



## The care exchange - Series 4 Episode 6: Recognise it, record it, evidence it: Maddie Watts

**Hosts:** Pia Rathje-Burton and Wendy Adams

**Pia** 00:07

Hello, and welcome to the care exchange. the Skills for Care podcast for managers in social care. I'm Pia Rathje-Burton

**Wendy Adams** 00:13

and I'm Wendy Adams. Today we're talking to Maddie Watts. Maddie is the owner and registered manager of Inchwater homecare in Dover Kent. Maddie has owned and run Inchwater homecare with her husband Paul since 2012. And employ approximately 60 staff. Previous to that they owned and operated a residential care home for people with a learning disability for about 21 years. Inchwater is currently rated overall Outstanding by CQC. And this is a rating that they've been awarded twice.

**Pia** 00:51

So we will be talking to Maddie about the CQC single assessment framework. The guidance and information from CQC are continuing to change and being updated while introducing the new framework. So just be aware that everything we talk to Maddie about today is correct as of March 2024. So let's have a good chat to Maddie on the show.

**Pia Rathje-Burton** 01:23

Hello, Maddie, welcome

**Pia** 01:24

to the care exchange.

**Maddie Watts** 01:25

Hi, Pia, thank you for having me. It's been Yeah. So yeah, I can share some interesting information with you.

**Pia** 01:26

I'm sure you can. And I'm really looking forward to chatting to you. So we've heard introduction, that you're a registered manager for Inchwater homecare, and you're currently rated overall Outstanding by CQC, which is always something to celebrate.

**Maddie Watts** 01:45

Thank you. Yes.

**Pia** 01:47

So I wanted to start by asking you a question that probably is on the mind of a lot of registered managers at the moment. So how are you preparing for your next CQC inspection under the single assessment framework?

**Maddie Watts** 02:01

Okay, so we've read them, we've looked at them, we've talked about them, and we've looked at those, those quality statements and, and try to pick on a few and and dig a bit deeper. It's about how you how you record that evidence I've been working on staff well being, which is, which is quite a hot topic within sort of, you know, within a lot of places of work. And I've been looking at about doing little wellbeing assessments with people about you know, are they happy, what makes them happier? Can we alter the way that we work, to, to put something back within what they like to do, and you find the most bizarre things through, setting out little little sort of assessment, the risk assessments for well being, I have a member of staff, for example, who she's a triathlete and likes to compete occasionally at the weekend, always on a weekend on and things like that. But it's about us recognizing that that's, that's what puts her in a good headspace, we need to make those adjustments. And someone else who I hadn't realized that she she goes to book club, the first Wednesday of every month, well, every care coordinator will know that when you're when you're planning shifts it you know, the first Wednesday of every month doesn't go into the computer, you know, the fourth wave is every month or so it means that someone's just got to go through and alter all their sites. And I can do that so she can go to book club. And that's great. And it's little things like that, where you feel that you've made that you can show that you've made small adjustments that have made big improvements for your staff.

**Pia** 03:56

So how do you evidence those two things? Well, that's the issue.

**Maddie Watts** 04:01

So it's about somebody writing down what we've done. So I fill in a little form with the staff usually at supervision and we talk through some of these things. So you know, what puts you in a good headspace and, and then we've got the evidence, we've collected that information. And then it's about writing on the bottom of those sheets to say that this is what we've done about it. There is your evidence and the stuff. It's not it's not as simple as that because with some people, it's the there's, there's more to it, I suppose, but it's it's, it's about showing that you've made an effort and that you are keen to try. I mean, there's other things we've done around staff well being that a couple of us have trained as Mental Health First Aiders, which is a little course. It just gets you to think about, about people and how you can point them in the right direction for for help.

**Pia** 05:02

So what are you thinking about? So when you're thinking about that prepare preparing for CQC? Is that different to how you would normally prepare? So yeah, well being is because it's a new quality statement, but kind of looking after staff, it may not have been so explicit in the, in the old standards,

but you know, you know, with a single assessment framework, it obviously there's a quality statement as well, by when bar is overall, when you think about the overall preparation that you're doing is that different now, to what it was before

