

# Registered manager networks - Benefits of attending



**Name:** Essie Manomano



**Job title:** Domiciliary Care Manager

Essie has attended our networks in South and West Yorkshire. Her service, based in Sheffield, provides home care services to people in the community, supporting with personal care, domestic tasks and companionship.

Here she shares her experience, getting support from the networks that have helped the whole community of residential managers in her area.

## Essie, tell us a bit about yourself...

I started working in healthcare in 2016, that's when I became a registered manager. Before that, I worked in finance with the NHS. I already had a finance degree, but I did a Masters in Occupational Therapy, became fully qualified, and then set up the home care business in 2016. Registration with CQC happened in 2017, and while it was just me and my husband when we started, we now employ more than 90 people. It's been an amazing journey.

## What was your perception of networking, before your current role?

I hadn't had much experience of networking in my previous career. Actually, it was the contracts officer at Sheffield City Council who recommended getting in touch with and taking part in the network. He explained it's a place where like-minded people would meet, and that's how I became a part of it.

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## What part of attending the registered manager networks do you enjoy most?

The network is very informative. Very organised. Whenever you go, you come out with something - in fact, we often get information that bypasses the local authority. We'll find out about training and funding in the region.

The network is a great place to talk about things that concern you, things we feel we can't really address directly with local organisations. It's all confidential. Our network leaders find a way of putting those issues across on our behalf to the council - brokering a conversation. That's brilliant.

Those personal connections are really important, because there's a lot of things we all struggle with but wouldn't want to address individually. If it comes from a network, then the council hears we're a collective voice - that really makes a difference. If it's coming from the network, then it means it needs to be addressed for a whole group of people. Registered managers do feel vulnerable, especially when they're in a difficult situation.

The other benefit of the networks, is that we've had opportunities to meet different people - from CQC, and from Skills for Care itself. Even commissioners have come along to the meetings. There's a lot to take in, though. So we cascade details to our staff as and when, although I think a lot depends on what information you're picking up. When I go along, I'm always looking at the information to decide, does it need to go directly to staff? Is it to do with the service? Is it for me as a registered manager?

## Can you give us an example of something you've learned through the registered manager networks?

What I've learned personally from the networks, is that they're an opportunity to share best practice. You can say, "I'm having issues around recruitment on this matter and that matter." We looked at values-based recruitment, for example, and altered our interview questions and the way we were recruiting. That's valuable.

## Would you encourage other people to join a registered manager network?

I would say it really is important to get involved with one or more networks in your area, because you get to meet people that have already walked the same road as you, in similar circumstances. They'll know the same authorities. You can share contact details - I met a lady recently, we just exchanged numbers, and she called me to ask for advice on some HR matters. I explained to her that we use a private consultant for some matters we'd rather not handle internally, as that's their speciality. We shared the information with her, and that kind of connection is sometimes only possible through the network.

**Local networks for registered managers and deputy managers**

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