

A black and white photograph of a woman wearing a black hijab, smiling broadly and looking upwards and to the right. She is seated at a desk with her hands clasped. In the background, a man is also smiling and looking in the same direction. The scene appears to be a professional meeting or a classroom setting.

Developing new managers and deputies

A guide to effective succession planning



Foreword

Recruiting future managers internally means you've already got somebody aligned with the vision and values of your organisation. They know your client base, their families and are familiar with the wider team. Offering development opportunities can also be highly motivational for growing talent from within and securing retention of staff and managers.

There are multiple ways you can identify emerging talent. We have a system where our deputy manager undertakes the monthly one-to-one, the registered manager does the six-monthly one-to-one, and I do the annual reviews. This ensures that we have different levels of management speaking to staff about their interests and aspirations. We also host internal awards and quarterly high-performing team workshops where we come together to observe staff team members interacting with other team members.

To upskill our future managers, we adopt a structured approach. We start by thinking about the date we want to have somebody in place. If you know a date when you want to achieve this by, it helps you to timetable how to achieve that. It is important that you give the person you are developing plenty of information so that they can understand their own progression and how they will be supported. Once this has been agreed, one-to-ones and reviews can be used to track progress.

I'm a real believer in customising the development of future managers around the individual. We all have a lot of existing abilities and so helping to nurture their skills and talents is important. Some future managers will be stronger in some areas than others, so it's about having those discussions and identifying those strengths and building your support where it is needed.

To help build confidence in new managers, we have used Skills for Care Manager Induction Standards, the Lead to succeed and Well-led leadership programmes, and the Level 5 Diploma. We also look to continually develop our managers using short courses from organisations like the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) and the Association for Coaching to build up interpersonal skills. We also find getting our managers involved in attending conferences is a superb way for them to connect with others.

Alison Carter

Manager Director

No Place Like Home



Bespoke Later Life Support

Introduction

The adult social care sector in England is evolving, increasing the demand for skilled, compassionate, and inclusive managers.

To maintain a positive and inclusive culture, the sector needs strong, mindful leaders who lead by example, ensure regulatory compliance, and support the wellbeing of both people and staff. Inclusive leadership means inspiring and supporting teams to deliver high-quality, person-centred care through clear communication, promoting inclusivity, fostering resilience, and ensuring compliance.

Developing and recruiting future managers from within should be the first option for any care service. Strong recruitment processes that secure a diverse team with the right values create an ideal foundation for developing future managers. These development opportunities progress valued staff members into management roles, fostering loyalty, reducing recruitment costs, and ensuring continuity of care.

Developing managers internally also helps retain valuable knowledge and expertise. By nurturing talent within their workforce, organisations can build leadership teams that align with their service values and priorities. Supporting the development of leaders from diverse backgrounds also promotes fresh perspectives and equitable representation. Every service, regardless of size, can identify and develop future managers. Overlooking succession planning may result in the loss of emerging talent, impacting staff morale and potentially compromising the quality of care.

Becoming an effective care manager will involve a number of key steps; gaining frontline care experience, aspiring to senior roles, accessing internal development opportunities, and completing relevant qualifications. These steps prepare staff for managerial responsibilities with confidence, fostering success in a diverse, inclusive environment.

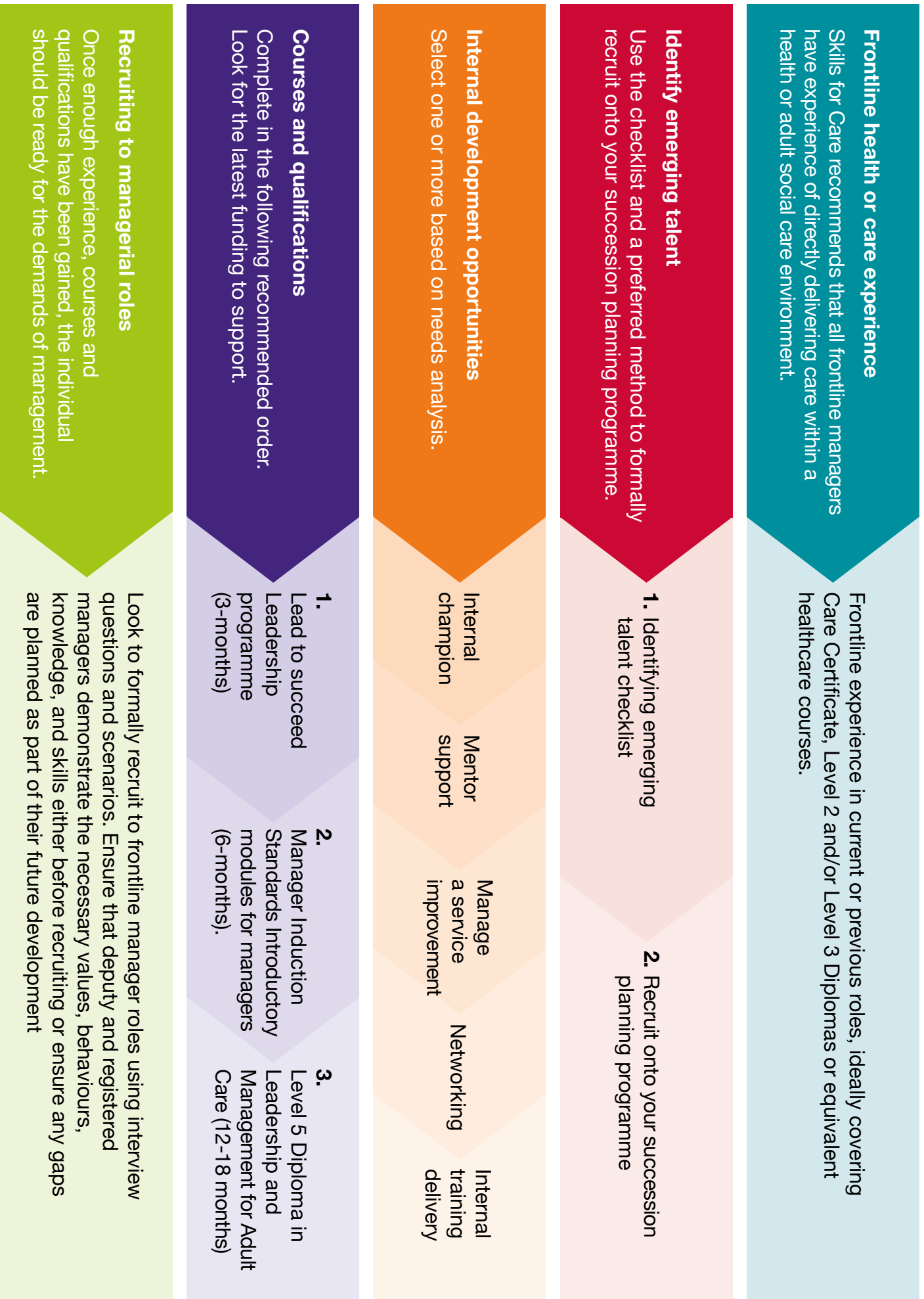
This guide provides practical strategies for spotting talent and supporting aspiring leaders. It aligns with the Care Workforce Pathway and Leadership Qualities Framework, detailing the skills, values, and behaviours needed.

With thoughtful planning and targeted training, organisations can create a strong pipeline of confident and capable future leaders.

“Our internal leadership programme helped us to reflect on how we would deal with situations and share ideas. We considered the different ways we needed to communicate as leaders, including how we engaged with staff to get them on board.”

Leanne Capstick, Registered Manager
Castle Supported Living

Recommended steps in a future managers development journey



Contents

We recommend working through this guide step-by-step, reflecting on key points and how this relates to your service. By reviewing each step, you can consider whether any of the ideas and suggestions in this guide will help enhance or overhaul existing processes or enable some services to embed succession planning for the first time.

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Step 1: Shape your succession plan

This section highlights the importance of succession planning, its opportunities, risks of neglect, and strategies to align plans with your service's needs. Succession planning suits services of all sizes. A clear plan ensures continuity, boosts morale, and secures future leadership. Smaller providers can focus on tailored development for a few, while larger services might implement broader programmes.

For those yet to invest in succession planning, this section outlines critical considerations and opportunities. Now is an ideal time to assess workforce diversity and leverage skills, backgrounds, and perspectives to strengthen leadership.

Inclusive succession planning can lead to a more representative and effective management team, ultimately benefiting the service. However, if you have concerns about the lack of diversity across your workforce, it is recommended to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment prior to developing your approach to succession planning.

Whatever challenges you may face – whether financial constraints or concerns about investing in staff who might leave – this section provides actionable insights and evidence to address these barriers. By taking a proactive approach, even the most cost-conscious owners can see the value of succession planning in ensuring long-term success and stability.

We aim to inspire confidence that investing in leadership development is not a risk but a pathway to sustained excellence.

“Succession planning involves the whole team and upskilling everyone. In my experience, developing a thirst for knowledge and offering development across the board brings the best results.

By upskilling even junior members of the team, team leads are better able to support their managers and managers are therefore able to continue their CPD and self-development.”

Claire Callaghan, Registered Manager, Bowfell House, Knoll Care Partnership

Why succession planning is important

With the demand for care rising, 31% of registered managers expected to retire in the next 15 years, and 2,800 adult services looking for a new manager at any one time contribute to the high 19.4% annual turnover rate for managers across the sector. Succession planning is crucial for securing and growing your own business and the wider sector.

Despite there being 28,900 CQC-regulated care establishments, there are only 4,400 deputy managers currently working in the sector. To maintain care standards during a registered manager's absence, every provider should consider establishing a deputy manager or equivalent role.

Issues impacting the opportunities to develop future managers and deputies

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Aging population | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The aging population is significantly increasing demand for adult social care services.■ As more people require long-term care, there is a growing need for experienced care managers.■ This demographic shift puts pressure on recruitment, especially in management roles. |
| Workforce shortages | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Adult social care sector is experiencing a workforce shortage, driven by low pay, challenging working conditions, and competition with other sectors.■ The shortage at the frontline level often translates into a smaller pool of candidates for management positions, as fewer staff are advancing to leadership roles. |
| High turnover | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ High turnover among care staff impacts management vacancies.■ Managers may face burnout due to the stressful nature of the work, regulatory pressures, and the need to manage understaffed teams.■ This turnover can create frequent vacancies in management positions and makes it harder to retain experienced leaders. |
| Regulatory pressures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The complexity of regulatory requirements and compliance can add significant pressure on a care manager.■ Many may feel unprepared for the regulatory burdens, deterring potential applicants and increasing vacancies. |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Lack of structured leadership development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Many care organisations lack structured career pathways or leadership development programmes that prepare care workers for management roles. ■ Without adequate training and mentorship, fewer frontline staff transition into management positions, leading to more unfilled vacancies. |
| <p>Lack of workforce diversity</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A lack of workforce diversity limits the range of ideas, experiences, and approaches, reducing adaptability and innovation in leadership. ■ It narrows the talent pool, overlooking potential leaders from under-represented groups and missing opportunities to reflect the communities served. |
| <p>Sector recognition</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adult social care often suffers from a lower public profile and recognition compared to healthcare, which can impact the attractiveness of care management roles. ■ Efforts to raise the profile of the sector, improve working conditions, and offer clear career pathways are essential to addressing vacancies in management roles. |



Benefits of succession planning

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Continuity of leadership and quality</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensures a smooth leadership transition. ■ Allows for a seamless handover, preventing any disruption in the quality of care provided. |
| <p>Retention of expertise</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Succession planning helps capture knowledge and expertise before it is lost. ■ By preparing internal staff to step into leadership roles, organisations can transfer knowledge effectively. |
| <p>Increased morale</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Succession planning creates a clear pathway for staff development, providing opportunities to grow within the organisation. ■ Supporting personal and professional development boosts staff morale, motivation, and engagement. |
| <p>Benefit from diverse leadership opportunities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allows space to take a step back, view the diversity of your organisation and figure out how to increase or maintain it and be representative of the wider population and those accessing care and support. |
| <p>Reducing recruitment costs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Succession planning reduces the need for external recruitment. This saves the organisation time and money on external hiring, onboarding, and training new staff. ■ It will enable organisations to fill key positions faster, using talent that already understands the service’s values, policies, and practices. |

“I think it is important to build up a lot of experience and understanding to be a good manager. Across health and social care, I worked as a carer, senior carer, clinical nurse, deputy manager and as part of the ICB quality team before becoming a registered manager. Prior to this, I had experience in pre-hospital and hospital.”

Silvia Nunes, Home Manager, Ford Place Nursing Home, Stow Healthcare

Risks of not succession planning

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Leadership gaps</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Key management roles may be left vacant due to sudden departures, retirement, or illness, leading to a lack of leadership and staff support. ■ Without strong leadership, day-to-day operations can become chaotic, reducing the quality of care and decision making. |
| <p>Reduced retention</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Without clear career progression opportunities, staff may feel unmotivated and overlooked. ■ Low morale and limited growth prospects can lead to higher staff turnover, increasing recruitment and training costs. |
| <p>Regulatory risks</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leadership instability may lead to non-compliance with Care Quality Commission (CQC) standards or legal requirements. ■ Failing to meet regulatory standards (e.g. Regulation 7: Requirements relating to registered managers) could result in negative assessment outcomes and unenviable ratings, fines, or the loss of operating licenses. |
| <p>High recruitment costs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organisations without succession plans will be forced to recruit externally for leadership positions, which can be costly and time-consuming. ■ External hires require more onboarding and training, increasing expenses and delaying the effective transition into leadership roles. |

“A previous company I worked for did not offer any management development opportunities. They were open with me and said that if I stayed, I would not be able to progress, so I left.”

Silvia Nunes, Home Manager, Ford Place Nursing Home, Stow Healthcare

Investing in succession planning

“Whilst it’s great to have succession planning initiatives on paper, these only come to life if you empower and resource people to support them to happen. You need the managers and leaders to be bought into the value of succession planning, actively looking for people who want to step up and investing the time to help them progress.”

Deborah McNally, Locality Manager and Leadership Development Programme Co-ordinator, Brandon Trust

Whilst the benefits may be convincing for owners, a key obstacle for providers in offering succession planning opportunities is the potential cost.

Succession planning allows for a structured approach that reduces these costs over time by preparing internal candidates and reducing external recruitment.

What are some of the estimated costs of externally recruiting future managers?

The following list includes estimated costs and timeframes needed if externally recruiting a new manager. Whilst not all costs may apply to every service, the oversight of some or all these processes can be demanding on finances and capacity.

- **Recruitment advertising:**
£300-£1,000 per listing, takes 1-3 months.
- **Agency fees:**
£5,000-£8,000 (15-20% of £30,000-£40,000 salary), 1-2 months.
- **Assessment tools:**
£50-£200 per candidate, completed in 1-2 weeks.
- **Onboarding:**
£500-£1,000, takes 1-3 weeks.
- **Training:**
£500-£2,000, duration 1-3 months.
- **Professional development:**
£1,500-£3,000, over 1-2 years.
- **Temporary coverage:**
£150-£300 per day, for 1-3 months.

**Total cost without succession planning:
£12,350-£47,200**

What are some of the estimated costs if we developed future managers internally?

- **Training programs:**
£100-£500 per session, over 6-12 months.
 - **Leadership courses:**
£1,500-£3,000 annually, lasting 1-2 years.
 - **Shadowing:**
Minimal cost (£100-£500), for 3-6 months.
 - **Mentorship:**
£500-£1,500 annually, for 12 months.
 - **Workshops:**
£200-£1,000 per event, held 2-4 times a year.
 - **Resources:**
£100-£300 annually, self-paced.
 - **Succession planning:**
Minimal cost, part of regular meetings.
-

**Total cost with succession planning:
£3,200-£18,300**

“Succession planning should remain the forefront of managers and directors’ minds at all times. You can never overestimate the time it takes to recruit and train the right individuals. If you are constantly assessing your team and constantly looking at ways to upskill the process becomes so much easier.”

Claire Callaghan, Registered Manager, Bowfell House, Knoll Care Partnership



Identifying the right approach – staff team

Involving your staff team in shaping your succession planning approach can create a plan that reflects real needs, secures buy-in, and enhances their engagement.

When seeking their input, here are some important questions to ask via staff surveys, one-to-one discussions, or team meetings. The latter can provide a particularly open and transparent opportunity to explore what your team would value the most.