**Maddie Watts 05:39**

we have drilled down a bit more. And we have said, This is what we're going to do. I mean, we are, we are very sort of flexible in our approach. And we do change things if we feel that things aren't working. But it's, it's showing that we've done that, and that they could be things that we've normally always done, we just haven't recognized it and recorded it. And and evidenced it. So that's what we need to do. And it's about it's about thinking of things like that. And it's about sometimes it's about tweaking some paperwork, so you're adding another question in or you're recording something at that touch point. To show that, that you've thought about the slightly bigger picture or something that's more specific. I mean, we won't know how it works with CQC until a lot more inspections have been done. And there is a lot more evidence because I always say to people, you need to read CQC reports to look at what sort of topics they're looking at at the moment, oh, what's important to them? And things do change? And how does that how does that affect us? i The the recording of the evidence is, is a big issue, because I think we don't do enough of it. And I believe that there's people out there that may not do a lot of it at all. And it's about how we how we how we collate the information into a into something that is presentable to CQC, because you can guarantee you'll fill up a BIG FAT file full of stuff, and then you've got to scan it all in to get it across to them or it's not quite what they're looking for. And they're not going to sift through A4 lever arch files full of all the wonderful things that you've done. They want you to to collate it for them into those areas, and some bits of evidence fall into fall under several quality statements. Yeah. And it's and it's recognizing that that one bit of paper doesn't fit in one slot, it could it could cover an awful lot. And and it's trying to break those down. So you've got good coverage of all quality statements.

**Pia 08:07**

And I suppose it is interesting, you're saying about lever arch files. And I know that a lot of managers have done use those in the past. But my impression is the CQC are much more digital now. So as we speak, we don't know what if evidence is going to be started to be collected via the portal. But there's definitely much more about providing electronic evidence. So having a lever arch file, as you're saying you would you would have to start preparing for that so that your evidence isn't just in.

**Maddie Watts 08:41**

So we do some digital formats of evidence files, things that we have did emails and things and there's bits that we have scanned in that we're quite proud of or it shows a very clear approach to what we what we've done. It is difficult because it you don't know how much how much reading am I going to do before an inspection or during an inspection? How much of this stuff are they going to sift through to say that there is that's the evidence and we require because it may be that some of the evidence that you that you gather that you're very proud of just doesn't meet their criteria? It just isn't I don't know deep enough or what it's that you haven't, it's just not quite right. Or you've been a bit glib of how you've written it or something like that. So it's about knowing what the acceptable standard is. And we only can do that by by trying by by and it's about finding evidence in different ways. I'm a quite I'm a I'm a keen advocate for reflection and looking at lessons learned and things like that. When you talk to people

about, or thinking about lessons learned, people always think that there's been a problem, it doesn't have to be, there's some really good stuff that people do that actually, if you sat down, that worked really well. And we should do that again. I mean, it's, it's about showing that that is, it's that strive for continual improvement. And it doesn't have to be coming from a negative for you to improve, it could have been a really positive experience. And actually, the icing on the cake would be if we had done so and so. And that's what you're striving towards. So when you've, you know, you've ice your cake, there's always a cherry to go on top, it's about looking for that, because it is a constant strive for improvement, it's not something that you just achieve, and you're there and everyone breathes again. It is it is, it is it is pushing forward all the time.

**Wendy Adams 10:52**

And that's really interesting, because when you one of the things that we do know is that CQC are going to focus much more on gathering evidence and feedback from people who use use our services. And actually, that's not always going to be about the big things. You know, sometimes that might be about making improvements about some of the some of the smaller things, as you said, not necessarily CQC aren't just going to be interested in where somebody's made a complaint, and you've resolved that, they want to see that journey to continuous improvement. This can be a real challenge, I think, for some services, to think about how to gather that feedback. So it does become about continuous improvement more than a once a year survey. Have you given any thoughts as to how you're gonna do that? Yeah, well,

**Maddie Watts 11:47**

we do. We've been looking at our survey questions, actually, our staff survey was in at the end of last year, and our client survey will go out reasonably soon. It's about what you do with the information that comes in, because I feel that if you're going to put together this exercise to gather this information, you've got to say, you've got to show that you've done something with it. And it's that process afterwards, where you say, right, this is what you've said, This is what we're going to do about it. So you can show that actually, it was worth their while filling in their filling in their form, or whatever it was, or making some comments. And that's very important. Working with the evidence, it's a bit like I don't know, writing a risk assessment and just sticking a flag in it. But we're not actually acknowledged how you're going to mitigate it. And then people sometimes complain about the daftest and things and we can change those, that's not a problem. And

