

Do you find it difficult to find – and keep – high quality care staff whether that's registered manager, senior carers or ancillary staff?

You are not alone. It is a common problem around the country because demand for good quality staff far outweighs supply at present in the care home sector.

How do you recruit effectively in the care sector?

It means that it has never been more essential to retain your staff once you've recruited them.

In order to attract the best candidates, and ensure the need to recruit is kept to an absolute minimum, we believe it is important to differentiate yourself from your local competitor homes, to really value your staff, and to show them recognition where it is deserved.

If you are going to recruit most effectively, there are also some key things you need to do. Here are our tips:

- Assess what you need and understand what the minimum level of experience required is. Think about whether the current staffing structure would allow you to train someone up.
- Delegate where appropriate. The recruitment process, when undertaken effectively, can be a time-consuming task. Look to delegate responsibilities from the outset and ensure there is accountability for each task.
- Role profile: ensure it's clear, concise and provides the job seeker with a good summary of day-to-day responsibilities involved, the minimum requirements of the application and crucially, how to apply. Include phone numbers on adverts where permitted.
- It is absolutely essential to ensure that the person responsible for writing the job advertisement is grammatically sound and has a good standard of written English. First impressions really count.
- Always, where feasible, publish the salary on offer for the post, even if you advertise it as a salary bracket (from £ to £, negotiable, depending on experience). Research suggests that job ads displaying salaries receive a far better response.
- Utilise as many means as possible to promote the vacancy. Establish if there is a recruitment budget. Certain job boards offer free postings e.g. Indeed, Reed, or you may wish to settle on a maximum budget. Research the best job boards to use and negotiate on price with them in turn. In addition, be creative: utilise recruitment banners on the exterior of your care homes(s), place a card in the local shop/post office window, introduce 'refer a friend' incentives amongst your existing staff, advertise on your own website, consider overseas recruitment, liaise with local colleges or hold job fairs/open days.
- Ensure whoever is screening and shortlisting CV's has an excellent understanding of the candidate profile you're looking for.
- Where possible, telephone-screen shortlisted candidates before inviting them for face-to-face interview. It's much less time-consuming, you'll be able to form a good first impression and you'll often be able to weed out potential time-wasters.
- Before interviewing, do prepare in advance. Have pre-prepared interview questions, which should ideally be competency based (i.e. "can you give me an example of", "describe an occasion when").
- Where possible interview in pairs and have at least one of you taking notes. You may wish to score candidate responses to each question individually and compare scores at the end – it's good to have a second opinion.
- Be prepared to go to a second interview if you are unsure about a candidate or more than one candidate impresses you. Taking additional time at this point could save you significantly more time in the long-run, were you to make the wrong choice. Inviting candidates to second interview also tests candidate commitment – how much do they want the job? (although be certain to arrange any second interview as soon as possible after the first – take too long and you may lose the candidate to another employer)
- Once a decision has been made, phone the candidate to tell them. Share the good news.
- Assuming a verbal offer is accepted, follow it up with an offer in writing as soon as possible. Do not delay – the candidate may lose interest or be attracted elsewhere.
- Keep in regular touch with the candidate throughout the checks/offer process. Keep them warm, invite them in to meet the team, invite them on staff nights out.
- On their first day, ensure the home and staff are well-prepared to welcome the new staff member – induction arranged, training plan in place. Consider providing them with a "buddy" or "mentor" for their first few weeks in the post.
- Plan ahead for any further/future recruitment. If there are no permanent vacancies, then advertise on an ongoing basis for bank staff – it will eliminate agency spend and provide you with a future staff pipeline.

James Parkin, Co-founder and Operations Director of Caresolve, the specialists in care home transformation.
www.caresolve.org.uk

New online home of Redwoods Dowling Kerr Healthcare

Redwoods Dowling Kerr, one of the UK's leading Healthcare Brokers, is delighted to announce that it has a new online home – businessbuyers.co.uk.



BusinessBuyers.co.uk is a one-stop shop for buying and selling SME businesses in the UK, bringing together the UK's leading business brokers who have fostered a reputation for selling businesses.

The website offers over a thousand businesses for sale, and Redwoods Dowling Kerr offer in excess of 100 national healthcare opportunities via a bespoke market sale process, as well as a specialist healthcare business finder service which facilitates transactions off market on behalf of our clients. RDK offers a national service with local knowledge, and we have witnessed significant demand for UK Healthcare opportunities, notably from abroad where both operators and investors who are looking to capitalise on the growth projections and reap the rewards of the beneficial exchange rates.

The website's 'buy a business' function makes finding what's right for you hassle-free, while the 'Value my business' function puts business owners who are thinking about selling in touch with the most well respected brokers in the industry, with over 40 years of experience.

The outlook for Healthcare in 2017 is positive with strong growth potential for both mainstream and specialised healthcare offerings. If you are considering buying or selling in 2017 then contact us today to discuss your requirements.

Potential buyers and sellers can register now at Businessbuyers.co.uk/business-category/healthcare