- What skills and values do you believe are essential for future leaders in our service?
- How can we ensure that our future managers and leaders are representative of our diverse and inclusive workforce?
- What types of training or support would help everyone feel prepared for more responsibility?
- What barriers might stop you or others from pursuing a leadership role here?
- Are there factors that might lead you or others to consider leaving after gaining skills here?
- How can we make our culture more inclusive and supportive of career progression for all staff?
- What steps can we take to ensure our succession planning process is fair and transparent?
- What incentives or support would encourage staff from all backgrounds to explore leadership opportunities?

By gathering feedback through these questions, you can create a succession plan that reflects your team's real-world experiences and aspirations, increasing both the plan's effectiveness and the team's commitment to staying and growing in your organisation.

Identifying the right approach – partners

This guide offers examples from various adult social care services, but exploring approaches from other local providers can inspire your succession planning and foster collaboration.

Working together allows for shared expertise and cost savings through joint initiatives. Smaller providers can benefit by sharing resources for training, coaching, and mentoring across local services.

When discussing succession planning with other local services, here are some of the questions to ask:

- What strategies do you use to identify and prepare diverse staff for leadership roles?
- How do you balance external recruitment with promoting inclusive internal development for leadership positions?
- What training or development programs have been most effective in preparing staff with the right skills and values for leadership?
- Do you partner with external training providers, and could we collaborate to share resources or costs?
- What approaches do you use to retain staff after they complete leadership or succession programs?
- What incentives have you found effective for encouraging staff from all backgrounds to engage in succession planning?
- What challenges have you faced in creating inclusive succession planning, and how have you addressed them?
- Are there ways a partnership between our services could better support diverse staff development?
- How do you ensure experienced leaders pass on knowledge and values to future leaders?
- What methods do you use to measure the inclusivity and success of your succession planning initiatives?

These questions can help uncover practical strategies, identify areas for potential partnership, and build a foundation for mutual support in achieving strong, sustainable succession plans.

“Whilst our Stepping Up succession planning related programme has been very valuable for career progression, we do on occasions recruit externally too into management roles. We know external recruitment can introduce fresh perspectives and experience into the care we provide.”

Deborah McNally, Locality Manager and Leadership Development Programme Co-ordinator, Brandon Trust

Succession plan template

After considering the benefits of succession planning, identifying what your staff team values, reviewing approaches from other services, and applying the recommendations from this guide, it's time to document your plan.

Here is a suggested template to capture key information.

Download this template:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/succession

| Purpose and objectives | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Define the plan's purpose and key objectives, like identifying leaders and supporting staff development. | |
| Roles and responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">List critical roles (e.g. registered manager, deputy manager).Outline responsibilities, required skills, and qualifications. | |
| Values | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Highlight essential values (e.g. accountability, compassion, inclusion).Assess values in recruitment, training, and reviews to match the organisation's culture. | |
| Inclusion | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure leadership roles are accessible to diverse staff.Track diversity metrics and support under-represented groups | |
| Competency framework and skills assessment | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Define core competencies for roles (e.g. leadership, compliance)Assess through evaluations, feedback, or training modules. | |

Identifying talent

- Set criteria for identifying potential leaders (e.g. performance, motivation).
- Use diverse panels in formal recruitment processes.

Development plans

- Detail available training and development programmes.
- Include milestones and timelines for progression.

Retention and incentives

- Develop strategies to retain staff post-training.
- Offer career advancement opportunities.

Knowledge transfer

- Facilitate knowledge transfer from current leaders.
- Encourage mentoring by senior staff.

Review process

- Assess plan effectiveness with metrics (e.g. retention, leadership diversity).
- Update processes periodically.

Communication, implementation, monitoring and improvement

- Promote transparency and engagement through clear communication.
- Set an implementation timeline and ensure continuous monitoring and improvement.

Step 2: Identify emerging talent

The first step in developing future managers and deputies is identifying talent fairly and inclusively, ensuring equal opportunities for growth.

The following qualities, drawn from CQC reports, highlight the attributes of capable and compassionate managers:

- Approachable and promotes an open-door policy
- Supports staff development, empowerment, and recognition
- Ensures high-quality care and continuous improvement
- Promotes equality, diversity, and staff wellbeing
- Manages risks and ensures regulatory compliance
- Demonstrates integrity, professionalism, and builds external partnerships
- Fosters a positive workplace culture with clear goals

These align with what many frontline managers recognise as key values for anybody managing a service, such as accountability, collaboration, compassion, curiosity, inclusion, and integrity.

Focus on developing future managers who align with your organisation's values and goals, rather than solely on their skills. Many staff members, with the right guidance and opportunities, can excel in leadership roles. Encourage leadership at all levels and provide opportunities to try new roles to inspire staff growth.

Use our tips, examples, and checklist to identify and support potential future leaders.

“For your future managers, look for agents of change. These are those team members who can influence and inspire change in others at your service. These individuals might not have the technical skills yet to be a manager, but do not worry because you can teach those. Look for those with the passion.”

Silvia Nunes, Home Manager, Ford Place Nursing Home Stow Healthcare

The Brandon Trust explains here how their existing managers and leaders are heavily involved in identifying emerging talent.

“Our leaders are always looking at what staff enjoy getting involved in, what they excel at, and discuss progression in career-related conversations. We discuss opportunities for our staff to progress up or across into different parts of the organisation.

Some are happy where they are, but they still want to undertake further training or take on extra responsibilities, which we are happy to support. Where staff have expressed an interest in progression with their manager, they are put forward for our Stepping Up programme.

It really varies who expresses interest in our Stepping Up development programme. Some are ambitious frontline carers who are looking to fast-track to a more senior role, others may have been with us for a long time and are ready to take on new responsibilities.

The first part of the Stepping Up programme is a three-hour virtual session which explores the role and responsibilities and development opportunities, which include a list of development tasks that could be undertaken, complemented by coaching support from our team of coaches.

The development tasks can be undertaken at each individual’s own pace and is directly supported by their own line manager. Tasks include arranging a team meeting and undertaking some best interest work. Coaching support is usually limited to four sessions, but there is some flexibility in this. We also talk through leadership responsibilities and how these can benefit the people we support.

Not everyone on our Stepping Up programme chooses to progress into a managerial position. Some decide these higher-level positions are not for them. That’s not a bad thing as we don’t want staff to find themselves in roles that are not the right ones for them.

What makes the biggest difference when developing future managers is the support they receive from their own manager. This is why we begin our managers on our leadership programme at the earliest opportunity.

It’s important that all our managers and leaders are courageous, compassionate and inclusive and ensure a positive and supportive relationship that gets the best out of the individual and the team.”

Deborah McNally, Locality Manager and Leadership Development Programme Co-ordinator, Brandon Trust

Practical ways to spot potential leaders

Through regular observations and engagement with team members, there should be multiple opportunities to spot emerging talent.

Ideally your performance management reporting may have captured some of this already, potentially highlighting great work and ambitions being demonstrated by less vocal members or the team.

Here are some things to look out for:

| | |
|---|---|
| Lead by example | Look for individuals who step in hands-on, support the team, and prioritise issues to improve care. |
| Align values with the role | Seek staff whose personal values align with the needs of people, showing empathy, integrity, and commitment to high standards. |
| Promote inclusivity and fairness | Identify those demonstrating inclusivity, fairness, and championing equity, diversity, and human rights in the workplace. |
| Quality of care | Notice team members who go above and beyond, uphold quality care, and promote best practices. |
| Observe performance | Look for staff showing resilience, problem-solving, and remain calm under pressure – like in crises or conflicts – these individuals often have leadership potential. |
| Evaluate interpersonal skills | Effective managers communicate well and build strong relationships; note staff who support peers and listen actively. |
| Look for self-starters | Look for proactive individuals improving care delivery or proposing innovative solutions who may excel in leadership roles. |
| Understand staff aspirations | Use one-to-one meetings and reviews to discover staff with ambitions for management roles who may not yet voice them. |

“The managers of the future need to be passionate about what they do. This is not a job you can do just for the sake of it.”

Silvia Nunes , Home Manager, Ford Place Nursing Home, Stow Healthcare



What to listen out for?

In developing this guide, we asked those wanting to become new managers or deputies what motivated them.

Statements that indicate readiness for leadership include:

- “I believe I have the potential to lead and inspire the team while upholding core care values.”
- “I want to deepen my understanding of leadership and promote dignity, respect, and inclusivity in my management style.”
- “I feel ready to take on more responsibility and demonstrate compassion and integrity in my role.”
- “I’m comfortable working independently or as part of a team, and I treat everyone equitably.”
- “I feel confident supporting other staff members with their challenges, always focusing on fairness and respect.”
- “My long service shows my commitment to professional development and delivering care that values diversity.”
- “I enjoy problem-solving and always seek to improve processes to benefit everyone fairly.”
- “I’m committed to supporting the growth and development of my colleagues and promoting a culture of equity.”
- “I’m passionate about fostering a workplace where fairness, respect, and support are at the heart of everything.”
- “I take pride in motivating others, treating them with fairness, and helping them achieve their best.”

If you hear similar comments from your colleagues, you may wish to start looking into development opportunities.

Identifying emerging talent checklist

This practical checklist helps identify if emerging talent in your service demonstrates the skills, behaviours, and attitudes needed for effective management. It serves as a tool for observing, evaluating, and discussing potential candidates.

Not all criteria need to be met initially, but consider if individuals could demonstrate these traits with the right development and support.

Download this template:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/succession

| What to look for | Yes | No | N/A | Evidenced already or development need |
|---|-----|----|-----|---------------------------------------|
| Does the individual build respectful relationships, develop trust, and communicate clearly with clients, families, colleagues, and professionals? | | | | |
| Are they adaptable in communication style, cultural awareness, and able to meet diverse needs and situations? | | | | |
| Do they demonstrate high standards of professional behaviour, fairness, equity, and inclusivity? | | | | |
| Do they reflect values supporting high-quality care and set a positive example through reliability and punctuality? | | | | |
| Are they committed to learning, seeking feedback, and trying new approaches to improve? | | | | |

| What to look for | Yes | No | N/A | Evidenced already or development need |
|--|-----|----|-----|---------------------------------------|
| Do they proactively take on additional responsibilities and suggest improvements in care delivery? | | | | |
| Are they effective at problem-solving, resourceful, and focused on solutions over problems? | | | | |
| Do they actively participate in team discussions, support team decisions, and collaborate effectively? | | | | |
| Are they mindful of their impact on others and contribute to overall team success? | | | | |
| Can they work independently, take ownership, and also support team efforts? | | | | |
| Do they seek knowledge, show eagerness to learn, and inspire confidence among peers? | | | | |
| Are they adaptable, resilient, and committed to delivering consistent, high-quality care? | | | | |

“I didn’t have any ambitions to move into care management when I joined this organisation. It happened after the previous deputy manager left and I found myself working closely with the care manager.

My previous experience working in an administrative role within a healthcare centre has also been beneficial. It gave me experience of dealing with staff, clients, relatives, outside agencies and professionals.

Engaging with such a wide range of people helps you to strengthen your communication skills and understand the wider health and social care system. I think because of my previous experience in management and nursing and everything else, it just became a natural progression for me.”

Christine Taylor, Deputy Manager and Head of Training, Eckling Grange Ltd



Recruiting onto succession planning programmes

Recruiting talent for succession planning programs requires a balance of formal and informal methods to ensure inclusivity and fairness.

A common risk for employers is unconscious bias, where managers recruit individuals similar to themselves. This limits opportunities for diverse team members and hinders the benefits diversity brings to the growth and development of the service.

Formal applications and interviews provide structure and insights into candidates' experience, goals, and communication skills. However, they may overlook qualities like adaptability and values and can feel intimidating for some staff.

To mitigate bias, use diverse panels, clear scoring systems, and structured questions. Provide adjustments such as offering interview questions in advance or alternative application methods to accommodate different needs.

Informal methods, including supervisor nominations, performance reviews, peer feedback, and self-nominations, are effective at identifying hidden talent. These approaches are less stressful and uncover qualities that formal processes might miss.

By combining formal and informal methods, organisations can create a fair and inclusive system that nurtures diverse future leaders and strengthens the team.

“It’s essential to be asking people all the time about their career aspirations. Actively listen to people at every opportunity. Communication is key to identifying talent. Talk to colleagues to get feedback on work performance, get a rounded view. Look at what clients and family are saying so you have a 360-view of their abilities.”

Alison Carter, Managing Director, No Place Like Home

Applications

Requesting candidates to complete an application form for a succession planning programme can provide useful information that complements other assessment methods.

If you decide to use an application form, check that this form effectively aligns with equality legislation and good practice (e.g. first name rather than Christian name) and the process captures and safely stores equality monitoring information.

Here's a breakdown of the pros and cons of this approach:

| Pros | Cons |
|--|--|
| An application form provides a consistent and efficient first step in evaluating candidates, allowing you to quickly gauge basic experience, qualifications and interest. | An application form may not provide as deep an understanding of a candidate's personality, adaptability, or interpersonal skills, which can be more apparent in face-to-face settings. |
| Completing a form prompts candidates to think critically about their career goals, strengths, and areas for development, helping them clarify their aspirations before entering the program. | Some candidates may feel hesitant to apply formally, especially if they're unsure of their readiness, potentially missing out on candidates with strong potential. |
| An application form allows you to assess candidates' ability to convey their thoughts and goals in writing, which is valuable for roles requiring documentation or report writing. | Candidates might provide vague or generic answers, limiting the form's effectiveness in revealing genuine skills, motivation, or commitment. |
| A standardised application form makes it easier to review and compare multiple candidates, as each applicant addresses the same questions, helping to ensure fair evaluation. | Written responses may favour candidates with strong writing skills, which don't always correlate with leadership potential, especially in roles requiring hands-on interaction. |
| Unlike interviews, application forms allow candidates to complete responses at their own pace, potentially reducing stress and providing a more inclusive approach. | Written responses can't capture how candidates might react in real-time situations or handle on-the-spot challenges, both of which are critical management qualities. |



Suggested application form questions

- What specific skills do you hope to develop through this programme, and how will they help you contribute more effectively to our team?
- Describe a time when you set a personal or professional goal for yourself. How did you work toward it, and what challenges did you overcome?
- How do you plan to balance the responsibilities of your current role with the additional demands of the development programme?
- What personal qualities do you believe make you a strong candidate for this programme, and how will they support your growth as a manager?
- Can you share an example of how you have embraced or championed diversity and inclusion in your work or community? How would this perspective shape your leadership style?
- How has your own cultural, community, or lived experiences prepared you to connect with a wide range of individuals and needs?
- Share an example of a time you came up with a creative solution to a challenge, either at work or in your personal life. How could this creativity contribute to your development as a leader in adult social care?
- Reflecting on your experience in adult social care, what motivates you to take on a leadership role, and how would you apply this motivation to your learning?
- Can you give an example of a time you improved a process or practice in your role? How would you use this experience to foster positive changes as a manager?

Whilst the above list might be helpful to consider what to ask, you might find asking three core questions is sufficient to identify individuals to progress to the next stage of the selection process. Again, it is useful to involve your wider teams in the scoping of your succession planning process.

Interviews

Interviewing potential candidates for a succession planning programme can be an effective way to assess readiness and suitability.

It is recommended to give out the interview questions in advance, helping your emerging talent to prepare and give fuller and clearer answers.