**Pia 12:45**

I suppose the other thing with a with a action from a survey, because you might not do all the actions straightaway you might do some of them in a few few months time is reminding people that, you know, the reason why we're now changing this, because it's what you asked us to do in a survey, isn't it really, because I think things sometimes, you know, experience for myself, you know, I'll fill in the staff survey, you know, and you see the results come out. And then about six months later, the changes happening, or why they're making that change. And if somebody actually said, Oh, we make this change, because that's what the overall majority of staff in my instance, you know have asked for, you know, you kind of forget, but I think it's interesting what you were saying, Wendy, because it's not just about surveys, it's also about that, because because these the new evidence categories, there's three, which are focused on feedback, so there's feedback of people that you're supporting and feedback of staff. And that's, you

know, gathering evidence around those regularly, not just in surveys, is can be a challenge in something different when you're thinking about collecting evidence, a different type of evidence now that this, you know, collecting evidence ongoing on feedback from from the people that you're working most closely with that? Have you any thoughts about how to do that, or kind of more than the survey, as opposed to what we're saying?

**Maddie Watts** 14:06

Well, we do a client review every three months where we talk to them and that's a good way of gathering feedback and so on our staff have supervisions appraisal, staff meetings, that kind of thing. So it's that it's about gathering that evidence and, and trying to put some of those things into practice so that you'll you've listened to them and and it's sometimes it's about the little things that really annoy people that you can change and, and it's all good and an example I give was we had a we had a client who it was very difficult to park but she had a drive, but if you parked in a drive you were parked very close to her rather beloved roses and she didn't want you to knock any petals off. So she didn't want the staff to park there. It was just a case of us looking at the area finding somewhere else for the park to for the staff to park and her roses will then safe. And we always made a point of saying how beautiful they were. And she said yes, because no one's knocked the pedals off. I think it's as you brushed past them. And it was really important to her, recognizing that that was really important to her beloved roses. They we, we were able to do something about it. And that's not people will think, Well, that's not a big deal. That's a really pathetic example. But actually, it's not because you add all those up, she was very happy. Yeah, it is. It is, it is the little things that make it sometimes make the biggest difference.

**Wendy Adams** 15:35

For managers, it's about how you capture that, isn't it? I bet in lots of organizations, those sorts of things happen all the time, you know, something, something happens, somebody will say, I'd really rather you didn't do that. I really would rather you do this, the staff go, oh, yeah, that's fine. That's no bother change it, and it just never gets recorded. And that's all this stuff about being responsive, isn't it? And, and actually making changes? By the time that person comes to fill in their annual survey, they've probably completely forgotten about that small thing, or would think is too small to put on the survey? Yeah, yeah. But it's those changes that make a real difference to people's lives.

**Pia** 16:19

So maybe having some sort of you have this week or something?

**Maddie Watts** 16:27

Yeah, I constantly have a notebook on my desk where I jot down the daftest of things. But it's, it's it's, it's those that add up really? Yeah, it is showing that it's responsive to, to the service that you're providing.

**Pia** 16:46

The other one in terms of feedback. The other new evidence category that's now is about feedback from partners. And it can be really, really tricky to to gather. Have you had any thoughts about how you're going to start doing that? Well,

**Maddie Watts 17:01**

for a long time, we've had little cards that say, thank you. And with it, you know, on occasion, we would send one out to I don't know, a set of district nurses that are really pulled out the bag for us with someone at a time. And we need to use those more. We need to, we need to provide them with that written feedback. So hopefully, they'll be better at giving us written feedback is a particular receptionist at a doctor's surgery that has really helped us in the last couple of weeks, over someone who had been really quite unwell and had got things sorted with the pharmacy. And we wrote a little thank you card to her to say we really appreciate the your efforts. And she was gobsmacked. And I didn't like to say at the time, well, I hope that perhaps you know, if we ever pull it out of the bag, it would be reciprocated. But actually, that's what CQC want. They want us to be more forward thinking with each other and perhaps nicer and pointing out the fact that I really appreciate that that was very kind of you. You've you know, and we need to we need to start really? Yeah. So we have done it for a while, but we haven't done it. I suppose we haven't really been on top of it so much. But we definitely are this year, because but it also gets your name out there because what you don't want is CQC to say to them, I don't know, the district nurses, you know, a feedback on each quarter. And for them to go who you want them say oh, yes, actually. Yeah. And to take it from there. You need to people need to know who you are. Yeah.

