

Involving people who need care and support in values-based recruitment

Involving people who draw on care and support in recruitment and retention

This guide helps social care employers include the people they support in the recruitment and retention process.

It is split into four easy-to-read sections, with practical tips and case studies to help.

*Parts of this guide have been adapted from 'How to involve people who use services and carers in staff recruitment and development: a practical guide for employers', Skills for Care (2008).

Why should you involve people who draw on care and support in your recruitment and retention?

Where people who draw on care and support are actively involved in recruitment and retention, they can

- exert greater control and influence over who will support them, resulting in better outcomes
- provide a first-hand experience of what is needed from new recruits
- judge how well a candidate engages and communicates with them
- tell candidates what's important to them, and identify if they have the right values, behaviours and attitudes for the role.

You might also like to include families and carers in the process.

By finding the right people initially who perform well and are more likely to stay, this can improve the quality of care for individuals, save time and recruitment costs, and improve staff retention.

How can people who need care and support be involved in valued based recruitment and retention?

You can involve those who draw on care and support at each stage of the 5 A's values-based recruitment journey.

Before you get started - Articulate

It's important you prepare properly to involve people who draw on care and support in your recruitment and retention.

1. Recruitment- Attract

People who draw on care and support can help you to:

- identify the type of person they'd like to support them
- support the development of job descriptions, person specifications, promotional adverts and recruitment information packs.

2. Selection- Apply and Assess

People who draw on care and support can help you to:

- shortlist candidates
- contribute to face to face interviews, visits or presentations
- provide valuable feedback to those who were not successful.

3. Induction and training - Assimilate

People who draw on care and support can:

- be involved in induction, learning and development.

4. Feedback about performance- Assimilate

People who draw on care and support can:

- provide feedback throughout probationary period and ongoing appraisals
- be involved in exit interviews for staff who leave.

Before you get started ...

You must prepare properly to involve people who draw on care and support in your recruitment and retention. Here are some tips to help you get started.

1. Make sure your organisation has a positive workplace culture and ethos

It's crucial that managers and staff are committed to the idea of involving people and making it happen. A positive inclusive, compassionate, workplace culture will support this.

Our [culture toolkit](#) can help you with this.

2. Consider individuals' access and personal support needs

Make sure all the necessary practical arrangements are put in place to enable people who draw on care and support, their families and carers, to get involved. Here are some things you might need to consider.

Checklist	Y/N
Are you using any technology, like Zoom and will the person have support?	
If face-to-face, is the venue accessible?	
Is the venue on a major transport link for buses and trains?	
Does the person who draws on care and support, need help to arrange transport?	
Does the venue have a hearing loop system if required?	
Do you need to accommodate assistive technology?	
Is the time convenient for the individual? It may not be practical for some people to come too early or late in the day.	
Do you need to provide any personal support?	
Will a personal carer or assistant also be coming?	
Will you need to provide lunch and refreshments? If so, are there any dietary requirements?	
Do you need to schedule regular breaks?	

3. Provide training where necessary

Some people may want to get involved but feel they don't have the right skills; training might therefore be necessary. Or, they may need structured and planned support to contribute in a meaningful way. Everyone should be properly briefed and have the right knowledge about key recruitment policies.

Here are some areas where people might need training.

- Confidentiality
- Equal opportunities
- Public speaking
- Interviewing techniques

4. Be clear and honest about how much influence people have

It's important to establish boundaries to involvement to avoid disappointment or disagreements later on in the process.

Decide how much weight the views of people who draw on care and support will have in recruiting new workers. If, for example, managers make the final decision but the views of people who draw on care and support are taken into account, everyone needs to be clear about this at the outset.

5. Ensure compliance with employment legislation

Make sure your recruitment and selection process is fair and consistent and complies with relevant legislation such as equality and diversity. You need to make sure people draw on care and support understand what this will mean in practice. Here are some examples.

- Every candidate must be treated in the same way. This means asking them the same questions and using the same system to score their responses. Using values-based interviewing techniques, interviewers are upskilled to probe further and record answers so that interviews are consistent and fair.
- Each candidate must be assessed against the assessment criteria, not against each other.
- It's important to avoid questions that are discriminatory against anyone with a protected characteristic.

6. Value people's contribution

Thank people for their contribution. This could include a reward for people for their involvement or covering expenses such as travel or lunch. It's important to agree how much and when they'll be paid before, and ensure you pay them promptly.

7. Ask for feedback about the process

Asking people how they found the process will show that you value their involvement and also help you to improve and develop your recruitment and retention practices. For example, if someone interviewed a potential candidate, you could ask them 'Did you enjoy asking questions?', 'Did you feel well prepared and supported to take part?', and 'Did you feel you made a difference?'.