Here’s a breakdown of the pros and cons of this approach:

| Pros | Cons |
|--|--|
| Interviews provide structure, highlight motivation and values, and ensure all candidates are assessed using the same criteria. | Interviews risk bias, may disadvantage less confident candidates, and can miss informal leadership qualities shown in daily work. |
| Interviews allow candidates to express their career aspirations, interest in leadership, and motivations for joining the program, helping you gauge alignment with succession goals. | Interviews may introduce bias, as first impressions can sometimes skew judgment. Structured interviews and standardised questions can help mitigate this risk. |
| Interviews provide a chance to observe communication skills, confidence, and problem-solving abilities first hand-qualities essential for future managers. | Conducting interviews requires time and resources from both managers and candidates, which may be challenging if there are many potential candidates. |
| Candidates can ask questions, giving you insight into their understanding of leadership responsibilities and allowing them to clarify their expectations. | The interview process can feel intimidating for some staff, especially those in junior roles, which might limit their ability to demonstrate potential. |
| Interviews can help identify individual strengths and areas for growth, enabling you to create customised development plans for each participant. | Some candidates may have strong management potential but may not shine in an interview setting. Observing day-to-day performance alongside the interview process may provide a fuller picture. |
| The interview process can be a valuable way to assess the candidate’s commitment to the organisation and their readiness to invest in a long-term career there. | Candidates may feel pressured to give ideal answers rather than authentic ones, which could make it challenging to accurately assess readiness. |

Suggested application form questions

- What excites you about the management development programme, and how do you plan to maximise this opportunity?
- What values are most important to you in delivering high-quality care, and how have you demonstrated them in practice?
- Describe a time you collaborated with others to support a service user. How would you apply this skill as a manager?
- How do you prioritise tasks during busy shifts, and how would this skill support you in a management role?
- Can you share a time when you encouraged someone to share their ideas? How did you handle it, and what was the result?
- Tell me about supporting a colleague through a difficult time. What leadership skills did you develop from that experience?
- Describe a time you received constructive feedback. How did you respond, and how would you use feedback to grow in this programme?
- How do you stay updated on best practices in care, and how would you apply new learnings in a leadership role?
- How would you promote inclusivity and equality as a manager? Can you share an example of this in your work?
- Describe a time you addressed a situation where someone was treated unfairly. What actions did you take, and what was the outcome?
- What steps would you take to ensure care provided by your team respects diverse needs and preferences?
- Share an example of adapting to a significant change. How would adaptability benefit you as a manager?
- Describe a time you worked to ensure a team member or service user felt included and respected. What did you learn?
- What actions would you take if you observed a colleague acting in a discriminatory way?
- What drives you to develop your skills, and how committed are you to meeting the demands of this programme?
- What do you hope to achieve from this programme, and how do you see it impacting your career?

Scenario-based assessments

Adult social care employers can use scenarios to assess future manager potential because they provide a realistic, practical way to observe essential skills.

Here's a breakdown of the pros and cons of this approach:

| Pros | Cons |
|---|--|
| Scenarios reflect real challenges in adult social care, such as safeguarding issues or emergency response, providing insight into how candidates handle sector-specific situations. | Scenarios may not fully capture the day-to-day realities or emotional complexities of adult care, potentially limiting insight into real performance. |
| Scenarios help you to assesses crucial traits, such as resilience, patience, and integrity, which are vital for managing care services responsibly and compassionately. | Scenarios may miss certain skills (e.g. long-term planning or documentation skills) crucial for regulatory compliance and care quality monitoring. |
| Scenarios help test a candidates' ability to handle high-pressure situations, such as sudden staffing shortages or client complaints, critical for adult care management. | Scenarios may require role players or specific settings, adding to costs, which can be challenging in budget-conscious care environments. |
| Scenarios encourages candidates to assess situations and make informed decisions, showing their potential to manage complex, multifaceted care scenarios. | Success in a simulated task does not always indicate long-term effectiveness in managing an adult care service, where situations are unpredictable and evolving. |
| Scenarios can reveal how candidates interact with clients, families, and team members, highlighting their potential for effective team leadership and collaboration. | Multiple scenarios can lead to fatigue, particularly if assessing candidates for positions in settings with complex needs, impacting their performance. |

We have included some scenarios to assess if frontline care workers have the potential to become future care managers, focusing on leadership, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills. This includes some suggestions for different service types, but these could be easily customised to other services to help identify emerging talent.

Some scenarios include a focus on human rights because these are increasingly being seen as crucial by organisations like the CQC. Human Rights are universally agreed basic standards which aim to ensure that every person is treated with dignity and respect.

If you choose to use any of these, we recommend reviewing the terminology to ensure the scenarios resonate with your team members. You may want to test additional scenarios, helping you to explore issues important to all service types (e.g. a staff member being excluded by colleagues due to their ethnicity).

Residential care

Handling a staffing shortage

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assess the candidate’s problem-solving, prioritisation, calm response, and ability to foster collaboration and inclusivity. ■ Ideal candidates suggest solutions like reassigning tasks equitably, offering support to team members, and ensuring communication includes everyone impacted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ You are notified of two staff members calling in sick, creating a staffing shortage for the day. How would you plan the day’s coverage to ensure all residents receive high-quality care? ■ In your response, consider how you would ensure fairness in task reassignments and maintain an inclusive approach with the team. ■ Explain how you would collaborate with colleagues, communicate changes effectively, and support staff to handle the increased workload. |
|--|--|

Leading a team briefing

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Look for strong leadership and communication skills. ■ Ideal candidates plan effectively, engage team members through clear and positive communication, and create a collaborative atmosphere. They show the ability to coach and support staff, ensuring everyone feels valued and ready to deliver high-quality care. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ You are asked to lead a team briefing at the start of a busy day. During the briefing, you need to discuss key priorities, highlight important updates about resident needs, and ensure everyone understands their responsibilities for the day. ■ In your response, explain how you would prepare for and lead this briefing. Describe how you would communicate priorities clearly, set a positive and motivating tone, and ensure all team members are engaged and confident about their roles. ■ Consider how you would handle situations where a team member seems unsure or needs additional support. How would you use coaching conversations to encourage staff, address challenges, and foster their development? |
|--|--|

Responding to immediate needs

- Assess adaptability, time management, and leadership skills.
- Ideal candidates demonstrate flexibility, effective prioritisation, and proactive planning. They communicate changes clearly, lead by example, and inspire confidence in their team by maintaining a calm and solution-focused approach.
- You are faced with sudden schedule changes due to unexpected staff absences and urgent client needs.
- You must quickly reorganise your day to ensure all priorities are addressed without compromising the quality of care.
- Explain how you would adapt your schedule to respond to these changes effectively. Describe how you would prioritise tasks, communicate adjustments to your team, and ensure urgent client needs are met.
- As a leader, consider how you would inspire and guide your team during this situation. How would you ensure everyone remains motivated and clear about their roles?
- Discuss how you would encourage collaboration and involve your team in finding solutions.

Supporting a client with complex needs

- Look for attention to detail, adaptability, and a proactive approach to providing feedback and recommendations.
- Strong candidates demonstrate leadership by collaborating with the team, sharing insights, and inspiring others to prioritise high-quality care tailored to the client's unique needs. They show the ability to adapt quickly and maintain a person-centered focus in complex situations.
- You are assigned a new client with complex needs. You are responsible for reviewing their care plan, adapting your approach during the first visit based on the client's responses, and providing feedback to your team and supervisor afterward.
- Describe how you would prepare for this visit by reviewing the care plan and identifying key priorities. Explain how you would adapt your approach to meet the client's needs during the visit while ensuring their comfort and safety.
- As a team leader, discuss how you would share insights and recommendations with your team after the visit. How would you involve your colleagues in refining the care plan and inspire them to provide the best possible support for the client?

Supported living

Encouraging client independence

- Look for the ability to promote independence and tailor plans to meet the client's needs and abilities.
 - Ideal candidates demonstrate fairness by respecting the client's pace and preferences while encouraging equity by addressing any barriers the client may face.
 - Strong candidates also show adaptability, adjusting the plan as needed to celebrate progress and maintain motivation. They inspire confidence in the client and uphold a person-centred approach throughout.
- A client has expressed a desire to learn how to prepare their own meals. You are responsible for creating a step-by-step plan to help the client build their skills safely and confidently over time.
 - Explain how you would design a plan that encourages the client's independence while ensuring their safety. Describe how you would break down the task into achievable goals and adapt the plan as the client makes progress.
 - Discuss how you would ensure the client feels empowered and supported, especially if they face unique challenges or barriers. How would you promote fairness and equity by respecting their individual needs, preferences, and abilities?

Managing a roommate conflict

- Evaluate the candidate's conflict resolution skills, empathy, and ability to mediate in a respectful and impartial way.
 - Ideal candidates demonstrate fairness by treating both clients equitably and ensuring their voices are valued equally. Strong candidates also show the ability to promote understanding and shared responsibility.
- Two clients who share a living space disagree over shared responsibilities, such as cleaning or meal preparation. You are asked to mediate the situation and help them establish fair guidelines to resolve the conflict.
 - Describe how you would approach this situation to ensure both clients feel heard and respected. Explain how you would guide the conversation to identify the root of the disagreement and develop a fair and practical solution.
 - Discuss how you would uphold the clients' human rights, ensuring they have equal say in the resolution process. How would you ensure fairness in creating guidelines that respect their individual needs, abilities, and preferences?

Adapting activities to individual preferences

- Look for adaptability, creativity, and a commitment to treating each person as an individual.
 - Strong candidates demonstrate the ability to adjust plans to accommodate diverse needs while fostering a sense of inclusion. They show respect for each client's preferences and actively seek feedback to ensure everyone feels comfortable and engaged.
 - Ideal candidates balance group cohesion with individual attention, ensuring the activity promotes enjoyment and participation for everyone.
- You are tasked with planning an activity for a small group of clients. The clients have a range of sensory, communication, and personal preferences, which need to be considered to ensure everyone can participate comfortably and enjoy the experience.
 - Explain how you would plan the activity to accommodate the diverse needs of the group. Describe how you would adapt the activity to meet everyone's sensory and communication needs while ensuring it remains inclusive and enjoyable for all participants.
 - Discuss how you would ensure each person feels valued and respected as an individual. How would you approach understanding and addressing their unique preferences, abilities, and cultural or personal needs?

Developing a communication plan for a non-verbal client

- Look for initiative, resourcefulness, and a commitment to advocating for the client's voice.
 - Ideal candidates demonstrate creativity in developing the plan, ensuring it reflects the client's preferences and needs. They advocate for the consistent use of the communication method and emphasise the importance of respecting the client's human rights.
- You are tasked with creating a communication plan for a non-verbal client. The plan needs to incorporate visual aids, signs, or alternative methods to support the client's ability to express themselves effectively. Additionally, you must ensure the team consistently follows this plan to enhance the client's communication and autonomy.
 - Explain how you would develop a communication plan for this client, considering their unique needs and preferences. Discuss how you would ensure the client's right to communicate is respected and supported in every interaction. How would you make sure the client feels empowered to express their needs, preferences, and feelings, even if they cannot speak verbally?

Other approaches

To offer succession planning opportunities without formal applications or interviews, providers can adopt creative approaches to engage and attract a diverse group of future leaders.

- **Nomination by managers and supervisors:** invite nominations from those who work closely with potential candidates.
- **Peer-nomination system:** allow team members to highlight colleagues who demonstrate leadership qualities, inclusivity, and commitment.
- **Performance reviews:** incorporate succession planning into regular reviews to assess leadership potential and willingness to take on extra responsibilities.
- **Inclusive assessment days:** design diverse activities to test leadership skills, ensuring they accommodate different communication styles and abilities.
- **Observation:** document when staff demonstrate competencies like problem-solving, teamwork, or initiative.
- **Self-directed development:** support staff in setting personal development goals to prepare for future leadership roles.
- **Feedback-driven development:** hold regular feedback sessions to discuss career aspirations and gather input from team members and supervisors.
- **Encourage self-nomination:** allow staff to express interest in professional growth without formal applications.

These approaches help identify and nurture a wide range of potential leaders while promoting diversity and inclusivity.

“Think outside the box and challenge yourself not to replicate the same type of person every time. It’s easy to have that bias.”

Alison Carter, Managing Director, No Place Like Home

Step 3:

Planning development opportunities around the values, behaviours, skills and knowledge needed

Once you've identified talent, the next step is to undertake a needs analysis of those you hope to progress towards management.

Needs analysis

A needs analysis is crucial in adult social care when considering someone for a future manager role, as it aligns their abilities with the sector's unique demands. It assesses how well their values and behaviours match the organisation's ethos, ensuring they can inspire and sustain a culture of excellence in care. Ideally your needs analysis should be flexible enough to recognise that behaviours may show up differently for some colleagues (e.g. team members with autism).

The needs analysis process helps create a tailored development plan, identifying areas for growth such as leadership, decision making, compliance, or fostering a values-based culture. Focused training, mentoring, and experiential learning (e.g. participating in simulations, problem-solving tasks, role-playing care scenarios etc.) can then address these needs.

A needs analysis ensures suitable candidates are developed for leadership roles, maintaining care quality and continuity. Future managers must balance technical skills and emotional intelligence to manage both staff and individuals effectively. By understanding their strengths and areas for improvement, organisations can prepare them for leadership challenges.

For developing future managers, align the needs analysis with Skills for Care's [Leadership Qualities Framework](#) and [Care Workforce Pathway](#), which outline essential values, behaviours, skills, and knowledge.

“Our values give us a sense of identity and enables a team to have a sense of belonging, feel valued and respectful of each other. Values underpin our vision and purpose and guide us in all we do.”

Lesley Wilkins, Registered Manager, Lago Homecare

Core values

The overarching core values of any adult social care manager – including deputy managers and registered managers – are:

- Accountability
- Integrity
- Compassion
- Collaboration
- Inclusion
- Curiosity

The following table provides a more detailed breakdown of these core values and includes suggestions on how these can be developed and ultimately demonstrated.

| Accountability | How these can be developed |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Owning your actions and decisions, learning from your mistakes and holding yourself and your colleagues to account, in order to achieve the best possible outcomes and experiences for people in the health and care sectors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide opportunities for future managers to lead projects, documenting decisions to foster transparency and accountability. ■ Facilitate reflective sessions to analyse mistakes, identify lessons, and apply improvements. ■ Use team-building activities and peer reviews to promote shared accountability and collaboration. ■ Offer training on ethical decision making with real-world scenarios to build confidence in explaining actions. |
| Integrity | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Being a role model through your behaviour and actions, even in complex and challenging situations, while demonstrating honesty, transparency, and the highest ethical standards to remain true to yourself, your colleagues, your organisation, and the people you serve. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide mentorship for managers to observe senior leaders demonstrating ethical behaviour in challenges. ■ Organise role-play to practice handling complex scenarios with honesty and transparency. ■ Establish clear values and codes of conduct to guide ethical actions. ■ Create supervision sessions for discussing dilemmas and supporting integrity under pressure. |

| Compassion | How these can be developed |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embracing a people-centred approach in all actions, showing empathy, kindness, and thoughtfulness toward others, while ensuring dignity and respect for individual autonomy and rights. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer empathy training to help managers address diverse needs thoughtfully. ■ Encourage shadowing to observe and adopt compassionate care practices. ■ Provide sessions on balancing empathy with professional boundaries. ■ Create feedback systems to recognise and reward compassionate leadership. |
| Collaboration | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encouraging strong teamwork and transdisciplinary cooperation to maximise expertise and resources across professional, team, organisational, and system boundaries, integrating diverse skills and experiences to achieve shared goals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitate cross-team projects for managers to integrate diverse skills toward shared goals. ■ Provide training on communication and conflict resolution to enhance collaboration. ■ Organise networking events to foster cooperation and resource sharing with external professionals. ■ Implement mentorship programs with experienced leaders to promote teamwork and problem-solving. |
| Inclusion | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exemplifying and promoting equity, diversity, belonging, and ethical practice for all by fostering a safe organisational culture that actively challenges situations that are not inclusive, such as bullying, harassment, disrespectful behaviour or discrimination. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide training on equity, diversity, and inclusion to address workplace barriers. ■ Establish anonymous feedback channels for reporting non-inclusive behaviours and ensuring prompt action. ■ Create opportunities for managers to lead diversity initiatives like cultural events or inclusive hiring. ■ Offer mentoring on conflict resolution to handle bullying, harassment, and discrimination confidently. |

| Curiosity | How these can be developed |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Empowering individuals to embrace a spirit of inquiry that welcomes innovation and challenges ways of working, in order to keep practices and processes current, and drive incremental and transformational change and development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide training on creative thinking to inspire innovative problem-solving and challenge conventions. ■ Give access to conferences, webinars, and research on trends and best practices. ■ Create forums for managers to share ideas and foster continuous improvement. ■ Establish mentorship or peer-learning groups to discuss innovation and develop solutions collaboratively. |

Behaviours

The overarching behaviours of deputy managers and registered managers are:

- Respect
- See the whole person
- Honest, trustworthy and reliable
- Kind, compassionate and empathetic
- Courageous and principled
- Flexible open and learning
- Proud and positive
- Working together
- Professionalism

“Values, passion, and commitment should always be your first driver in recruitment and development. Look for those members of the team who share the company values and instil them every day. The skills and knowledge can be taught but the values need to be present in every interaction.”