**Wendy Adams 18:41**

I found it really nice idea. I think it's I mean, you're right. You know, if you then need to get some feedbacks from them, it would be very hard, wouldn't it for her to say I'm not gonna give you any feedback when you'd sent us your lovely card. So, you know, from a cynical point of view, that's really, you know, it's a good idea in terms of gathering your own evidence for CQC. But actually, what a really nice thing to do anyway, because I would suspect that receptionists like many, many of us working in the sector, don't have very many people who say thank you to us. Yeah. And, you know, I would imagine, she's probably in a similar position to many of us, which is that we don't people don't always feel appreciated. So, you know, a good thing to do anyway, really?

**Pia 19:31**

Yeah, of course, they're rated by a CQC as well. So they will be very happy to receive that kind of feedback. And as you say, they hopefully will, will do the same for you. And I suppose it's just about keep reminding partners, this is this is going to be really important for all of us, because obviously the the whole point of the single assessment framework was that it was the one framework for everybody. And, you know, obviously it's, I think, for social care for the registered manager it's really really, you know, CQC is very forefront of their minds it may not be so forefront on the receptionist or GP surgery or district nurse because they may not be aware of it. But if it's reminding, you know, you're being CQC rated as well. So am I let's let's make sure that we, you know that we kind of give each other feedback and feedback and positive as well as the negative.

**Maddie Watts 20:25**

Yeah, yeah, but I suppose I don't know. I always say it's because we're British. We're not great at saying, Wow, well done. Thank you. That's great. But yeah, but we're very good at saying, well, actually, I'm not very happy about this. And it's, it's altering that, isn't it? And it's Yeah, I think, I think but you could send emails, it makes no odds. I mean, we just happen to have some cards printed, and but it was nice. I'll let you know, in a year's time. But it's also about having those thank yous on display, isn't

it that you get families and, and things back? And, yeah, and there are times that you need to make a point of showing staff that have worked with a particular client, perhaps to say, you know, this, this is this is aimed at you, I'm holding on to the card, but you know, sentiment is because of your hard work. And

**Wendy Adams 21:17**

actually also, I think about thinking about quite broadly who your partners are. Because we tend to think, you know, we tend to often to think or our partners for social care, we think health, but what about all the other partners that you have in your local community, like schools? Or, you know, there's a whole range of things, isn't there? And that's what you're saying? Isn't it about that? Actually, sometimes the evidence might overlap across several different statements. Yeah. My

**Maddie Watts 21:49**

other issue with with health is there's tons of little teams out there that you think Who the heck are they? And that gives you the opportunity to go and have a dig round to think, oh, who knew that there was this particular team that did so and so. But you know, that and that you can then you can then link with and it's and it's unpicking all those bits? I suppose. And, I don't know, there was something that needed some help from a district nurse. And, and she put me on to the community there. And I'm thinking, Are you not the same person? Well, obviously, they weren't. And I needed to go away and work out what the difference was. And, and they were, they were very helpful. Yeah, it's, yeah,

**Pia 22:28**

you learn everyday in this job, don't you? Absolutely. It's interesting what you're saying about Partners, because you have things like charity of the year and you also have connected with your local food, food bank and things like that? Because that's that's partnership, isn't it? Yeah, we

**Maddie Watts 22:45**

do have we do have a charity the year we go we Macmillan last year. It's the local hospice this year. Yeah, we do a lot for the, for the food bank, because that's important. And people sometimes will say, well, actually, is a food bank in about a suitable local charity to support their Yes, it is. It's and they need our help. And actually, it doesn't cost us anything. We have a box, we ask people to donate. And people will, you know, drop in. We seem to be inundated with rice pudding at the moment, for example, but it's, it's, it's something that we can promote. Yeah. And, and make a difference to our local community. We, it's it's trying to find things like that, that, that show that you that yes, it's about you partner up with other people, don't you? And then people are gonna be thinking, oh, gosh, this all takes time. But actually, it doesn't, you just have the food bank collection of us, which makes life a lot easier. Just give them a ring when it's full. But it does make a difference.

