions. Inclusive recruiting should be intersectional and consider more than just gender or race. It can help your team grow efficiently, create happier employees, build stronger teams, and improve outcomes for those experiencing your services. You can find more guidance [here](#).

Advert content

Now you have your job description and person specification, you can develop your advert. I don't mind saying that the majority of recruitment ads for social care roles are poor. We all know that attracting the right staff in this sector is tough, so you need to stand out from the crowd.

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Start by perfecting what you want the advert to say (we'll get on to format later). Here's a few tips to bear in mind:

- Get the legal bit right, this is crucial – here's some [guidance](#) to follow
- Showcase the organisation, the values, the people – leave the reader feeling like this is somewhere they want to belong
- Qualifications – do you really need them to hold qualifications? For some roles maybe, but not all. If you really require them, please use the current terminology, NVQs haven't existed for a long time in our sector.
- Identify the benefits of employment with your organisation e.g. pension, training, perks, health insurance, day off for their birthday etc.
- Describe the role briefly, draw out the wonderful things about working in social care and focus on the innovations that your organisation might be exploring e.g. using technology.

Where to place the advert

First you need to decide where you want to place your advert. Who do you want to attract? School leavers, graduates, people living locally, people with experience. For each 'audience' you'll need a slightly different strategy. For example, if you are hoping to target graduates, you could contact your local University, they often have job portals. If you are looking at targeting anyone who lives locally, remember the golden rule that most people won't travel further than 6 miles for a social care position (further for management roles). So for these people you should advertise locally e.g. newsagents, churches, community groups, local papers and magazines, online groups.

- Social media – this works best if you already have a good presence on social media platforms. Facebook and Instagram are good for attracting local people, Twitter and LinkedIn are better for more senior roles. You can pay to make your adverts stand out on social media if you choose. Equally you can ensure they are eye-catching (more on that later) and ask friends, colleagues, or family to share them for you.
- Job sites – such as Indeed, Total Jobs or Monster. Most of these will have a free, limited option and then a paid for option. We know that people look at these because they'll come up in internet searches, however you'll be one of many recruiters on them. You will also likely be inundated with people from the wrong locality or who aren't suitable for your role, this can be time consuming.
- Many regions now have 'Proud to Care' websites. These are usually free, definitely worth checking out the one in your area.
- Care Friends – employee referral App, you can find out more [here](#).
- Jobcentre Plus – again, this is a free service. You can find out more [here](#). Remember to keep Apprenticeships and other employment schemes in mind, they might be the right thing for your organisation. The Department of Health and Social Care also run a campaign called [Every Day is Different](#).
- For more senior roles you might want to consider options such as [Guardian Jobs](#) or [Community Care Jobs](#) there will be a cost attached to options like these.

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- Recruitment agencies – there are plenty operating within social care but do your research and ask for recommendations as this can be a costly option.
- Don't forget your current staff team, they may be looking to progress into a new role, or they may know people who are looking for jobs.

Format of the advert

For some adverts, your only option will be text based – as mentioned before, the trick here is to keep it concise and eye-catching.

You can be more creative when advertising on social media or online though, you can use images and even short videos. Why not get your teams and people drawing your service involved (if they are willing of course)?

Here's a few examples:

The Good Care Group

Quarriers

Remember that you don't need a budget to create great films or images these days. We recorded this [interview](#) with Richard Wyatt-Haines, Director of HCI Digital in which you'll find some super top tips for making your own recordings. If you don't feel confident, ask around in your teams or your network, there's bound to be someone who fancies being the next Steven Spielberg.

Final tips

Make the application process straightforward. Think through what your current process is? Are there pain points for the applicant, that might put them off? Remove or improve them.

If potential applicants make contact, be sure to get back to them swiftly. They may well be applying for several positions at once and it's better for you to stand out.

Don't immediately rule out previous employees or people who applied before - you never know!

Keep applicants updated and informed throughout the whole process. We all know that waiting for interview dates (or if successful, waiting for DBS checks and references) can take a while. This can be a point at which applicants will get fed up and accept another job.

Evaluate your performance honestly, are there areas that need improving for next time?

Remember, the hard work isn't over once you've found the right person!

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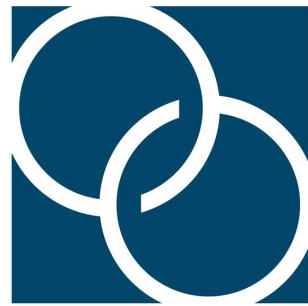
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