Claire Callaghan, Registered Manager, Bowfell House, Knoll Care Partnership

The following table provides a more detailed breakdown of behaviours have been identified through national consultations that shaped the Care Workforce Pathway. It includes suggestions about how these can be developed if they are not already demonstrated.

| Respect | How these can be developed |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Personally promotes equality and diversity and ensures their staff are sensitive to people’s culture, age, gender, religion, race, sexual orientation and disability. ■ Encourages and enables both staff and people drawing on support to be involved in decision making, respecting and incorporating their views on how support should be provided. ■ Treats everyone with dignity, sensitivity and respect using a convincing and authentic leadership style. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide cultural competence training to help managers understand and address the diverse needs of staff and people. ■ Facilitate regular meetings where staff and people can share their views on decision making and co-create care plans. ■ Encourage managers to lead by example, demonstrating sensitivity and respect in all interactions to foster a positive workplace culture. ■ Implement leadership development programs focused on authentic leadership styles that promote dignity and inclusivity in practice. |
| See the whole person | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Acts as a leader in delivering person-centred support. ■ Leads a culture of co-production in their service, recognising the significance and value of the lived experience of the people drawing on care and support. ■ Devotes themselves to ensuring the contentment, health and wellbeing of the people drawing on care and support by putting them at the heart of what they do. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Train managers on person-centred care to lead by example in delivering individualised support. ■ Facilitate co-production workshops to improve care with input from lived experiences. ■ Encourage wellbeing reviews to engage with individuals on health and satisfaction. ■ Provide mentorship for managers to learn from leaders fostering care-centred cultures. |

| Honest, trustworthy and reliable | How these can be developed |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates and sets high standards of personal and professional behaviour, role modelling these attributes to the staff they lead. ■ Establishes boundaries between personal and professional responsibilities, leading others in their service do the same. ■ Acknowledges and takes responsibility when a mistake is made, learns from the incident and actively works to ensure that the same mistake is not made again in the future. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide leadership training focused on ethics and professionalism to help managers model high standards for their teams. ■ Offer guidance on establishing and maintaining professional boundaries through workshops and reflective practice sessions. ■ Create a safe environment where managers can acknowledge mistakes, analyse incidents, and implement preventive measures without fear of blame. ■ Encourage managers to lead by example in accountability, demonstrating honesty and reliability in their daily actions and decisions. |
| Kind, compassionate and empathetic | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leads with compassion, modelling and championing a culture of care, empathy, openness and inclusivity in their service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide emotional intelligence training to help managers lead with empathy in challenges. ■ Encourage regular team check-ins to foster support and value among staff. ■ Offer mentorship to develop compassionate leadership through guidance from empathetic leaders. ■ Recognise and reward kindness to reinforce a caring culture. |
| Courageous and principled | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promotes and champions a culture of advocacy for the rights of people they support, ensuring people are provided with opportunities for a good quality of life through positive risk taking. ■ Challenges themselves to try new things, supporting others to do the same. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide training on advocacy and positive risk-taking to champion individuals' rights. ■ Facilitate workshops on balancing risk and quality of life, promoting courageous leadership. ■ Create opportunities for managers to pilot innovative approaches and foster learning. ■ Establish peer support networks to share ideas and build confidence in new strategies. |

| Flexible, open and learning | How these can be developed |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Acts in a flexible, creative, innovative and proactive way when problem-solving, taking account of best practice. ■ Promote an open environment that encourages and values feedback and learning from incidents, taking responsibility for ensuring it is incorporated into practice. ■ Champions, and leads others in the use of, reflective practice to help drive service and personal improvement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide scenario-based training that encourages managers to practice creative and proactive problem-solving using best-practice examples. ■ Establish feedback systems where managers actively seek input from staff and people to foster an open learning culture. ■ Facilitate reflective practice sessions for managers, helping them analyse incidents and apply lessons learned to improve services. ■ Encourage managers to model flexibility and adaptability, inspiring their teams to embrace continuous improvement and innovation. |
| Proud and positive | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Takes pride in their role in adult social care, empowering their staff to also take pride in the work they do, celebrating achievements and success. ■ Role models a calm, measured and positive approach when managing complex or difficult situations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regularly celebrate team achievements to build pride and accomplishment. ■ Provide leadership training to help managers stay calm and inspire confidence during challenges. ■ Encourage sharing success stories to promote pride in the social care sector. ■ Facilitate team-building activities to strengthen morale and foster a positive workplace culture. |
| Working together | How these can be developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Acts proactively to develop positive and collaborative relationships with their staff, external stakeholders and people who draw on care and support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Train managers in collaborative leadership to build strong relationships with staff and stakeholders. ■ Organise workshops to co-create solutions with managers, staff, and people. ■ Promote participation in multi-agency forums to enhance stakeholder connections and service coordination. ■ Implement team-building initiatives to foster trust and collaboration. |

| Professionalism | How these can be developed |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Act in an ethical and professional manner, role modelling evidence-based best practice and values. ■ Always takes personal responsibility for the effective and safe running of the service. ■ Recognises the need for continual professional development to remain up-to-date and able to understand and follow appropriate regulations and practice updates/innovations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer training on ethical decision making and evidence-based practices to help managers model professionalism and best practice. ■ Provide leadership workshops to equip managers with tools to ensure the effective and safe running of their service. ■ Encourage managers to set professional development goals and support them with access to relevant courses, seminars, and certifications. ■ Establish regular updates on regulations and innovations, ensuring managers stay informed and implement changes effectively. |

Skills and knowledge

The journey to becoming a care manager involves developing a broad range of knowledge and skills, often gained gradually through experience in junior, frontline, or supervisory roles.

For those entering the sector via different career paths, reviewing the competencies for supervisor or leader roles in the Care Workforce Pathway can help employers assess transferable skills or identify areas needing development.

“My progression has been largely achieved by undertaking extra responsibilities over those years. This has meant working in different parts of the service and building up my understanding, including delivering frontline care, managing new projects, auditing the care we provided etc.”

Leanne Capstick, Registered Manager, Castle Supported Living

The following table outlines the key knowledge and skills needed before transitioning to management roles, with suggestions for development through internal processes or short courses.

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|---|
| <p>Understand how to mentor others</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer structured mentoring training tailored to adult social care needs. ■ Facilitate shadowing opportunities with experienced mentors in the sector. ■ Provide role-play sessions to practice real-life mentoring scenarios. ■ Create peer mentoring networks for collaborative learning and support. |
| <p>Understand how to coach others</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage participation in coaching certification programmes or courses. ■ Use real-case scenarios for coaching practice and feedback. ■ Provide access to coaching toolkits and frameworks tailored to the workforce. ■ Foster a coaching culture through regular reflective discussions and team learning sessions. |
| <p>Be able to apply basic counselling skills to support your team</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer training on active listening and empathetic communication techniques. ■ Facilitate peer discussions to share approaches to team support challenges. ■ Encourage role-playing exercises to practice supportive interactions in real-world scenarios. ■ Supply resources on workplace wellbeing strategies. |
| <p>Be able to apply Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enrol on accredited MHFA training courses. ■ Provide scenario-based exercises to practice MHFA responses. ■ Create a support network for managers to share MHFA experiences and strategies. |
| <p>Be able to Train the Trainer (via completing Train the Trainer learning)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enrol on accredited Train the Trainer courses tailored to adult social care. ■ Provide opportunities to deliver supervised training sessions for real-time feedback. ■ Offer workshops on adult learning principles and engaging training techniques. <p>Encourage the development of customised training materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ relevant to your service. |

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|--|
| <p>Be able to assess learning (via completing Assessor training)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enrol on in accredited assessor training programmes. ■ Facilitate practice in evaluating learning outcomes using competency-based assessment tools. ■ Encourage shadowing experienced assessors to observe effective assessment methods. |
| <p>Complete Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enrol on Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training sessions. ■ Provide case studies on supporting individuals with learning disabilities and autism. ■ Facilitate reflective discussions on training insights and workplace application. ■ Offer opportunities to observe and engage with specialists in learning disability and autism care. |



The knowledge and skills needed specific to deputy managers and registered managers positions

Each care provider must decide the essential skills and knowledge required for a deputy manager role.

For registered managers, the CQC registration team assesses candidates' skills, knowledge, and experience on a case-by-case basis.

The following table outlines the required knowledge and skills for both roles, with examples of development methods and relevant national qualifications or learning programs.

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|---|
| <p>Understanding leadership and management in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand leadership and management theories and styles. ■ Understand leadership and management in adult care. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead to succeed ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create mentoring opportunities with experienced leaders to demonstrate effective management practices. ■ Host leadership roundtables for managers to share insights and challenges within adult care. ■ Offer regular feedback and coaching sessions focused on leadership development. ■ Provide leadership resources, such as books, articles, and toolkits, tailored to adult care contexts. |
| <p>Decision making in leadership and management within adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand effective decision making. ■ Be able to demonstrate effective decision making. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage reflective sessions to review past decisions and their outcomes for continuous improvement. ■ Host decision making workshops focusing on balancing risks, human rights, ethics, and person-centred care. ■ Develop case study discussions to explore diverse approaches to solving complex care challenges. ■ Provide opportunities to lead small projects, fostering accountability and real-time decision making experience. |

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|--|
| <p>Team leadership in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be able to provide leadership for a team. ■ Be able to manage teamwork. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead to succeed ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organise team-building activities to enhance collaboration and leadership within care teams. ■ Facilitate regular debrief sessions to reflect on team dynamics and leadership effectiveness. ■ Implement peer feedback mechanisms to strengthen leadership and teamwork practices. |
| <p>Leading team learning and professional development in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand principles of learning and professional development in adult care. ■ Be able to lead learning and professional development practices. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead to succeed ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitate knowledge-sharing sessions where team members present insights from their experiences or training. ■ Organise on-the-job coaching to enhance skills and promote continuous learning within the team. ■ Implement regular team reflection meetings to identify development needs and growth opportunities. ■ Create personalised development plans for team members, aligning with organisational goals. |
| <p>Professional supervision in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the purpose and practice of professional supervision in adult care settings. ■ Be able to provide regular professional supervision. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead to succeed ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care |

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|--|
| <p>Professional supervision in adult care (cont'd)</p> | <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pair new supervisors with experienced mentors to observe and practice supervision sessions. ■ Create templates and tools to structure and document professional supervision discussions effectively. ■ Encourage reflective supervision sessions to explore challenges and build supportive solutions collaboratively. ■ Provide feedback and coaching on supervisors' performance to refine their approach and skills. |
| <p>Safeguarding in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand requirements for safeguarding in adult care. ■ Be able to lead the implementation of practices, policies and procedures to support safeguarding in adult care. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level 4 or 5 Safeguarding courses ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organise regular team briefings to review safeguarding policies and discuss real-life scenarios. ■ Develop internal audits to evaluate and improve safeguarding practices within the organisation. ■ Assign individuals to lead safeguarding projects or initiatives to gain hands-on experience. ■ Create an internal resource hub with updated safeguarding guidelines and best practices |
| <p>Understanding mental capacity and restrictive practice in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand mental capacity and consent. ■ Understand the use and impact of restrictive practices. ■ Understand what is meant by the term least restrictive practice. ■ Understand how to use person-centred planning and strengths-based approaches to deliver least restrictive practice. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level 4 or 5 Mental Capacity/Consent courses ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Host workshops on person-centred planning and strengths-based approaches for least restrictive practices. ■ Facilitate team discussions on real-life cases involving mental capacity and restrictive practices. ■ Conduct audits of care plans to ensure adherence to least restrictive and person-centred principles. ■ Create a resource library with guidelines, tools, and best practices on mental capacity and consent. |

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|---|
| <p>Leading and managing partnerships in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the context of relationships and partnership working. ■ Be able to lead effective relationships with individuals, carers and families. ■ Be able to manage working relationships with colleagues in own setting to achieve positive outcomes for individuals. ■ Be able to work in partnerships with professionals and other agencies. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organise joint workshops with external agencies to strengthen collaboration and relationship-building skills. ■ Facilitate team exercises on effective communication strategies with families, carers, and professionals. ■ Assign individuals to lead multi-agency projects to practice partnership management and coordination. ■ Host reflective sessions to address challenges in maintaining positive working relationships and partnerships. |
| <p>Leading practice to manage comments and complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the management of comments and complaints. ■ Be able to lead practice in listening and responding to comments and complaints. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learning from accidents and events ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish regular team meetings to review and discuss feedback, comments, and complaints. ■ Role-play complaint resolution scenarios to enhance listening and problem-solving skills. ■ Facilitate reflective sessions to identify lessons learned from handling feedback and complaints. ■ Encourage staff to suggest improvements based on trends in comments and complaints received. |

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|--|
| <p>Effective communication in leadership and management in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Know how to use communication skills to achieve positive interactions. ■ Know how to manage and resolve conflict. ■ Be able to communicate effectively with others. ■ Be able to develop communication practices that promote positive outcomes. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conduct conflict resolution role-play exercises to practice managing and resolving workplace disputes. ■ Provide team feedback sessions to refine communication practices and encourage open dialogue. ■ Develop communication guidelines tailored to adult care settings, focusing on clarity and empathy. ■ Encourage reflective practice to analyse communication challenges and improve strategies for positive outcomes. |
| <p>Managing the effective handling of information in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand effective information management. ■ Be able to implement systems for effective information management. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create internal training sessions on data protection and confidentiality in adult care settings. ■ Develop clear protocols for secure information storage, sharing, and access within the organisation. ■ Host workshops on using digital tools and software for efficient information handling. ■ Facilitate team discussions on challenges and best practices in managing sensitive information effectively. |

Skills and knowledge needed

How these can be developed

Leading person-centred practice

- Understand person-centred, outcomes-based practice.
- Understand the value of person-centred practice in partnership working to enable individuals to achieve their desired outcomes.
- Be able to lead practice to facilitate positive outcomes for individuals through person-centred practice.
- Understand the role of relationships in promoting health and wellbeing.
- Be able to lead practice in recognising individuals' relationships.
- Understand positive risk-taking in context of supporting individuals.
- Be able to lead the implementation of practices, policies and procedures to manage risk and positive risk-taking.

Courses and qualifications

- Introductory modules for managers
- Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care

Other development opportunities

- Facilitate workshops on integrating person-centred approaches into daily care practices and decision making.
- Organise reflective sessions to discuss case studies demonstrating positive outcomes from person-centred practices.
- Encourage individuals to lead collaborative goal-setting exercises with individuals, families, and care teams.
- Host team discussions on balancing positive risk-taking with achieving individual outcomes and wellbeing.

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|--|
| <p>Leading a service that promotes health and wellbeing in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be able to lead a culture that promotes individuals' wellbeing and independence in all aspects of day-to-day practice. ■ Understand the importance of promoting individuals' health and wellbeing. ■ Be able to lead practice in promoting individuals' health and wellbeing. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organise team workshops to identify and implement strategies for promoting wellbeing and independence. ■ Encourage reflective practice sessions to evaluate how daily routines support individuals' health and wellbeing. ■ Develop action plans for embedding wellbeing focused goals into personalised care plans. ■ Assign individuals to lead initiatives promoting physical activity, nutrition, and mental health awareness. |
| <p>Leading and promoting equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights. ■ Be able to lead a culture that promotes, values and celebrates equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creating an inclusive organisation ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Protect time to research equality and human rights legislation; social care related acts/legislation. ■ Facilitate workshops on recognising and addressing unconscious bias in adult care settings. ■ Organise team discussions to explore real-life scenarios and promote inclusive decision making practices. ■ Develop and implement policies celebrating diverse cultures, abilities, and individual identities. ■ Assign individuals to lead initiatives that highlight the importance of equality and human rights. |

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|---|--|
| <p>Leading and managing health and safety in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand health and safety requirements in adult social care. ■ Be able to lead the implementation of health and safety requirements in adult social care. ■ Understand effective risk management. ■ Be able to lead the implementation of policies, procedures and practices to effectively manage risk. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level 4 or 5 Health and Safety courses ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conduct regular health and safety audits led by managers to identify and mitigate risks. ■ Facilitate team workshops on implementing and updating health and safety policies and procedures. ■ Develop a system for tracking and reviewing incident reports to improve safety practices. ■ Encourage individuals to lead staff briefings on health, safety, and risk management updates. |
| <p>Continuous development for leaders and managers in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be able to demonstrate commitment to own development. ■ Be able to demonstrate commitment to self-awareness. ■ Be able to manage own workload effectively. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care ■ Well-led <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schedule regular one-to-one reflective sessions to identify development goals and areas for improvement. ■ Encourage participation in peer-led learning groups to share experiences and foster self-awareness. ■ Provide time management workshops to enhance workload prioritisation and efficiency. ■ Develop personal development plans with clear objectives aligned with organisational goals. |

Skills and knowledge needed

How these can be developed

Personal wellbeing for leaders and managers in adult care services

- Understand own wellbeing.
- Understand the importance of maintaining and improving own wellbeing.
- Know how to maintain and improve own wellbeing.
- Know how to manage own stress and anxiety.