**Pia 24:00**

And I suppose for home care, sometimes it could be quite hard for you know, homecare providers to show that they're part of their local community because, you know, with a care home, you know, you have all saying you have people you know, you happy the people you're supporting are there within within the walls, and therefore, it's easier to kind of show that community connection where you know,

this seems like a really good way of doing the same thing isn't a you know, that you got got a box and you're you're supporting the local community with this food bank. So sounds really great idea.

**Maddie Watts** 24:32

So you could also join in with local fetes and things like that. We've done that in the past and you're an information provider, although you're you may be promoting yourself at the same time, but you're also providing information and people are very keen to have so have that there. Yeah. I

**Pia** 24:51

wanted to get back to something Wendy was saying earlier about reflection. So why why do you think reflection is important?

**Maddie Watts** 24:59

And I suppose it's it's like lessons learnt isn't it, but lessons learnt makes it sound as though something is really big reflected is about it's about looking back, how did that go? What went well? What went not so well? What could be done better? Or whatever new? How can we change that? And sometimes, you know, the answer is not a lot. And sometimes it's actually it allows you to think and change your practice. And it's that that strive for improvement. And it can be really simple things. And it can be sometimes quite big things. And especially with experiences that perhaps don't happen every day, every week, every month. It's about it's about making it looking to make those changes and I was thinking about some of this before, in the run up to us having this conversation. And I was talking to some colleagues about, you know, in reflection, what have we changed recently, and they were laughing and they said that we've had the on call have been called out because we had someone that wasn't very well. And and the reflective practice is the lessons that we learned is that there needs to be some coffee in the the on call back because it all got fairly dire. And I said, You know what, there is now coffee in the on call back. That's what we learned from that. Okay, oh, what happened a week or two ago, and they were laughing about it, because I didn't know what else we put we changed from some reflective practice. And reflective practice doesn't have to be written down. It can be it can be just just a conversation. And then you write down the important bits, if anything comes out, sometimes nothing comes out of those reflective conversations. But it needs to happen. And it's and it probably does happen. But it needs to happen in a way that you can do something with it. There is no point in people going home at night and talking to their partner or their family. Because they can't do anything that you know, you don't work with them and listening to you rabbit on about this, that and the other. And actually, if you'd have done it with your colleagues, it allows them to be able to think well, we can do something about that. And if you know if that little something is making sure there's some coffee in the on call back. Log it is better.

**Wendy Adams** 27:25

Yeah, I feel like links right back to what you started talking about about wellbeing, doesn't it? Yes.

**Pia** 27:30

You got to be on call. At least Yeah,

**Maddie Watts** 27:34



coffee. The lack of Coffee was affecting everybodys wellbeing! Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

**Pia 27:41**

So how do you make time for reflecting because managers are very time poor? And they will probably suddenly think, oh, I don't have time to reflect on take, it will take forever? You know, I don't have time for things like that. How do you make time for it?

**Maddie Watts 27:55**

I think it's, it's about if I if I'm ever out with a colleague in the car, I make a point of talking about work I talk about so you know what we're doing, who are we going to see? why is this important? Are we doing well? Could we do better? And it it puts staff in a position where they can, they can offer their point of view. And if you think about the supervisions, and appraisals with staff, you know, we need to be reflecting with them and asking their point of view, they come out with some really cracking bits of things. You think, Well, I hadn't thought of that. You know, let me just write that down. It's about making those opportunities. Yeah, it does sound a bit woolly, that I spend most of my day talking. It's not true, but it's about they don't have to be long conversations. But sometimes if we have had something that's taking up a lot of time, a client or an experience, it's about sitting down with your it's usually at my office team and writing something down about how did that go? Because everyone has an opinion, you may think it went really well. Someone else may be thinking that went really badly. We did not consider something, it hadn't crossed my mind. And that's what it's about being honest and transparent enough to be able to say that, or to say that really didn't go very well. What could we have done differently? And try and put that into practice?

**Wendy Adams 29:23**

Is there anything you've done to help others you know, maybe in your office team or whatever, get into the habit of that reflective practice as well because it's one of those things that I think comes easier to some people than others. Yeah.

