

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**TRANSFORM RESEARCH REPORT - EXETER UNIVERSITY**

**RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ISSUES  
IN THE  
ADULT SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE IN DEVON**

Updated 18 January 2018

**1. Demand and Supply Issues – 2016 figures from National Minimum Dataset (published on 26 Sept 2017)**

Turnover rate for regulated care workers from all sectors (private, local authority and voluntary) and all service types in <b>Devon</b>	41%
Turnover rate for regulated care workers from all sectors (private, local authority and voluntary) and all service types in <b>England</b>	32.4%

Turnover rate for regulated care workers, employed in the private sector, in domiciliary care in <b>Devon</b>	55.2%
Turnover rate for regulated care workers, employed in the private sector, in domiciliary care in <b>Somerset</b>	38.5%
Turnover rate for regulated care workers, employed in the private sector, in domiciliary care in <b>Cornwall</b>	35.4%
Turnover rate for regulated care workers, employed in the private sector, in domiciliary care in <b>England</b>	42.2%

## 2. Main Reasons for Care Workers leaving private domiciliary care in Devon vs England

Main reasons for leaving given by Care Workers working for private domiciliary care	Devon	England
Pay	2.3 %	3.4 %
Nature of the work	10.0 %	9.6 %
Competition from other employers	6.8 %	5.6 %
Transferred to another employer	18.8 %	15.3 %
Career development	5.4 %	9.4 %
Personal reasons	26.4 %	23.7 %
Resignation	6.1 %	11.6 %
Retirement	3.1 %	1.8 %
Dismissal	5.8 %	6.0 %
End of contract term	7.8 %	0.9 %
Other reasons	9.1 %	9.6 %

## 3. Care Workers in Devon

Skills for Care's National Minimum Dataset Set (INMDS-SC) data indicates that Devon's regulated Care Workers who are employed by private sector organisations and working in domiciliary, community or day care are noticeably different from their contemporaries across England in various ways. These are listed below and it is noticeable that these are all differences that are likely to impact on recruitment and retention:

- They are more likely to be aged 55 or older (+5%) or aged 24 and under (+2.1%);
- Less likely to be male (8.4%) compared with Care Workers from across England (12.8%);
- Less experienced (26.4% compared with 31.0% across England have three or more years of experience), while over two fifths (43.7%) have less than one year of experience in their current job; and
- Less likely to be employed full time (32.1%), compared with over two fifths across England (44.5%).

## 4. Why Care Workers leave the sector

- Too much responsibility (for the level of reward)
- Lack of flexibility over working hours
- Lack of time for and between appointments
- Lack of guaranteed hours
- Cost of childcare

## 5. What Care Worker like about working in the sector

- Having a positive impact on people's lives
- The diversity and challenge of the role
- Team working with other care workers

- Having a good employer organisation
- Inclusion and 1-2-1 nature of work

## **6. What Care Workers dislike about working in the sector**

- Huge responsibility when dealing with service users' lives (often with complex needs)
- Not being able to do enough to help some service users
- The unpredictability of rotas
- The absence of slack in the system (short appointments)
- Unsociable hours
- Downtime in the middle of the working day
- Need to travel long distances between clients.

## **7. Care Workers' views on pay**

- Overarching sense was that care workers simply wanted a fair rate of pay that reflected the responsibility and difficulty of the job that they were now being tasked to do:
  - "All we want is a fair wage."
  - "We should be paid for value of what we do – the same as others."
  - "Our job has got much more difficult and time consuming, but we've not had a pay rise at all."

## **8. Care Workers' views on training**

- Considerable confusion as to whether or not all the basic training required was available from the NHS and if so, whether it was free of charge.
- Concerns that the training available was not fully preparing new recruits to the reality of the care worker role.
- Concerns about the cost of training required to progress beyond level 2.
- Some employers made new recruits pay for their own training and uniforms.

## **9. Care Workers' views on transportation issues**

- Need to own car (insurance and running costs)
- Failure of providers to pay adequate expenses to cover real cost of journey
- Stress and anxiety due to lateness
- Lack of proper scheduling
- Poor state of roads
- Inadequate public transport.

## **10. Care Workers' views on career progression**

- Lack of opportunity for personal or professional growth.

## **11. Care Workers' views on stress**

- The time available for travel between appointments
- Problems with paperwork e.g. incorrect NHS discharge paperwork.

- Lack of support and coordination from own organisation/NHS/LA
- Insufficient training for new care workers

## 12. Conclusions

Triggers for care workers leaving their jobs:

- Challenging role (lone working. Current pay levels and level of support do not reflect the full responsibility of the role)
- Stressful events and stress of appointments being too close together
- Working conditions:
  - Lack of guaranteed working hours
  - Lack of a full-time job and split shifts
  - Lack of input to working rota/schedule and last-minute changes.
- Agency workers – paid more
- Not feeling valued for role they do (by management or clients' families)
- High cost of childcare.

## 13. Recommendations

- Living Well at Home Retention Strategy and Action Plan developed by primary providers with other providers.
- Leadership and Management development for providers.
- Contractual issues and compliance addressed.
- Completion of NMDS data by all providers. Close monitoring of individual providers recruitment, retention and development stats. Sharing of best practice.
- Investigate and take action over issues relating to patient discharge, paperwork and cooperation to reduce stress on care workers.
- Further work to co-ordinate and develop clear Proud to Care package for providers to further develop:
  - Greater links with acute hospitals to develop shared training and career pathways.
  - SW Care Awards ceremony being developed by Care Managers Network, initially in Torbay and South Devon, with view to expanding.
  - Using 99 Proud to Care Ambassadors, across care and health, to attend careers events to promote working in sector
  - Share resources and tools from Proud to Care Group across the Provider Engagement Network
  - Get everyone behind Proud to Care Devon to promote health and adult social care as a career, plus recruitment, training and qualifications.
- Training in March 2018 for providers across Devon in “Improving Retention” amongst care workers, focusing on:
  - Organisational culture
  - Managing care worker performance (recruitment, supervision and development).
- Values-based recruitment workshop in March 2018.

**Sally-Ann Turner**  
**HR Strategy Manager**  
**Devon County Council**  
[Sally-ann.turner@devon.gov.uk](mailto:Sally-ann.turner@devon.gov.uk)