Courses and qualifications

- Introductory modules for managers
- Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care

Other development opportunities

- Organise mindfulness and stress management workshops to support managers' mental health.
- Encourage regular check-ins to discuss wellbeing challenges and provide tailored support.
- Promote work-life balance by implementing flexible working policies and manageable workloads.
- Facilitate peer support groups to share experiences and strategies for maintaining personal wellbeing.



Additional knowledge and skills specifically needed registered managers

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|---|
| <p>Governance and regulatory processes in adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand legislation and statutory guidance that underpins adult care provision. ■ Understand internal governance arrangements within own organisation. ■ Understand systems and requirements for the regulation of adult care services. ■ Understand the inspection process in adult social care. ■ Understand the inspection process in own service. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead to succeed ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organise internal briefings on current legislation, statutory guidance, and regulatory updates in adult care. ■ Facilitate workshops to review and improve internal governance structures and processes. ■ Develop scenario-based exercises to practice compliance with regulatory and inspection requirements. ■ Assign individuals to lead mock inspections to familiarise teams with inspection processes. |
| <p>Understanding business and resource management for adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand principles for effective resource management. ■ Understand principles of effective human resource management. ■ Understand market provision in adult social care. ■ Understand integrated approaches in health and social care. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level 4 or 5 Business skills courses ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitate budget management workshops focusing on resource allocation and cost-effectiveness in adult care. ■ Organise team discussions on workforce planning and strategies for effective human resource management. ■ Assign individuals to research and present on local market trends in adult social care provision. ■ Develop case studies to analyse and optimise resource management practices in real-world scenarios. |

| Skills and knowledge needed | How these can be developed |
|--|---|
| <p>Leading the vision of an adult care setting/service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand how to develop a vision for the service. ■ Be able to lead commitment and implementation of the vision and future direction of the service. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead to succeed ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care ■ Well-led <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage reflective sessions to evaluate how current practices support the service’s long-term vision. ■ Assign individuals to lead initiatives that demonstrate commitment to the service’s future direction. ■ Develop action plans for embedding the vision into daily operations and team practices. ■ Provide opportunities for staff feedback on the vision to foster ownership and shared commitment. |
| <p>Continuous improvement within adult care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand continuous quality improvement in adult social care. ■ Be able to lead continuous improvement in practice. ■ Be able to lead a culture that supports innovation and change to improve outcomes for individuals. ■ Understand how to implement effective change. | <p>Courses and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introductory modules for managers ■ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care ■ Well-led <p>Other development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Host regular team meetings to review feedback and identify opportunities for quality improvement. ■ Facilitate sessions to encourage innovative ideas for enhancing care outcomes. ■ Assign individuals to lead small-scale improvement projects and share lessons learned with the team. ■ Develop a toolkit with strategies for managing and implementing change effectively in adult care settings. |

Step 4: Development opportunities: New experience

Choosing the best development opportunities

Providing hands-on experience and exposing staff to varied responsibilities lays a solid foundation for roles like care managers or deputies.

Informal development opportunities, such as day-to-day experiences, are key to building confidence and leadership skills. This might be achieved as part of an expansion of the individual's current role, by providing acting-up opportunities or a secondment.

This section summarises popular approaches to develop future managers. Some providers may choose to offer a wide range of these approaches, others might focus on a few to address specific skill gaps. Use supervisions or informal discussions combined with practical tools such as the Care Workforce Pathway's GROW model, to identify long term goals and the development opportunities that will help facilitate this.

In this section we take a closer look at the following ways to develop management related experience and skills using the following methods:

- **Becoming an internal champion**
- **Being mentored by a manager**
- **Managing a service improvement**
- **Delivering internal training**
- **Building networking skills**

“When we initially recruit our carers, we discuss the opportunities available to help them grow. We ensure that our new recruits know that moving into management is possible at our service. Some are quite happy to take on leadership responsibilities, going above and beyond their frontline carer or senior carer roles. We provide shadowing opportunities with our managers, so the care team can learn more about these roles and how to perform extra duties.

These extra experiences – whether getting more involved in risk assessments, needs assessment, supporting hospital discharge processes, or other responsibilities – helps embed these staff into the service.”

Monica Chisanga, Registered Manager, Beryl Care Services

Becoming an internal champion

Champions are internal experts in specific areas who support staff in delivering best practices. They play a vital role in improving care quality, operational effectiveness, and staff development.

Their role often overlaps with staff training, mentoring new starters, and leading improvement projects. Champions may also handle internal quality assurance, refine policies, act as key reference points for care areas, and engage with external partners and healthcare professionals.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

Here are some of the skills and experience needed by future managers that becoming a champion can strengthen:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Leadership development | Being a champion is likely to require the individual to develop skills such as decision making, delegation, and motivating others. Leading with authority empowers the individual to influence, inspire, and build trust, fostering collaboration and driving change through relationships. |
| Communication skills | Becoming the lead on a specific topic or process will require the champion to be an effective communicator, engaging the wider workforce, and articulating the reasons. |
| Specialist expertise | Champions will typically need to develop expertise, acquiring knowledge and skills through additional training, research or shadowing. |
| Project management | Champions will often be central to the planning, implementation and evaluation of changes linked to their areas of expertise. This will often empower them to handle multiple priorities and effectively manage resources. |

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Whether individuals ultimately progress into future manager roles or other roles, here are some of the ways that developing champions will benefit your organisation:

| | |
|---|---|
| Quality of care | Champions can raise standards by becoming topic specialists and support others to ensure good and best practice is maintained. |
| Retaining talent | Champion development opportunities can help you to retain talent, enhancing career prospects and job satisfaction. |
| Wellbeing and morale | Champions support the wider workforce, helping to improve morale and wellbeing by offering timely assistance and expert advice. |
| Reduce risk and assure regulatory compliance | Champions can proactively support quality compliance and improvement, including undertaking spot checks and audits to ensure regulatory compliance. |



Example champions roles

There are multiple different champion roles that can be created across adult social care services. These are just a small sample:

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Dementia care champion | <p>This role can lead on promoting good and best practice when supporting people living with dementia.</p> <p>The champion may support the training and development of others, provide advice around dementia friendly environments, and connect with dementia specialists in other services.</p> |
| End of life Care champion | <p>This role can be central to the service offering palliative and end of life care aligned to the latest good and best practice.</p> <p>The champion can support staff training, act as a central contact for people and their relatives and connect with other specialists in the wider community.</p> |
| Wellbeing champion | <p>This role can be an important internal referral point of expertise for other staff and people needing mental health and wellbeing support.</p> <p>The champion can lead and promote wellbeing initiatives, as well as establishing wider support mechanisms across the service.</p> |
| Digital champion | <p>Digital champions can support staff and people to build confidence and skills in using digital tools effectively.</p> <p>They can drive innovation by identifying and implementing technology solutions to improve service delivery and operational efficiency.</p> |

Discussing this development opportunity

If you are planning to establish champion roles and want to check if colleagues might be interested, here are some questions you could ask:

- What interests you most about becoming a champion?
- How do you feel about taking on more of a leadership role within the team?
- What do you think are the key qualities and responsibilities of a champion?
- Can you give an example of when you advocated for best practice to others?
- How would you balance champion responsibilities with other work?

Other considerations

Some organisations promote champion roles through internal applications to uncover hidden talents and motivations. Others offer these roles to recognise strong performance or interest noted during appraisals or one-to-ones.

Champion roles may be timebound for specific projects or open-ended, depending on what works best for the service and individual. While champions are often self-motivated, employers must invest in their development and allow time to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

“In the lead up to becoming the registered manager, I became our digital champion. This involved leading on rolling out digital changes at the service, introducing new technologies and ensuring reasonable adjustments were in place.”

Leanne Capstick, Castle Supported Living

Being mentored by a manager

Mentorship from exemplary leaders enhances emerging talent's ability to manage care, meet role demands, and collaborate effectively. Successful mentoring requires committed managers who model essential competencies.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

Here are some of the skills and experience needed by future managers that being mentored by an existing manager can strengthen:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Emotional resilience | Mentors can teach mentees techniques for maintaining emotional resilience and managing stress, crucial in high-pressure management roles. |
| Performance management | Mentees can learn how to lead appraisals, provide constructive feedback, and support staff development. This support should not shy away from some of the more challenging areas of performance management. |
| Strategic planning | Mentors can involve mentees in high-level discussions about delivering on the organisation's strategy, empowering them to see how long-term planning is important for service quality and sustainability. |
| Knowledge transfer | Mentorship helps share best practice and lessons learned from an existing manager's own experiences. This is key to the mentee knowing the realities of the role and the challenges of the wider sector. |

“I'd recommend anybody wanting to become a deputy manager to shadow the care manager before you take on the role. There's a lot to get your head around so it is important you understand the role before taking on the responsibility.”

Christine Taylor, Deputy Manager and Head of Training, Eckling Grange Ltd

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Whether individuals ultimately progress into future manager roles or other roles, here are some of the ways that offering mentor opportunities will benefit your organisation:

| | |
|--|--|
| Pipeline of future managers | Given how the turnover of managers risks future provision and expertise, providing mentor opportunities supports succession planning and expansion of expertise within adult social care. |
| Increased engagement | Mentoring is likely to secure more engagement and trust from the mentee. This enhanced commitment from your emerging talent can lead to more dedication and buy-in to your service. |
| Cost-effective leadership development | In comparison to external leadership development programmes, mentoring can be a cost-effective process that can be tailored entirely around the priorities and operational effectiveness of your business. |
| Fostering innovation | Mentoring encourages future managers to reflect, think innovatively, and develop new, effective ways of working. |

Examples of mentoring

There are various ways that being mentored by a manager can benefit somebody wishing to progress into a similar role. This includes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Insight into everyday management tasks | Mentees can be guided through everyday care management duties, learning about managerial decision making, communication styles, and operational processes. |
| Reflecting on experiences | Mentors can support mentees to observe and reflect on challenging situations, such as team disputes, complex issues with people using the service, etc. |
| Role-playing | When other learning opportunities are limited, mentors can simulate challenges like difficult staff conversations or CQC assessments to help mentees practice responses. |
| Financial and budgetary exposure | Given that few frontline managers have come from financial backgrounds, being supported to understand financial planning, budget reviews, and resource allocation are important skills. |

“I’ve benefited from receiving mentor support from the original registered manager, and this is going to continue for six-months after I become the registered manager too.”

**Leanne Capstick, Registered Manager
Castle Supported Living**

Discussing this development opportunity

If you are planning to offer a mentorship opportunity and want to check if colleagues might be interested, here are some questions you could ask:

- How do you think having a mentor would support your career development?
- What aspects of management are you most interested in developing through mentorship?
- What skills would you like to develop before stepping into a management role?
- What do you hope to gain from being mentored?
- How do you typically apply feedback to your work?

Other considerations

Before offering mentorship, define the scope and time commitment. As care managers are often busy, careful planning is essential to ensure effective support.

Providers may allocate one or two hours of weekly mentoring, with some services combining mentoring and shadowing for faster development. Typically, mentoring lasts six to twelve months, with agreed timescales in place.

Mentoring gives mentees a competitive edge for management roles, benefiting succession planning but posing a risk if they pursue external opportunities. Organisations may want to confirm the mentee’s commitment before investing in this support.

Providers should consider the benefits of adopting a reverse mentoring approach. This involves less experienced or junior staff mentoring senior colleagues, offering fresh perspectives on trends, technology, or lived experiences. Reverse mentoring helps senior leaders gain a deeper understanding of equality, diversity, and inclusion, promoting a more inclusive workplace. This approach benefits both the organisation and emerging talent, providing valuable development opportunities for all involved.

Managing a service improvement

Hands-on experience with service improvements develops leadership skills, helping future managers understand operations and lead effectively. Opportunities range from quick-win projects to complex initiatives, adaptable to any care service.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

Here are some of the skills and experience needed by future managers that leading an improvement project can strengthen:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Decision making | Managing improvement projects can strengthen multiple skills, including creativity, problem-solving and decision making. |
| Project planning | Successful improvement projects need clear objectives, timelines, and resource planning all of which are key skills for future care managers. |
| Stakeholder engagement | Project management requires engaging stakeholders, helping future managers tailor communication and negotiate effectively. |
| Change management | Future managers can gain experience in leading change by preparing teams for new ways of working, addressing concerns, and ensuring that transitions are smooth. |

“In developing others, you need to trust them with new opportunities and delegate. It’s important to let them try new things and give them the freedom to come up with new ideas. If they fail, we will look at that together.”

Silvia Nunes, Home Manager, Ford Place Nursing Home, Stow Healthcare

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Whether individuals ultimately progress into future manager roles or other roles, here are some of the ways that supporting them to lead an improvement project will benefit your organisation:

| | |
|---|---|
| Creating a culture of continuous improvement | Promoting continuous improvement initiatives ensures the service continues to strengthen the quality of care delivered, helping it to remain competitive, efficient and effective. |
| Improved client satisfaction | Whilst not exclusively benefiting the people you support; most improvement projects will offer a tangible benefit for those using your service. Higher satisfaction amongst the people you support can strengthen your reputation and attract new business. |
| Improved performance | Successful projects can target key areas of improvement related to care delivery, operational efficiency, or regulatory compliance. This can contribute to greater satisfaction, cost-saving and reputational gains. |
| Fresh perspectives | Involving emerging talent can bring new ideas and fresh perspectives to the table that can take the service off in an exciting new direction. |

“If you want to move into management, get yourself involved in as much as possible to prepare you for the role. From writing policies to delivering training, make sure you understand the recruitment process, and what CQC expect.”

Christine Taylor, Deputy Manager and Head of Training, Eckling Grange Ltd

Examples of improvement projects

We have included below a sample of the improvement projects that could be undertaken but discuss what would be most beneficial to your service.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| CQC assessment | A project looking at strengthening quality assurance and compliance with CQC assessment focus. This could look at one specific topic or the full scope of assessment, building understanding of regulatory compliance. |
| Health and safety | A project ensuring safe and effective delivery of care via enhancing health and safety at the service. This can build experience of engaging stakeholders, identifying risks and mitigations, and driving forward new ways of working. |
| Culture change | Whilst never easy to change, tackling a cultural issue can have long-lasting impact. These projects can test a person's ability to drive forward change, communicating their ideas and securing support. |
| Implementing new technologies | If implemented carefully, new technologies can result in immediate benefits, but these projects are reliant on careful management, effective training and communications. |

Discussing this development opportunity

If you are planning to offer the opportunity for a potential future manager to lead a new improvement project, here are some questions you could ask to test their interest in such an opportunity:

- When managing service improvement, which of your skills do you think would really help?
- How would you approach identifying areas in need of improvement?
- Can you give an example of a time when you led or contributed to an improvement project?
- How do you think you would balance maintaining current service quality with implementing changes during an improvement project?
- How do you handle resistance to change from team members or other stakeholders?

Other considerations

The organisation must support future managers as they transition into this role. Clearly outline expectations, goals, and the level of autonomy, including when to escalate issues.

Provide the necessary resources for success and facilitate introductions to unfamiliar colleagues or stakeholders to demonstrate full support. Line managers should act as reference points, offering project reviews and informal guidance throughout the project.