**Maddie Watts 29:36**

So we tend to do we have a morning meeting at nine and talk about yesterday last night, so the weekend what how are we going to go forward? And then normally about about two o'clock just when you after lunch when you would like to go home now please. And you've still got three hours We'll all stop and have a cup of coffee together and we will talk about what Whatever is is causing us an issue is the wrong way is whatever is our top priority? We will, we will reflect on that. And it's sometimes it's just nice to have that 10 minutes where you bounce a few ideas around and you think, Oh, I hadn't thought of that. It's but yeah, it's a bit, I suppose it's culturally, we have developed one where we do a lot of reflection. And reflection is a very good way to learn, because it improves your practice, it changes your practice. Because not only are you having to think very quite carefully, about deeply about what you've done, other people are also thinking about that, and it's about what they bring to the table. Yeah, is there some

**Pia 30:51**

questions you ask yourself and your team when you're doing the reflection.

**Maddie Watts 30:55**

I always talk about what went wrong, what went well. And then because I don't like using negatives, I talk about what went in brackets not so well. And, you know, what, could we have done better? You know, so, so if this happens again, what would we you know, what would we do differently? And, and sometimes it's sometimes it can be really quite woolly that, you know, what would we have done differently it may have been having that conversation with with I don't know, a healthcare professional earlier, you know, would that be practical? Would we have got through, etc, etc. It's about sometimes it's about we would have thought about something sooner. And it was how we would implement that. And it is usually trying to have medical help and things like that. How do you? How do you try and get that point across? Perhaps we weren't strong enough with our approach? I don't know. Just very good

**Pia 31:57**

questions. So to ask, and I was thinking when you were saying you needed to, you know, so I noticed some services will have like a 10 or two or something like that, you know, they'll have a little slogan around it, you know, and I suppose in residential services, you might have a handover. So just kind of weaving in, you know, when you have those kind of quick meetings, you know, what are our priorities today? What, what's gone well? What could we have, what could we have improved on, and then it doesn't have to be something that's, you know, added on to your day is something that is including in your, in your normal, everyday communications now, and then evidencing it going back to your point in the beginning, you know, then thinking our way, what can we you know, if we have an ongoing improvement plan, or is there some way I was evidence in there we are having these conversation, and this is what comes out of it? And this is what the how the quality is improved for the people we're supporting? Yeah, yeah,

**Maddie Watts 32:53**

I think so. It's some Yeah, it comes down to how do you evidence some good, sometimes you can reflect and just go into great big circle, and nothing, nothing quality has come out of it. So do you record that one? Or do you just make that to one side? It's, it's a difficult one, it's split?

**Pia 33:11**

Is finding, finding a middle way, isn't it? I just want to talk to you a little bit about culture and social care, and in particular, in home care, because that can be sometimes a bit more tricky to find, you know, to a make sure that you, you know, kind of work on having a good culture within your staff too, but also kind of measuring that in home care, because your staff are sort of kind of out in the community working and you're in the office, and there's them and ask them, you know, how do you know how everybody's feeling? What's your, what's your thoughts about that? Yeah,

**Maddie Watts 33:43**

I have a bit of a bee in my bonnet about about culture, because I it's about you are fostering a positive culture you are, it is something that you create, and it is, it is a reflection on on us as a business that, that we have a good culture, we have a positive culture. And, and although my, my staff when they get when they come to work for us, you know, understand our values and our beliefs and what we, what our mission is. Culture is a different, it's a different one. It's, it's about, it's about getting them to experience that and I feel that especially in dom care, positive and good culture comes from good

communication. It's about how you, how you talk with your staff, how you engage with them, and how you how you support them, and you can't you can't teach good culture, but but you can promote it. You can, you can get them to experience it. And it may be that they don't recognize that I enjoy working here because there is a positive and good culture at work, but they know that there's something right. And you, you can't demand that people are or teach people to be positive at work, but you can provide a positive place for them to work. And and that is part of I think, I think that's that's a very important point that the work needs to be a positive place either I don't want to use the word happy because you know, we do a difficult job at the best of times, but it's but these if you've got a good culture it it stops that that that constant turnover of staff that is that is quite relevant in them in domiciliary care. And it's about getting people to enjoy their job, but enjoy their job is not quite right. It's about getting something from their job, that gives them a sense of purpose. Because sometimes domiciliary care is not enjoyable. And we you know, we I take that on, but there's parts of it that are, but it's about getting people to get that feeling that they have been meaningful. And if you can get people to feel that they are that they make a meaningful difference to other people. The culture improves, it's about they are proud of where they work, and they talk to other people.