Involving people who draw on care and support in recruitment and retention

1. Recruitment

People who draw on care and support can help you to

Identify the type of person they'd like to support them

- Find out from people what they want from staff who support them. This should include their **values, behaviours and attitudes**, as well as the practical tasks new recruits might need to do.
- This could be done through resident or carer meetings or forums, surveys and questionnaires, and speaking to people individually.
- Be realistic and honest. People might give a specific description of the person they'd like to support them; however, they may need to compromise due to the variety of candidates that apply or employment and discrimination law.
- Make a video with people saying what is important to them and what they want from staff, to be used at recruitment events.
- Gather information from the person's circle of support, friends, family and carers about what's important to them.
- Use existing members of staff as a conversation starter. For example, someone might say 'I want someone like David.' This could lead to a conversation about what makes David good at his job, focussing on their values and behaviours in particular.

Support the development of job descriptions, person specification, promotional adverts and recruitment information packs.

- Adverts could feature people who need care and support with powerful statements about what's important to them such as 'I want someone who is caring and treats me with respect.'
- Ask people who use your services what they think should be included in recruitment information and packs for potential job applicants.

2. Selection

People who draw on care and support can help you to ...

Shortlist candidates

Ask people who draw on care and support what they think of applications by getting them involved in short-listing. (If there are a large number of applicants, the manager could carry out the initial short-listing to make it more manageable). Think about other requirements such as large print copies of application forms.

Contribute to face-to-face interviews, visits or presentations

They could

- write some values-based questions that the interview panel will ask
- meet with potential candidates and ask them questions they've prepared in advance, or talk informally
- hold a separate interview panel alongside the management panel, or be on the same interview panel as managers
- watch candidate's presentations, where applicable, and provide feedback. Candidates could be asked to present to a panel of people who draw on care and support, their families and carers.
- meet candidates before an interview; they could have a cup of tea together or include candidates in an activity.
- You could record the interview so that people can reflect on each candidate afterwards.
- Think about the support people might need to be involved. They might need a practice interview to read through the questions beforehand.
- Think about a simple score sheet to provide feedback.
- People might also want to write pre-defined questions. For example, candidates are asked 'How can you support me if I was upset?' and they would tick if a candidate answers 'Talk it through, be calm and understanding and give me some space.'

Tell successful candidates they have the job

- This could be done by letter or phone.
- People who draw on care and support could write successful candidates a letter that welcomes them to the post. Or they could be involved in developing constructive feedback for candidates that have not been successful.
- Remember, if someone phones a candidate to tell them they have the job, this constitutes a verbal offer of a contract.

3. Induction and training

People who draw on care and support can help you to...

Support staff with induction and ongoing training and support

- Show new staff around the work environment and talk to them about the way they'd like them to work. Experienced staff can support people to do this.
- Contribute to induction or training sessions, tell participants what they want from staff and answer questions.
- Include people who draw on care and support in deciding what training staff need. For example, if someone feels that staff don't communicate with them in a way they prefer, this could influence the ongoing training offered to staff.
- They could also be part of the training delivery.
- Show new workers a video of people talking about what they want from the people who support them.
- Feedback about how staff are using training in practice. For example, if staff have just done moving and handling training, you could ask people if staff are explaining the manoeuvre before doing it, or if they're using the correct equipment.

4. Feedback about performance

People who draw on care and support can help you to ...

Provide feedback throughout probationary period and for ongoing appraisals

Feedback could be collected about staff through:

- questionnaires and surveys, face-to-face feedback meetings, and carer networks
- observation of interaction between staff and people who need care and support.

Be involved in exit interviews for staff who leave

- Ask people who draw on care and support what they will miss about the person who's leaving. You could also ask them what they want the new person to be like in terms of their values, behaviours and attitudes.

Employer experiences from Accolade submissions

Community Support Services

Each application is reviewed by a panel consisting of people who use the service, support staff and senior managers.

Our interviews and recruitment processes are driven by people who use the service and are value based. Although our director and/or seniors sit on the recruitment panel, it is service users who ask the majority of questions and hold the greater weight in decision making, after all they are the people who will be inviting the successful candidates into their home.”

Lewisham Nexus Service

To recruit the right support staff to Nexus, we need to involve people with learning disabilities in the interview process. This is true of whatever post you apply for, whether you are the CEO, Business and Finance manager, Support manager or Support worker. We employ two people with learning disabilities who are trainers and are also experienced interviewers.

Future Directions

The people Future Directions support form part of the selection process, sitting on panels and hosting second stage interviews. They help decide the key questions and agree the values they're looking for.

Home from Home Care

We also have a team of Recruitment Partners - a selection of individuals we support, who are involved in the recruitment process and help with decision making. This allows them to have a direct say in the staff who support them. Choosing your own care team is surely the most person centred a company can be?