“Before becoming a registered manager, I undertook projects. I led on health and safety related audits, working with the housing association to undertake compliance visits. This included making sure fire evacuations were undertaken, emergency lights tested, insurance was in place, everybody has the policies and procedures etc.”

Leanne Capstick, Registered Manager, Castle Supported Living



Delivering internal training

Becoming an internal trainer develops aspiring managers' skills and confidence. Delivering training enhances leadership, communication, and emotional intelligence while ensuring best practices are understood.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

Here are some of the skills and experience needed by future managers that delivering internal training can strengthen:

| | |
|--|--|
| Presentation and public speaking skills | Delivering internal training will require future managers to build confidence in presenting information to groups of people. This will help future managers to engage an audience, making their communication more impactful and effective. |
| Engaging and motivating others | Trainers need to keep their audience engaged and motivated throughout the session, which mirrors the need for managers to keep their teams motivated. By regularly delivering training, future managers can learn how to boost participation and encourage interaction. |
| Time management | Planning training requires time management to deliver content and allow discussion, building skills like multitasking and prioritising for future managers. |
| Evaluation and handling feedback | Trainers often need to assess the effectiveness of their training and gather feedback. Effectively evaluating feedback can help future managers to identify areas for improvement that could lead to even higher levels of care. In preparing for this, the future manager could research continuous improvement methodology and frameworks. |

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Whether individuals ultimately progress into future manager roles or other roles, here are some of the ways that involving them in delivering internal training will benefit your organisation:

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| Improved quality of care | Upskilling your staff through tailored training can ensure that the team is equipped with the latest best practices and knowledge. This leads to higher-quality care, which improves satisfaction and outcomes. |
| Cost-savings | Offering internal training can be far more cost-effective than sending staff to external training providers. It provides more opportunity for customised learning shaped around your service. |
| Flexibility and responsiveness | Internal training can be rapidly adapted to meet emerging needs, such as new care techniques, or in response to accidents and incidents. |
| Regulatory compliance | Internal training can ensure that staff are fully aware of and compliant with the latest legal and regulatory requirements, such as safeguarding, health and safety, and GDPR. |

“If you want to deliver high-quality care, it is important to train staff and ensure they understand what is expected from them.

I’m involved in planning and delivering a lot of face-to-face training. We train staff on how to deal with situations and show empathy to the people they support. I like to customise training around issues that staff are struggling with.

It’s important that my own knowledge and learning on the courses I deliver is up-to-date, so I undertake my own training using other companies.”

Christine Taylor, Deputy Manager and Head of Training, Eckling Grange Ltd

“Directly delivering care is important part of your learning process and progressing to be a care manager. It helps you to understand people’s needs, and how best to support and empathise with them. This frontline care experience has helped me to be a better trainer for my own team.”

Monica Chisanga, Registered Manager, Beryl Care Services

Examples of internal training that could be delivered

Whilst there are a wide range of topics that could be delivered by internal training, identify areas of interest and expertise demonstrated by your potential future manager.

The following are just a few examples of what could be covered:

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| Equality, diversity, and inclusion | Develop training to understand and implement equality legislation, equality impact assessments, promote an inclusive work culture that respects the diversity of both people and staff. This can help staff embrace diversity and ensure inclusive and equitable care is delivered, something that is essential within any care service. |
| Medicines administration | Deliver training demonstrating practical ways to safely administer medications, covering issues such as storage, and documentation in compliance with evidence-based practice. |
| Person-centered care planning | Train staff on how to develop care plans that reflect the needs, preferences, and goals. It will provide the opportunity to highlight the importance of tailoring care and support, something essential to any effective care culture. |
| Safeguarding | This training could focus on identifying, preventing, and responding to abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable people. It could raise awareness of the types of abuse, how to recognise and report them. |

Discussing this development opportunity

If you are planning to encourage potential future managers in delivering internal training, here are some questions you could ask to check their interest:

- Have you ever considered leading a training session?
- How would you feel about delivering a training session for the team?
- What areas of your work do you feel most confident in sharing with others?
- What other topics would you be interested in teaching?
- How would you approach explaining complex information or tasks to others?

Other considerations

Training in adult social care must meet high standards and ensure that everybody working for the service meets CQC's Regulation 18: Staffing.

Trainers should be competent, experienced, and able to deliver effective sessions. While the CQC allows flexibility, trainers are expected to understand the subject, refresh their knowledge regularly, and complete at least a train-the-trainer course.

Though internal training can offer long-term cost savings, developing new programs is time-consuming. It's important to assess the requirements and weigh the cost-benefits of this approach.



Building networking skills

Networking with managers and peers fosters collaboration, best practices, and improved services. It provides resources, sector insights, and peer support, building confidence, knowledge, and leadership skills.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

Here are some of the skills and experience needed by future managers that networking can strengthen:

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| Understanding different perspectives | By connecting with peers from other services, future managers are exposed to a wide range of viewpoints, experiences, and leadership styles. This broadens their understanding of adult social care. |
| Stronger leadership skills | Building and maintaining a professional network requires effective communication, relationship management, and strategic thinking, all of which are critical to becoming a successful future manager. |
| Support for personal growth | A strong network of peer support provides future managers with mentors, collaborators, and potential partners who can help further help their career path. |
| Increased confidence in knowledge and ability | By exchanging ideas, seeking feedback, and contributing to discussions, future managers can reinforce their own expertise and expand their knowledge base. |

“In my progression towards registered manager, I’ve attended provider networks. It’s a chance to network with other people, share ideas and better bring back some ideas into our service.”

Leanne Capstick, Registered Manager, Castle Supported Living

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Whether individuals ultimately progress into future manager roles or other roles, here are some of the ways that having a confident networker will benefit your organisation:

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| Building collaborative relationships | Collaborating with other organisations enables joint initiatives and better-coordinated care, essential for integrated care priorities. |
| Identifying areas for service improvement | Exposure to other services and professionals can be eye-opening for future managers, helping them to learn about different ways of working. By connecting with others, they can discover new approaches, technologies, and initiatives. |
| Collaborative problem-solving | Through networking, future care managers can discuss challenges with peers and discover how others solve similar issues. |
| Resources and support | Networking can establish new relationships that could lead to valuable and cost-saving partnerships. For example, service might work together to share training resources, staff, and expertise on specialist areas of care. |

Examples of network opportunities

There are usually a range of different opportunities to help future managers build the skills to be an effective networker. These include:

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| Represent or shadow a colleague | Future managers could cover or shadow a colleague from your service at peer support networks. These network opportunities may be run by a local care associations or coordinated by Skills for Care. |
| Cross-sector collaborations | Look for opportunities to engage in cross-sector collaborations or projects, such as joint initiatives with healthcare providers, local authorities, or community groups. Collaborating on initiatives that address community needs helps build relationships based on shared goals. |
| Connect via online platforms | Look for local or national online forums which brings together health and social care managers and leaders. Whilst not every online group will be a productive use of time, some can really expand a future managers connections and support network. |
| Conferences, seminars, and workshops | Conferences, seminars, and workshops offer networking opportunities with care providers and specialists to discuss best practices, trends, and policy changes. |



“There’s always so much to learn from getting out of the service and listening to others. Go to conferences and meetings and build your understanding on specialist subjects.

Where my schedule allows, I try to attend the deputy manager network. I find it interesting to be able to hear what other people are doing or to hear an update from Skills for Care. I think being part of a network makes you feel like you belong to a wider group and not the only one struggling on an issue like recruitment.”

Christine Taylor, Deputy Manager and Head of Training, Eckling Grange Ltd

Discussing this development opportunity

If you are planning to support a potential future manager connect with others via networking, here are some questions you can use to check their interest:

- Would you be interested in attending sector events or joining care forums?
- Do you feel confident sharing your own experiences and expertise with others in the care community?
- What is your previous experience of connecting with other care services and healthcare professionals?
- What type of professional support would you value most from a peer network of care managers?
- What areas of care would you like to learn more about from peers?

Other considerations

Supporting future managers in developing networking skills offers many benefits but requires careful consideration of time and workload impact.

While many networks meet online, some involve face-to-face sessions with associated travel, time, and costs, which may require budget allocation. The value often outweighs the cost, but it's essential to ensure networking benefits the service by bringing back tangible learning and improvements.

“In the lead up to becoming a registered manager I found attending workshops and networks with other managers to be very useful. Regardless of the agenda being discussed, the biggest value was often making connections, learning from these contacts, and just knowing that help is out there.”

Monica Chisanga, Registered Manager, Beryl Care Services



Step 5: Development opportunities: Courses and qualifications

The CQC expects future managers to be suitably qualified but does not specify exact courses or qualifications. Skills for Care recommends the options referenced in this section.

Investing in future managers' development ensures long-term success and sustainability. Support ambitious individuals with structured learning, induction standards, and formal qualifications. Again, the Care Workforce Pathway's GROW model can be a practical tool to aid discussions with potential future managers, helping to tease out the more formal learning and development that might be needed.

Larger providers often create management development programs combining their content with nationally recognised qualifications, a proven approach to succession planning. Smaller providers can achieve similar success by pairing development opportunities with recognised courses and qualifications.

How offering management level courses and qualifications help

National qualifications and management courses provide a strong foundation for roles like care managers or deputies. While hands-on experience is vital, formal education offers essential knowledge and skills for advanced responsibilities.

These courses deepen understanding of regulatory requirements, leadership, strategic planning, and complex care management, preparing staff to address higher-level challenges beyond daily tasks.

What about past courses and qualifications

Look for evidence of completed courses such as the Care Certificate and Level 2 or Level 3 Diplomas in Adult Care. These provide essential knowledge, skills, and frontline experience valuable for progressing into management.

Frontline care experience is hugely valuable for future managers, but ideally look for other care skills such as undertaking delegated healthcare tasks or experience related to some of the conditions your service may specialise in.

Ensure also their statutory and mandatory training is current and review any relevant continuing professional development, including certificates from seminars, events, or conferences.

Be flexible with candidates who have taken different career paths. Cross-check their experience with the knowledge and skills outlined in this guide and identify practical ways to address any gaps.

What management level qualifications are needed

As of 2023/2024, over 60% of registered managers hold a Level 5 Diploma or higher, often supported by government funding such as apprenticeships and sector-specific initiatives.

When planning for succession, maximise available funding opportunities. Skills for Care's website lists the latest national funding options for adult social care employers.

Skills for Care strongly recommends the Level 5 Diploma for anyone aiming to become a registered manager.

What else does Skills for Care recommend

By incorporating the following key elements into your development plans or programmes, you can ensure your future leaders are well-prepared to thrive and lead your service with excellence. Investing in their training today ensures a stronger, more confident leadership team tomorrow.

In this section, we have included a summary of some popular courses and qualifications used to develop future managers.

- **Lead to succeed**
- **Manager Induction Standards**
- **Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care**
- **Level 5 Award in Understanding Digital Leadership in Adult Social Care**
- **Other courses to consider**

Lead to succeed

The Lead to Succeed programme, developed by Skills for Care, is designed to equip individuals in adult social care with essential leadership and management skills. It covers five key areas critical for effective care management.



What does it include

The first module covers core leadership qualities, styles, and team-building techniques, including Tuckman's stages of team development, and encourages reflective practice for improvement.

The second module focuses on personal leadership strengths, addressing growth areas, managing imposter syndrome, setting boundaries, and effective communication.

The third module highlights creating a safe, inclusive environment with transparency, compassionate leadership, and resilience.

In the next module, participants learn to conduct productive supervisions, provide feedback, and support team development.

The final module prepares managers for regulatory assessments, understanding the CQC framework, and maintaining quality standards. Together, these modules offer a comprehensive foundation for aspiring adult social care managers.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

Lead to Succeed brings aspiring managers together to learn, share ideas, and grow as leaders. Delivered virtually or face-to-face, it provides a supportive space for discussions, collaboration, and confidence-building at a key stage in their management journey.

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| <p>Developing essential leadership skills</p> | <p>The programme teaches critical skills in team management, supervision, and coaching, enabling future managers to effectively guide and support their teams, fostering a productive work environment.</p> |
| <p>Builds confidence in challenging situations</p> | <p>By learning how to handle difficult conversations and manage inspections, participants gain the confidence needed to face everyday challenges in a managerial role with professionalism.</p> |
| <p>Promotes a positive workplace culture</p> | <p>Emphasising accountability and continuous improvement, the programme helps future managers create a supportive and open culture where staff feel valued and motivated to provide high-quality care.</p> |
| <p>Strengthens person-centered care</p> | <p>The training reinforces the importance of person-centred care, helping managers lead with empathy and dedication, which improves team morale and enhances the quality of care delivered to people who draw on care and support.</p> |

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Whether individuals ultimately progress into future manager roles or other positions, here are some of the ways that undertaking Lead to succeed will benefit your service.

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| <p>Improved leadership quality</p> | <p>By developing leadership skills and behaviours, future managers will lead teams more effectively, directly contributing to improved service quality and positive CQC ratings.</p> |
| <p>Enhanced workplace culture</p> | <p>The programme equips managers with the tools to build and maintain a positive workplace culture, improving staff engagement and retention, thus reducing turnover costs.</p> |
| <p>Better supervision and support</p> | <p>Future managers will gain skills in effective supervision and coaching, ensuring staff are well-supported, which enhances team performance and client care.</p> |
| <p>CQC compliance</p> | <p>The programme prepares managers to navigate and excel in the CQC assessment process, increasing the likelihood of achieving higher overall ratings, which boosts business reputation and client trust.</p> |

When should this be undertaken?

Lead to Succeed is best suited for individuals preparing for supervisory or managerial roles, allowing them to apply learning immediately and build skills and confidence early.

It's ideal for aspiring managers to complete the program within their first year in a senior role or shortly before promotion, ensuring a smooth transition into management with key skills in leadership, supervision, and care quality management.

Discussing this development opportunity

Here are some recommended questions to ask a potential future manager to assess their commitment to undertaking the Lead to Succeed programme:

- What motivates you to pursue a management role in adult social care, and how does this programme align with your goals?
- How do you plan to apply the skills and insights from Lead to Succeed in your current and future roles?
- Are you prepared to dedicate the necessary time and effort to complete this programme, balancing it with your other responsibilities?
- Can you give an example of a time when you committed to a development opportunity and how it impacted your career?

Other considerations

Before promoting Lead to Succeed, ensure its content aligns with your organisation's strategic goals, culture, and the skills needed to enhance care quality and leadership.

If you have internal leadership programs, check for overlap to decide the best approach, as Lead to Succeed is optional for future managers.

Consider the financial investment, time needed for staff to complete the program, and shift coverage during training. Explore potential funding opportunities by consulting learning providers.



Manager Induction Standards

The Manager Induction Standards (MIS) in adult care provide a structured framework for newly appointed or aspiring managers to build foundational skills and knowledge.

Developed by Skills for Care, the MIS cover essential areas such as leadership, safeguarding, person-centred care, and regulatory compliance, ensuring managers are prepared to meet sector standards.

What does it include

The MIS framework equips new and aspiring managers in adult social care with essential leadership competencies. It covers leadership principles, fostering inclusive workplace culture, and governance to ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards.

Key areas include safeguarding, focusing on risk prevention for vulnerable adults, and person-centred care, promoting dignity, rights, and choice. Financial management skills like budgeting and resource allocation are included, along with team development through supervision, training, and performance management.

Communication skills are emphasised, enabling managers to engage effectively with staff, individuals, and families. These standards prepare managers to lead with integrity, ensure high-quality care, and handle the complexities of adult social care management.



“The Manager Induction Standards is a really good template to benchmark a new manager’s development journey. It helps you to reflect on new skills that you want to nurture through their learning and development plans.”

**Alison Carter, Manager Director
No Place Like Home**

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

The MIS is a self-guided process that potential future managers can complete at their own pace, many using Skills for Care's Introductory modules for managers eLearning that has been shaped around the standards.