**Wendy Adams 36:44**

Yeah, I really liked what you said about communication being key to culture. Because I think in domiciliary care, one of the real challenges is it's very fast paced, you've got a lot of staff, and everybody's working remotely. And because of that, I guess, probably domiciliary care services use more WhatsApp or text messages as a means of communicating with our staff than maybe the likes of residential services do. And one of the things that we know not just from work life, but from personal life as well, is that messages, texts, WhatsApp messages, it's really easy for things to be misinterpreted. Alternatively, we shorten them, because it's a message to the point at which maybe the person sees it as just an instruction or quite direct or so that really made me think about for, particularly for managers who are communicating with large numbers of staff using a message type approach, just how you add in some of the niceties that actually we would add in, in normal conversation or face to face conversation that I think sometimes get lost in that means of communication.

**Maddie Watts 38:03**

And sometimes if you're sending a text to someone that you would you say, would you start with Hello. And you might not do you might just say, I don't know, laundry, silly machine and Mrs. So and so. So I'm actually and what you need to alter that pick on that one this one this morning, like that. But you know, I've set up how I could the next person in place, because I haven't finished yet. Thank you. And it's putting in those social niceties. And it's also that we in the office, we monitor those channels to make sure that we understand what's going on. And we will say I really appreciate you doing that. Thank you very much. And then it may be that something has come in that I said I could you pick up some milk for Mr. So and so on, you're on your way in. And it's I really appreciate you doing that. Thank you very much. And it's about showing this. That is a good, it's finding that way of communicating. And it's making sure that people don't take things wrongly or it It all started because we would get comments we somehow went into so and so's and they hadn't done X, Y and Zed and I was left with all this I don't know mountain of ironing. And actually if they'd have put on, I haven't been able to do the ironing, the iron's fused, the family is going to look at it, that kind of thing. That would have solved that

problem. And it's making things just that little more transparent. And actually, that makes a real difference if you're faced with a mountain of ironing or something else, you know.

**Pia 39:34**

And the reason behind it, isn't it? Yeah, it's really, there was a manager I was talking to a little while ago who was saying that they send voice notes, because obviously could do that on particular WhatsApp, you know, to you know, sometimes it's the writing things because they're able to kind of make a bit more expressive as I wish I quite liked it and maybe not all the time, but just you know, Friday, you know You know, just, you know, a bit of a, you know, Hello, and thanks for the way, you know, it's been great, you know, you know, some some way making a bit more is that communication again, it's really tricky when when you don't wish you don't very often see people face to face to actually judge how people kind of receiving your messages and everything is written in short form in the text. And I really like that kind of give them a bit of explanation about what you've done and what needs to be done and how you're doing it, then

**Maddie Watts 40:32**

I'm actually we have a lot of engagement with a messaging service, people were very keen to engage, in fact, that we joke that I, especially when the roads are dug up, and there's problems with the traffic and things like that, it all comes through and someone in the office makes sure that everyone that's working in that area knows that there is a road closed and things like that. And it's the little things because if someone hadn't told you and you just sat there for half an hour, you would be annoyed, and actually the information is there, we just need to get it across it and it works really well. But it's just it's fostering that positive way of communicating I mean, without sounding patronizing. And as I sort of go back to culturally, I don't think we as a race are very good at saying thank you, or being kind or showing appreciation. So we always have our time

**Wendy Adams 41:23**

or care slot in every episode where we ask the people that we're chatting to about what's your most time saving tip. So we'd like to put that same question to you, because clearly, you've got a lot going on, what would be your your top tip?

**Maddie Watts 41:41**

that's quite a difficult question. And I. But I think what saves me time is that I trust other people to do their job. So I have a good team around me, I prioritize what's important to me. And I trust them to, to do what they need to do. But I also think that it's I have it has taken a while to learn to switch off, and I relax. And so it saves my energy. So when I am in the office, I am I am, you know, switched on and ready to go, rather than always feeling tired and a bit lethargic. And, and I sleep a lot better now. Because I trust other people to do their job. And when I leave the office, I I may talk to myself on the way on the journey home because it's a way it's my way of unwinding. And obviously I my husband and I own this business, we have a rule that we don't talk about work at home. And I mean, you may joke that we have nothing else to talk. I but it works very well. Yes, a very, very clear switch off. And that has really helped. But yeah, and if you trust other people to do their job, and you have delegated and you priorities, prioritize what you if you've got more time, you've got so much more time.

