

Recruitment and retention update for Adult Social Care in England, including the scoping of a National Recruitment Campaign for the sector

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report provides Members with information on the recruitment and retention challenges faced by the adult social care sector in England and includes a brief overview of the work undertaken by Skills for Care, in partnership with sector stakeholders to scope and report on the sector views for a National Recruitment Campaign.

Recommendation

The Members of the Resources Board note the report.

Action

Officers to proceed in line with Members Steer.

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Background

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide members with an update on the recruitment and retention challenges for the adult social care sector in England and to provide a brief overview of the work undertaken by Skills for Care, in partnership with sector stakeholders to scope and report on the sector views for a National Recruitment Campaign linked to local activities to support their recruitment and retention challenges.

Supply and Demand

2. The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England, September, 2017 provides a comprehensive overview of the workforce in terms of its size and shape, employment information, recruitment and retention issues, workforce demographics, pay, qualification rates and future workforce forecasts.
3. An overview of the workforce 2016/2017 from the Skills for Care data set shows that:
 - 3.1. There were approximately 350,000 directly employed leavers from the sector during the year. A large proportion of people leaving their job roles did so soon after joining (within the first few months) – This means on average the sector loses around 900 people each day and carries around 90,000 vacancies on any given day.
 - 3.2. Despite interventions over the years many employers report continued rises in vacancy and turnover rates.
 - 3.3. For some employers, the inability to recruit the right people in sufficient numbers has meant that their businesses have closed thus reducing the availability of local social care provisions to provide services to vulnerable adults.
 - 3.4. However there were also approximately 425,000 new directly employed starters in the same year.
 - 3.5. Around two thirds of new starters come from within the sector.
 - 3.6. Turnover rates have increased steadily since 2012/13 and 2016/17 (27.8 per cent).
 - 3.7. The national vacancy rate stood at 6.6 per cent which means that on any given day there are around 90,000 vacancies within the sector.
 - 3.8. 83 per cent of the workforce defined as British with approximately 220,000 jobs being carried out by those with an EU or non-EU nationality.
 - 3.9. 145,000 Personal Assistant jobs carried out by around 115,000 people.
 - 3.10. The sector will need between a further 350,000 to 700,000 jobs by 2030.
 - 3.11. The figures used are national average figures and there are significant regional and local variations which are further outlined in **Appendix A**.
4. In the social work profession some key figures show:

- 4.1. 10.8 per cent vacancy rate for social workers in adult services;
 - 4.2. 21 per cent social workers over the age of 55; and
 - 4.3. 15.5 per cent turnover rate of social workers in adult services
5. Wide variations apply across the sector in terms of recruitment and retention practices with some parts of the sector struggling to attract, retain or both. There are high dropout rates within the first twelve months with high levels of churn and loss. There are also uncertainties around the full implications of the Brexit negotiations and a need to focus on the recruitment in the domestic labour market. In order to meet future workforce projections, particularly with the current high levels of employment within the economy, employers will need to develop and implement different ways of working to recruit and retain the workforce.

Scoping a National Recruitment Campaign, linked to local delivery activities

6. The need for a national recruitment campaign to raise the profile, image and professionalism of the sector is a re-occurring and enduring theme particularly at a time when the sector is advised to focus on the recruitment of its domestic workforce. Skills for Care has been asked by the Department of Health and Social Care to work with key stakeholders to undertake a scoping exercise to determine the strength of this interest, the scope of a national campaign, delivered locally, the infrastructure needed, ambitions and anticipated targets, costs and delivery profile.
7. The initial aims of the recruitment campaign would be to:
- 7.1. **Inspire people** with the right values, behaviours and attitudes to take the first steps towards a career in adult social care, including applying for a job, apprenticeship, college or university course, work experience, work placement, sector-based work academy or other pre-employment support.
 - 7.2. **Raise awareness and improve public perceptions** of the adult social care sector particularly those at the start of their career, job seekers or those considering a career change, including highlighting the career progression opportunities, and the different roles and types of employers, settings and people who use care and support services.
 - 7.3. **Help people understand** whether a job in adult social care would be right for them
8. In the medium-term, it's expected this activity will provide an **increased stream of appropriate applications** to employers and education/ training providers; and in the long-term **reduce vacancy, and potentially also turnover, rates**.

Scoping study

9. As the cost of a national recruitment campaign is expected to be considerable, Skills for Care has carried a multi-faceted scoping study with the aim of:

- 9.1. gauging support and demand for a national recruitment campaign from employers and other key stakeholders in the sector, including the LGA;
 - 9.2. describing what a successful recruitment campaign might look like, its characteristics and key success factors;
 - 9.3. understanding what a 'national recruitment campaign – delivered locally' might mean, how this might work in practice, and the likely challenges and key success factors;
 - 9.4. learning and applying lessons from successful and unsuccessful recruitment campaigns run in other sectors or at other times;
 - 9.5. exploring the scope and parameters of the recruitment campaign - its aims and objectives, output targets, intended outcomes and impacts, stakeholders, audiences, segmentation, content, channels, methods, messages and delivery model (including procurement); and
 - 9.6. estimating the cost of the preferred model and exploring options for funding and sustainability (including employer contributions).
10. Skills for Care is currently analysing the consultation responses which has been overwhelming and will produce a written report for the Department of Health and Social Care in March 2018 and with their agreement provide a summary of the report and further information as applicable.
 11. The LGA are working alongside Skills for Care and DH on the Recruitment and Retention Working group, which also includes BASW, Think Ahead and other senior professionals. As part of this work, a podcast (sponsored by LGA) is to be launched during Social work week in March 2018 in order to begin raising awareness of the social care profession and its many roles and opportunities.

Implications for Wales

12. Policy and programmes on adult social care are devolved matters and separate arrangements will be made by Welsh organisations as appropriate.

Financial Implications

13. There are no known financial implications.

Next steps

14. The Skills for Care report on their consultation is awaited and LGA actions will be determined when the outcomes are known.