Below are some key benefits of completing the MIS:

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| Builds essential leadership skills | The standards provide a foundation in leadership and management principles, helping new managers understand their responsibilities and develop a positive, inclusive workplace culture. |
| Ensures regulatory knowledge | By covering governance and compliance, the standards equip aspiring managers with the knowledge to meet legal and ethical requirements, essential for maintaining quality and safety. |
| Enhances safeguarding competency | Training in safeguarding and protection ensures future managers can recognise and address risks, creating a safer environment for vulnerable adults. |
| Strengthens financial management skills | The standards include guidance on budgeting, enabling new managers to allocate resources wisely and support staff growth. |

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Here's how an employer benefits from having a future manager complete the Manager Induction Standards:

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|--|--|
| Improves quality and compliance | The MIS ensures that new managers are well-versed in regulatory and quality standards, reducing the risk of non-compliance and enhancing the organisation's reputation for delivering high-quality care. |
| Supports cost-effective management | With knowledge in budgeting and resource allocation, MIS-trained managers are better prepared to manage finances efficiently, helping the organisation allocate resources effectively. |
| Encourages consistency in practices | The MIS provides a standard approach to management, ensuring new managers follow consistent policies and procedures that align with organisational goals. |
| Builds a stronger talent pipeline | Preparing future managers through the MIS develops a skilled pool of leaders within the organisation, reducing the need for external recruitment and supporting succession planning. |

When should this be undertaken?

It is recommended that a potential future manager in adult care undertakes the MIS early, ideally in the lead up to taking on management role or within the first six months of their appointment.

For aspiring managers, completing the MIS shortly before promotion or as part of a structured training plan can also be beneficial. This timing allows them to gain familiarity with key standards and expectations, which supports a smoother transition into management.

Discussing this development opportunity

If you are planning to offer potential future managers the opportunity to undertake the MIS, ask the following to check their interest:

- What excites you most about developing your skills in leadership and management within adult care?
- How do you see the Manager Induction Standards helping you in your journey toward a managerial role?
- Are you willing to invest time and effort to complete this structured training to enhance your ability to lead effectively?
- Which areas of care management do you feel most eager to improve, and how do you think this training will support that?

Other considerations

The MIS is primarily self-guided, so employers must actively support future managers through mentoring, regular check-ins, resources, and practical opportunities.

Organisations with internal leadership programs may find overlap and could integrate the MIS into existing training. Skills for Care's Introductory modules for managers offer foundational guidance to help managers navigate the MIS effectively.

Employers should allocate time and resources for access, learning, and applying these modules, including eLearning costs where used. Funding opportunities may be available to offset expenses.

“A key part of my initial learning was undertaking the Skills for Care Manager Induction Standards and using associated resources. This was a self-taught process and directly led me to progress onto the Level 5 Diploma.”

Monica Chisanga, Registered Manager, Beryl Care Services

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care

The Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care is the recommended qualification for aspiring CQC registered managers.

This qualification focuses on leadership and operational skills specific to adult social care, aligning with CQC standards. Completing this diploma proves the competence to deliver high-quality care and meet regulatory requirements, essential for CQC registration.

What does it include

The Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care builds on the Manager Induction Standards with a deeper focus on strategic aspects of managing care services.

It emphasises business operations, including resource management, health and safety, and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion. The diploma also addresses leadership in organisational vision, professional supervision, and complaint management.

Designed to enhance leadership, resilience, and continuous improvement, it prepares managers for the complex responsibilities of adult care, surpassing the foundational elements of the induction standards.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

Here's how undertaking the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care benefits someone aspiring to become a registered manager:

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| Comprehensive understanding of CQC standards | Provides a solid foundation in CQC requirements, essential for achieving and maintaining compliance. |
| Person-centred care focus | Teaches person-centred care approaches, ensuring managers can tailor services to respect individual preferences, dignity, and autonomy. |
| Risk assessment and management | Provides tools to identify, assess, and mitigate risks, ensuring a safe and supportive care environment. |
| Strategic planning skills | Encourages forward-thinking and planning, helping managers set and achieve long-term goals for service development. |



“I studied the Level 5 Diploma whilst working as the deputy manager. The day-release gave me the time to look at each section of the Diploma and compare it to our own policies and procedures, how we recruited and other ways of working. I received feedback on each unit of the qualification from not only my assessor, but from the registered manager within my own service too.

The main thing the Diploma did was build my confidence that I have the qualities to become a new manager. It was a real benefit and made you believe in yourself.”

Kim Woodhouse, Registered Manager, No Place Like Home

How providing this development opportunity will benefit your organisation

Offering future managers the opportunity to undertake the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care provides several direct benefits to employers, including:

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| Greater operational efficiency | Trained managers learn effective resource and budget management, leading to cost savings and more efficient operations. |
| Better communication and people/family satisfaction | Skilled managers communicate more effectively with families, building trust and improving satisfaction, which can lead to positive word-of-mouth referrals. |
| Preparedness for emergencies | Risk management training ensures managers are equipped to handle crises effectively, reducing potential disruptions to service. |
| Enhanced reputation in the community | A well-trained management team reflects positively on the organisation, attracting prospective people you support and their families. |

“The Level 5 Diploma helped me to think about what we do and build a portfolio or learning around the qualification units.”

Silvia Nunes, Home Manager, Ford Place Nursing Home, Stow Healthcare

When should this be undertaken?

Completing the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care before becoming a registered manager equips candidates with practical skills and confidence for effective leadership.

It helps new managers build a supportive culture, boost staff morale, and manage budgets, ensuring smoother operations and consistent, high-quality care. While some may step into the role without the qualification, this should be avoided when possible.

Discussing this development opportunity

If you are planning to offer potential future managers the opportunity to undertake the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care, ask the following to check their interest:

- What motivates you to pursue a management role in adult care, and how do you think this qualification will help you achieve that?
- Are you prepared to invest the time and effort required to complete a comprehensive qualification alongside your current responsibilities?
- How do you plan to balance the demands of the diploma with your day-to-day work duties?
- What goals do you hope to achieve by completing this qualification, and how will it help you contribute to our organisation's success?

Other considerations

Some providers may offer shorter, less costly alternatives to management qualifications, but these are unlikely to be preferred by the CQC for approving new registered managers.

The CQC favours the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care for its comprehensive assessment of practical and academic skills, including workplace evaluations to ensure competency in care management.

When selecting a learning provider, compare pricing, delivery methods, and support offered. Confirm the timeframe for completion, prioritising providers who allow at least two years to finish the diploma.

“Undertaking the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care gave me a massive insight into the care manager role. It is an intense course and requires me to undertake a lot my own research as I progress through modules. There is very little taught training, it requires you to be self-motivated and really think about how you would manage the service.”

**Leanne Capstick, Registered Manager
Castle Supported Living**

Level 5 Award in Understanding Digital Leadership in Adult Social Care

This qualification provides a comprehensive foundation in digital transformation and its applications within the adult social care sector. Designed for managers and senior leaders, this qualification focuses on the skills and knowledge required to implement and manage digital tools effectively.

What does it include

This qualification focuses on how digital innovation improves care delivery, communication, and administrative processes, enhancing client outcomes.

It highlights the strategic role of technologies like electronic health records, assistive tools, and data analytics, while teaching digital leadership skills for integrating technology into care practices.

Key topics include data protection, cyber security, and ethical considerations, ensuring leaders can manage digital resources safely. Learners gain the expertise to lead their organisations into a more efficient, digitally enabled future in social care.

How this development opportunity will benefit your future manager

The Level 5 Award in Understanding Digital Leadership in Adult Social Care prepares new managers to use technology for more effective and efficient care services. It introduces tools to improve communication, organise information, and streamline workflows while teaching managers to choose technologies wisely and ensure data privacy.

Through practical learning, managers build confidence in leading their teams in adopting digital practices and managing change smoothly. The course equips them to bring innovative solutions, enhance client care, and support their organisation's growth and adaptability.

Other courses and qualifications

Short courses, such as one-day sessions, provide practical insights to help new managers transition into leadership. They cover essential topics like compliance, quality assurance, and workforce planning, enabling managers to address key responsibilities effectively.

Focusing on real-world challenges, these courses build decision making skills, team management, and care quality standards, fostering confidence and capable leadership. While course titles may vary, they offer a strong foundation for discussions with training providers.

As always, employers will want to discuss with their potential future managers about which of these may be most relevant to their development journey.

| CQC compliance | Quality assurance/continuous improvement |
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| This type of course covers CQC standards, how to prepare for assessments, and ways to ensure ongoing compliance, helping managers understand regulatory requirements and best practices for demonstrating quality in care. | Focused on implementing quality assurance processes, this type of course teaches managers how to develop improvement plans, gather and act on feedback, and monitor outcomes effectively. |
| Effective supervision and appraisals | Safeguarding leadership improvement |
| This type of course provides techniques for conducting meaningful staff supervision and appraisals, ensuring teams are supported, motivated, and meeting performance standards. | Managers learn about their safeguarding responsibilities, including how to establish protocols, handle concerns, and maintain a safe environment for both staff and the people you support. |
| Risk assessment and management | Data Protection and GDPR |
| Teaching practical approaches to risk assessment, this course covers how to identify, assess, and manage risks in a way that balances safety with client independence. | Covering the essentials of data protection in a care setting, this type of course ensures managers understand their responsibilities regarding client data and GDPR compliance, critical in regulated services. |

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| Workforce planning | Building a positive workplace culture |
| <p>This type of course focuses on creating effective workforce plans to meet current and future staffing needs, covering recruitment strategies, retention approaches, and skills development to maintain a reliable and competent team.</p> | <p>This type of course helps managers understand the importance of workplace culture in care settings, teaching strategies to foster a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative environment that improves staff morale, reduces turnover, and enhances the overall quality of care.</p> |
| Business skills for care managers | HR essentials in care settings |
| <p>This type of course covers fundamental business management skills, including budgeting, financial reporting, resource allocation, and basic marketing strategies. It helps managers understand the financial aspects of running a care service and ensures they can make informed decisions to keep the service financially sustainable.</p> | <p>Focusing on human resources practices specific to care environments, this course provides managers with knowledge on recruitment, onboarding, handling employee relations, managing absence, and addressing performance issues, all within the context of employment law and CQC requirements.</p> |
| Moving Up programme | Digital Leadership programme |
| <p>This programme supports aspiring leaders from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds in adult social care. It helps participants overcome career progression barriers through mentorship, peer support, and leadership development, fostering confidence, skills, and inclusivity to advance into senior roles and promote diversity within the sector.</p> | <p>This programme equips adult social care leaders with the knowledge and confidence to drive digital transformation in their organisations. It covers strategic planning, data management, and digital innovation, helping leaders enhance care quality, efficiency, and sustainability while fostering a culture of digital inclusion and continuous improvement.</p> |

Service type specific short courses for managers

Frontline managers benefit greatly from courses on health conditions affecting those they support, gaining specialised knowledge relevant to leadership roles.

Understanding these conditions enables managers to tailor care strategies, guide teams effectively, and improve service quality. This training helps them handle complex situations, make informed decisions, and communicate with families and healthcare professionals for coordinated support.

To ensure suitability for experienced managers, confirm courses are designed for leadership roles. These programs foster an empathetic, knowledgeable environment, benefiting staff and clients.

What short courses to choose will depend on the type of care you provide. The following suggestions are simply examples to consider. Whether developing your own internal training or selecting the right course with a trusted learning provider, check it will meet the needs of your future managers first.

Residential care

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| Understanding dementia care | Managing end of life care |
| This type of course gives managers a deeper understanding of dementia, focusing on best practices for creating supportive environments and guiding staff in delivering compassionate care. | Covering the essentials of end of life care planning, this type of course helps managers understand the emotional and practical needs of residents and their families during this critical stage. |
| Falls prevention and mobility management | Diabetes management in elderly care |
| Focused on preventing falls and maintaining mobility, this type of course teaches managers how to implement preventive strategies and assess mobility needs in a care setting. | This type of course provides an overview of managing diabetes, emphasising dietary, medication, and monitoring practices specific to older adults. |
| Stroke awareness and recovery support | Mental health awareness in older adults |
| Managers learn how to support stroke survivors in recovery, including communication techniques, rehabilitation, and family support planning. | This type of course covers common mental health conditions in the elderly, such as depression and anxiety, and equips managers to support residents' mental wellbeing effectively. |

Homecare

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| Managing chronic illness in homecare | Mental Health First Aid |
| This type of course covers the essentials of supporting clients with chronic conditions like arthritis, hypertension, and heart disease, focusing on care coordination and monitoring. | Tailored for homecare managers, this type of course addresses mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder, teaching managers to support clients' mental wellbeing and recognise early warning signs. |
| Safe medication management at home | Nutrition and hydration in homecare |
| Focused on medication administration and adherence, this type of course covers best practices for ensuring clients safely take prescribed medications, especially for those with complex regimens. | Proper nutrition is vital for all clients, particularly elderly and vulnerable individuals. This course emphasises assessing and supporting healthy eating and hydration in a home setting. |

Supported living

| Managing behavioural challenges in supported living | Pain management in care settings |
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| <p>A practical course focused on strategies for supporting individuals with behavioural challenges, teaching managers de-escalation techniques and positive behaviour support.</p> | <p>This type of course focuses on recognising and managing chronic pain and teaches strategies for supporting pain relief and comfort.</p> |
| Trauma-informed care | Supporting clients with mobility and physical disabilities |
| <p>This type of course emphasises understanding the impact of trauma on mental health, providing managers with skills to create a safe, supportive environment for individuals with a history of trauma.</p> | <p>Focused on adaptive techniques and assistive equipment, this type of course helps managers coordinate safe, accessible support for clients with mobility challenges in home environments.</p> |

Learning disability and autism

| Epilepsy awareness and seizure management | Positive behaviour support and proactive strategies |
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| <p>This type of course focuses on supporting individuals with epilepsy, a common co-occurring condition in those with learning disabilities, covering seizure types, risk management, and emergency response.</p> | <p>Managers learn techniques for creating supportive environments that reduce challenging behaviours, with an emphasis on individualised planning and understanding behavioural triggers.</p> |
| Anxiety management | Communication techniques for non-verbal individuals |
| <p>Focusing on anxiety as a prevalent issue, this type of course helps managers understand causes, signs, and support methods to reduce anxiety and improve quality of life.</p> | <p>This type of course teaches managers effective methods for communicating with non-verbal individuals, including alternative and augmentative communication tools, fostering better interactions and understanding.</p> |

Step 6: Recruiting to managerial roles

The timing for when emerging talent step into a formal management role will vary. Larger multi-site providers may offer multiple opportunities annually, while smaller services may have fewer openings.

This section helps providers to ensure that your recruitment process for deputy and registered management positions is robust. This will enable you to select the right individuals for the role. As part of this process, you will ideally want to revisit the values, behaviours, skills and knowledge listed in Step 3 to check if these can now be demonstrated or you have plans in place to support this.

Becoming a deputy or registered manager is a steep learning curve, regardless of prior experience or qualifications. Success requires ongoing professional development and continued support from owners or senior managers.

- **Recruiting a deputy manager**
- **Recruiting a registered manager**

“We are always open and transparent with our management recruitment processes. There is no requirement that those applying must have undertaken our Stepping Up development programme first. However, the programme will most likely have helped prepare them for the interview and these colleagues should be in a good position to share their experiences.”

**Deborah McNally, Locality Manager
and Leadership Development
Programme Co-ordinator
Brandon Trust**

“Being a care manager is not for the faint hearted. It isn’t easy, but it is rewarding. If you want to know if you can do it, you’ve got to get hands on with the people you support.”

**Monica Chisanga
Registered Manager
Beryl Care Services**

Recruiting a deputy manager

Deputy managers in adult social care play a vital role in supporting the registered manager and ensuring the smooth operation of the service.

Common key responsibilities include:

- Support and develop team members to ensure safe, effective care delivery.
- Step into the registered manager's role in their absence.
- Collaborate on service decisions, including care planning and resource allocation.
- Monitor compliance with regulatory standards and organisational policies.
- Cultivate a safe, positive culture focused on person-centred care and staff wellbeing.

Other responsibilities may vary depending on service type, with the following a small sample of other responsibilities:

Residential Care:

- Supervise staff providing personal care and support with daily activities.
- Coordinate individual care plans and ensure adherence to quality and safety standards.
- Act as a primary contact for families, updating them on residents' wellbeing and progress.

Homecare:

- Oversee and support care staff visiting clients in their own homes, ensuring consistent, personalised care.
- Manage schedules and resources to meet client needs efficiently and ensure continuity of care.
- Conduct spot checks and quality assessments to maintain service standards in home settings.

“It's important as deputy manager to lead by example and be a role model to the wider staff team. Whether this is showing compassion to the people we support and other staff members or adhering to our policy and procedures that help us maintain standards.