**Wendy Adams** 43:10

That's great. And if you thought that question was hard, I've got I've got our final question now, which might be even harder. I want you to imagine that we're in the lift on the 10th floor, and we're going down with a group of registered managers. And before everyone gets out, you want to tell them, what is your what you think is the most important key message.

**Maddie Watts** 43:31

Um, I suppose I would say something like, look after your staff, they are your best assets. Be kind be fair. They are not your friends. They are. They are your colleagues. But they do a very good job. And you need to be in charge of that. But I hear so often that people have had a miserable experience in domiciliary care, and I've gone completely off working in that sector of care. And it's because they haven't been looked after. It doesn't take much for people to feel valued. And I might I suppose that's yeah, that would be my that would my comment, value your staff.

**Wendy Adams** 44:19

A really good one and a very good one to end on. Absolutely.

**Pia** 44:23

Absolutely. And just a huge, huge things from us. Maddie has been really, really fascinating to talk to you and and I suppose Best of luck when you have your CQC inspection because it sounds like you're well prepared for it. Well

**Maddie Watts** 44:39

Yeah, some way to go. But yeah, we have a lot in. Nice to talk to you. Yeah.

**Pia** 44:44

Thanks. Thanks for today. Bye. Bye bye.

**Pia** 44:57

That was a really great conversation, wasn't it Wendy? Yeah, Maddie had so much interesting things to say, didn't she? Yeah, clearly doing a lot of prep. And just lots of things you talked about with flexible lots of reflection about what what will stay the same what do they need to change in terms of their preparation for CQC inspection, you can hear that, you know, the, obviously some of their plans hadn't been firmed up. But they were they were talking about, they were obviously really thinking about what are the things that we're going to be doing in terms of of gathering evidence for our forthcoming CQC inspection under the single assessment framework. Interesting times, we've been doing a lot of work at Skills for Care around single assessment framework, and I suppose one of the things is really worthwhile checking out if you are making plans for for CQC. So we now have a seminar called Preparing for CQC inspection. It's an all day seminar. So all online, is one of our costed offers, as we call them. So it's about 120 pounds to attend plus VAT. But if you are a ASC-WDS account holder, you get a 10% discount. And what you get from those that whole day is you get a really sort of kind of comprehensive look at and suppose some time to think about what are the preparation that you need to make? How are you gathering evidence, if you participate, you also get a a toolkit to help you. So you know, something to really think about, if you are sort of listening to this and thinking, you know that, you

know, I need to start, I need to think about this, I need to do something about this, I need to be planning, you know, where am I going to start so you know, attending a webinar, worth knowing as well. If you're part of a big organization, we you can also commissioned us to come and deliver it just for you, as a team, as a team of managers, typically between 20 and 40 people, well, we can we can deliver it straight to you. And in the show notes there will be details about how you can do that. So worth having a look at isn't it really Wendy? Absolutely,

**Wendy Adams** 47:07

definitely is. And of course, we've, we've also got our good and outstanding inspection tool kit. Yeah. And we've revised that to include a whole section on the single assessment framework. So you can actually look at all of the I and We statements, and you can you can select what type of service you are. So if you're like Maddie, and work in home care service, then you can select that. And many of the examples that will be given are around home care, and those sorts of ways that you could gather evidence. But similarly, if you're residential services, if you're a learning disability service, you can choose that and look at particularly how new single assessment framework might be might happen in your area. Yeah.

**Pia** 48:00

And you can go in and you can look at individual quality statements, obviously Maddie was talking about the well being quality statements, or you can look at their quality statement, and the user was really one of the things that other people have have used as evidence, what are the, you know, latest guidances around, You know, what are the best practices you can kind of look at? So lots of lots of ideas. I suppose it's about sparking those ideas with you and your team, you know, don't don't just look at it yourself, you know, maybe get a group view having a look at the inspection toolkit and using that as a way of going oh, well, what are we doing in terms of of gathering evidence? And what are we doing in terms of, you know, for instance, around well being, the other thing that we have is the good and outstanding Guide, which is a guide that's available if you are a member. So if you're Skills for Care registered manager member, you can access this on our portal. It's been something that we have created and updated with the Outstanding Society. So if you are a member, worth having a look at that as well, because again, lots of ideas from both ourselves and the Outstanding Society about gathering evidence and looking at good practice. So that's it for this episode. And thank you very much for joining us. And remember all the resources that we talked about are in the show notes and on the Skills for Care website. Bye for now. Bye