I directly line manage others, including some care roles and heads of departments. However, I also have other staff members referred to me to help mentor and supervise them. The latter is sometimes linked to my role as a mental health first aider.”

Christine Taylor, Deputy Manager and Head of Training, Eckling Grange Ltd

Supported living:

- Promote client independence by supporting them with budgeting, meal preparation, and daily routines.
- Train staff on encouraging autonomy and respecting client choices while offering necessary assistance.
- Collaborate with community resources to provide clients with additional support and opportunities.
- Learning disability and autism support:
- Implement and monitor tailored support plans to address individual needs, including communication and sensory preferences.
- Guide staff in using appropriate techniques to foster independence and inclusion.
- Work closely with families and multidisciplinary teams for holistic support and continuity of care.

Alongside the core responsibilities mentioned above, each deputy manager will likely have unique duties defined by their employer. Recruitment should therefore focus on identifying individuals well-suited to these specific needs – a process made much easier with effective succession planning.

Interview questions

The following questions are based around some key components of most deputy manager roles. There might be some suggested questions that are interchangeable with those included in the later registered manager interview questions section, or alternate questions you already use in these processes.

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| Leadership and staff supervision | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ How do you foster a positive team environment and address issues in team morale?■ Can you describe a specific situation where you coached a colleague, explaining their approach and the positive outcomes?■ Can you describe a challenging situation where you had to act as a role model for your team? How did you ensure your actions aligned with ethical standards?■ What approach do you take to ensure staff appraisals and supervisions are constructive and support team growth? |
| Compliance and quality assurance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ How do you maintain and regularly audit care plans to ensure they meet quality and regulatory standards?■ Describe your process for identifying and addressing gaps in compliance within your service.■ Can you give an example of when you identified an area for improvement and implemented a creative solution to drive positive change?■ How do you ensure that policies and procedures are effectively communicated and adhered to by staff, and how would you address non-compliance if identified? |

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| <p>Care planning and delivery</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you ensure that care plans are individualised and regularly updated to reflect changing needs? ■ How do you ensure that individuals and their families are actively involved in the care planning process, and what strategies do you use to balance their input with professional assessments and regulatory requirements? ■ Can you describe a time when you tailored your approach to meet the unique needs of an individual, ensuring they felt respected and valued? ■ Can you explain how you involve multidisciplinary teams in developing comprehensive care plans? |
| <p>Safeguarding and risk management</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explain how you have led safeguarding initiatives in their previous roles. ■ Describe your approach to ensuring staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the processes for reporting concerns. ■ How do you assess and manage risks while maintaining a safe environment for people and staff? ■ Could you also describe what constitutes a restrictive practice and how you would ensure its use is lawful and, in the individual's, best interest? |
| <p>Partnership working and external stakeholders</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Please provide some examples of past partnerships working and the outcomes achieved. ■ How do you effectively communicate with external professionals to maintain strong working relationships? ■ Can you share an example of when you worked with professionals from different disciplines to achieve a common goal? How did you ensure effective teamwork and collaboration? ■ Can you share an example of when you advocated for a person you support with an external agency to improve their care? |
| <p>Staff recruitment, training and support</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you evaluate the success of induction programs and ensure new staff integrate effectively into the team? ■ What steps do you take to align ongoing training with both organisational needs and regulatory requirements? ■ Describe a situation where you applied 'Train the Trainer' techniques to support staff learning, focusing on how you planned, delivered, and evaluated the training ■ Describe a specific situation where you applied Metal Health First Aid techniques to support a colleague or client, focusing on the steps you took to assess and provide initial support? |

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| <p>Financial management and budget oversight</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you prioritise spending within a limited budget to ensure the best outcomes for people you support? ■ Can you provide an example of how you've tracked expenses to avoid budget overspends? ■ What processes do you have in place to regularly review and report financial performance, and how do you address variances between budgeted and actual spending? ■ How would you approach creating and managing a budget for a new project or initiative within the service, ensuring it aligns with the organisation's goals and financial constraints? |
| <p>Handling complaints and conflict resolution</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe your approach to handling complaints from people and their families, especially if the complaint involves sensitive issues. ■ How do you ensure that conflicts are resolved in a way that strengthens team dynamics and improves service delivery? ■ How do you ensure that lessons learned from complaints are used to improve the quality of care and prevent similar issues from arising in the future? ■ What strategies do you use to de-escalate tense situations and build trust, whether with people, families, or team members? |

Scenario-based assessments

Below are some examples of scenario-based assessments that could be used as part of the deputy manager recruitment process. If using scenarios, always consider the relevance to your service.

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| <p>Conducting a performance review</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The deputy manager is asked to conduct a performance review with a staff member who has been struggling with punctuality and workload management. They must provide constructive feedback and create a supportive improvement plan. ■ Assess their communication, empathy, and ability to handle sensitive conversations. Ideal candidates will offer clear, actionable feedback, set realistic goals, and demonstrate a supportive approach. |
|---|--|

Handling a safeguarding concern

- A care worker reports a potential safeguarding issue involving a resident. The deputy manager must follow safeguarding protocols, gather information, and determine the appropriate steps to ensure the resident's safety.
- Look for knowledge of safeguarding procedures, calm problem-solving, and a strong ethical approach. Effective candidates will handle the issue discreetly, follow protocol, and communicate appropriately with relevant parties.
- The deputy manager is tasked with organising a training session on infection control for all staff, from planning the agenda to evaluating the training's effectiveness.
- Assess their organisational skills, attention to detail, and commitment to staff development. Strong candidates will ensure the session is well-structured, relevant, and assess staff comprehension and engagement.



Recruiting a registered manager

A registered manager in adult social care plays a vital role in overseeing daily operations, ensuring regulatory compliance, and delivering safe, person-centred care.

The role and responsibilities can vary significantly across different types and sizes of services. Larger providers are more likely to have specialist teams to support areas such as recruitment, finance, and other functions.

However, the following common key responsibilities are undertaken by most registered managers:

- Ensure services meet CQC standards, regularly review and update policies.
- Lead recruitment, training, and staff development to uphold care quality.
- Manage budgets to optimise resource use and service quality.
- Implement individualised plans, consulting regularly with users and families.
- Make decisions to improve service delivery, allocate resources, and support growth.

Other responsibilities may vary depending on service type, with the following a small sample of other responsibilities:

Residential Care:

- Oversee daily operations to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for residents.
- Ensure all CQC regulations are met, and manage audits, inspections, and quality reviews.
- Lead and support staff in delivering compassionate, person-centred care, providing regular supervision and appraisals.

“In the lead up to becoming the registered manager, I have stepped up to help lead the business when they are on leave. It’s like a taster session, but it helps build experience and opportunities to learn from other managers, like our quality lead.”

**Leanne Capstick, Registered Manager
Castle Supported Living**

Homecare:

- Manage a team of care workers delivering support to individuals in their own homes, ensuring service continuity and high standards of care.
- Oversee scheduling, resource allocation, and staff training to meet clients' needs effectively.
- Maintain strong communication with clients and families, regularly reviewing care plans and adjusting support as needed.

Supported Living:

- Ensure the people you support receive appropriate support to live as independently as possible, facilitating choice and control over their lives.
- Manage staff and resources to promote independence and wellbeing, including tailored support for daily tasks and social activities.
- Build partnerships with community organisations to connect clients with additional resources and support.

Learning Disability and Autism support:

- Lead the development of individualised support plans, ensuring they address sensory, communication, and behavioural needs.
- Train staff in specialised approaches and tools to support individuals with learning disabilities and autism.
- Foster an inclusive environment that respects everyone's preferences and strengths, ensuring families and multidisciplinary teams are engaged.

In addition to the core responsibilities, each registered manager will often have specific duties tailored by their employer. Therefore, your recruitment efforts should aim to find individuals who match these unique needs – an approach that is greatly supported by effective succession planning.

“We know that interviews for manager positions can be challenging for some. This is why our Stepping Up programme provides a session on building up confidence when being interviewed for those wanting to progress.

Before they are interviewed by the CQC, we support them to commence their Level 5 Diploma and complete their probation period. We also provide support for the CQC registered manager interview itself, as this focuses on a wide range of topics in the wider social care context.”

Deborah McNally, Locality Manager and Leadership Development Programme Co-ordinator
Brandon Trust

Interview questions

Only the CQC registration team has the authority to formally appoint a registered manager. However, to help identify the right candidate, many providers conduct their own internal recruitment process before submitting the application to the CQC.

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| Capable and compassionate manager | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ How do you maintain honesty and transparency in your work, especially when facing complex or difficult decisions?■ Can you share examples of how you have mentored colleagues?■ What are your personal development goals and how do you manage your own learning?■ How do you manage your own stress and wellbeing, and how will you encourage a culture of wellbeing for others? |
| Influencing others and impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Share examples of how you have used communication to influence positive outcomes in previous roles.■ How do you inspire and motivate your team to embrace change or new initiatives, especially when there is resistance?■ How do you ensure your communication is effective across different audiences, including staff, people you support, families, and external professionals?■ What strategies do you use to demonstrate the impact of your leadership and decisions on the quality of care provided? |
| Equality, inclusion and diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Provide some specific examples of how you have promoted equality and inclusion in previous roles. Explain how this reflected good practice and complied with equality legislation.■ How do you ensure that care delivery respects and celebrates the cultural, religious, and personal preferences of the people you support, particularly those from marginalised or minority groups?■ What steps do you take to recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce, ensuring that staff feel valued and have equal opportunities for development?■ How do you address and prevent bullying, harassment, or discrimination to maintain a safe and supportive workplace culture? |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Regulatory compliance and quality</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you stay updated on changes in CQC standards and regulations, and how do you implement these updates in your service? ■ Describe your process for conducting audits and quality checks. How do you address any issues that arise from these assessments? ■ Can you give an example of a time when you identified an area for improvement in quality assurance? What steps did you take to address it? ■ How do you encourage a culture of curiosity and continuous improvement within your team? |
| <p>Staff management and development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you create an environment that encourages staff development and retention? ■ Describe a time they supported a colleague or client through a difficult situation, focusing on their listening skills, empathy, and approach to providing emotional support. ■ Describe a time when you had to implement a new policy or process with your team. How did you ensure everyone understood and adhered to it? ■ What strategies do you use to foster a positive workplace culture and maintain high team morale? |
| <p>Performance management</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How would you handle underperformance or conflicts within a team? ■ Describe a time they used assessment skills to evaluate a staff member's performance or competencies. Please detail your approach and the feedback you provided |
| <p>Financial and resource management</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you prioritise spending within a limited budget to ensure high-quality service delivery? ■ Describe a time when you had to make a financial decision that impacted service delivery. What factors did you consider in making this decision? ■ How do you monitor and control expenses to stay within budget while ensuring quality care? ■ How would you help integrate health and social care services with external providers to enhance service delivery? |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Care delivery</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you ensure that your actions consistently show empathy and respect for the autonomy and dignity of those in your care? ■ How do you ensure that care plans remain responsive to the changing needs of people? ■ What methods do you use to involve people and families in the care planning process? ■ Describe a time when you had to adjust a service user's care plan based on new information or changing needs. How did you handle this? |
| <p>Health, safety, and safeguarding</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What approach do you take to ensure that health and safety protocols are consistently followed in your service? ■ How do you ensure that safeguarding policies are not only compliant with regulations but also proactively promote a culture where staff and people feel empowered to report concerns? ■ Can you share an experience where you had to conduct a risk assessment? How did you balance safety with providing a supportive environment? ■ Describe how you handle incident reporting and follow-up. What steps do you take to prevent similar incidents in the future? |
| <p>Stakeholder engagement and communication</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do you maintain effective communication with people's families, especially when dealing with sensitive issues? ■ Describe a situation where you had to collaborate with an external agency to resolve a person's issue. What was the outcome? ■ How do you handle situations where there is a disagreement with an external stakeholder about a person's care? ■ What strategies do you use to build and maintain trust with families, commissioners, and other stakeholders, ensuring their confidence in the quality of your service? |
| <p>Strategic planning and service improvement</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What is your approach to evaluating the effectiveness of your service, and how do you identify areas for improvement? ■ Describe a time when you had to make a strategic decision that impacted the future direction of your service. How did you approach this? ■ How do you set and monitor long-term goals for your team and service? ■ Can you share an example of how you successfully implemented a change or innovation in your service to improve outcomes or efficiency, and how you measured its impact? |



Scenario-based assessment

Below are some examples of scenario-based assessments that could be used as part of the registered manager recruitment process. If using scenarios, always consider the relevance to your service.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Responding to a CQC assessment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The registered manager is informed of an unannounced assessment by the CQC. They must prepare the team, review compliance documents, and handle the inspector’s questions. ■ Assess knowledge of regulatory standards, attention to detail, and calmness under pressure. Strong candidates will demonstrate thorough preparation, effective communication, and a clear understanding of compliance. |
| <p>New policy or procedure</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The organisation introduces a new policy, such as data protection or infection control. The registered manager is responsible for implementing it, training staff, and ensuring adherence. ■ Assess ability to lead change, attention to compliance, and communication skills. Effective candidates will clearly explain the policy, address staff concerns, and monitor adherence. |
| <p>Planning for staff development and retention</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With high staff turnover rates, the registered manager is asked to create a plan to improve retention and staff satisfaction, including development and recognition initiatives. ■ Assess strategic thinking, understanding of team dynamics, and commitment to staff development. Ideal candidates propose realistic strategies that align with the organisation’s culture and budget, aiming to create a positive work environment. |

Step 7:

Further development and ongoing support

Supporting the ongoing development of new managers is vital for ensuring the long-term success of adult social care organisations. This step highlights the importance of continuous professional development (CPD), specific programmes, and tailored support for both deputy and registered managers.

Why is CPD important to new managers?

CPD equips frontline managers, including deputy and registered managers, with the latest knowledge and skills required to lead effectively and deliver high-quality care. In a sector driven by regulatory standards and frequent policy updates, CPD ensures compliance with bodies like the CQC and strengthens skills in safeguarding, health and safety, and person-centred care.

Key benefits of CPD for managers includes leadership growth, workplace improvement, adaptability, innovation and enhanced care quality.

Examples of CPD opportunities

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| Online training and webinars | Platforms like eLearning for health offer free or low-cost courses on compliance, leadership, safeguarding, and person-centred care. Skills for Care offers free webinars. |
| Peer networking and mentoring | Engage in peer mentoring to share insights, discuss challenges, and exchange best practices. |
| In-house workshops and knowledge sharing | Organise sessions where staff with specialised skills share knowledge, fostering a learning culture. |
| Reading and self-study | Stay informed by reviewing industry publications, regulatory updates, and best practice guidelines from reputable sources like the CQC. |
| Well-led programme | The Well-led programme enhances leadership skills, fosters quality improvement, and builds resilient, effective teams in adult social care. |

Higher-level qualifications: Level 6 and 7 Diplomas

For managers seeking advanced training, Level 6 and 7 Diplomas offer specialised skills in leadership, management, and related fields.

- **Level 6 Diplomas:** Focus on leadership, team dynamics, and project management. Ideal for developing organisational and change management skills.
- **Level 7 Diplomas:** Emphasise strategic planning, quality management, and business administration, preparing managers for senior leadership roles.



Supporting new managers

“The most important thing that helped in my development journey to become a registered manager was the support I got from the previous registered manager and managing director.

It was nice to digest the role with the support of the original registered manager across a slow transition. I began by taking on just a few elements of the role, such as leading on medication etc.

By progressing at my pace using a clear timeframe, I was able to build my confidence and transition into the new role with the full support of others.”

Kim Woodhouse, Registered Manager, No Place Like Home

Tailored support ensures new managers transition smoothly into their roles, building confidence and competence.

The following support is recommended through their transition:

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| Induction programmes | Customised inductions focus on leadership, compliance, and strategic planning. Using frameworks like the Manager Induction Standards and Induction toolkit helps establish expectations and prepare managers for their responsibilities. |
| Supervision and ad-hoc support | Regular supervision provides feedback, enhances decision making, and aligns managers with organisational standards. Ad-hoc support from senior colleagues offers immediate guidance for real-time challenges. |
| Peer support networks | Organise sessions where staff with specialised skills share knowledge, fostering a learning culture. |

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