

Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Monday 16 October 2023

Staffordshire's Social Care Workforce: Adult Social Care Update

Recommendations

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Consider and comment on the key discussion points and action points arising from the recent Adult Social Care Provider Round Table, facilitated on 14 August 2023.
- b. Consider and comment on the intention to establish an Adult Social Care Academy, to meet the training, learning and development needs of the adult social care workforce.

Local Member Interest:

N/A – relevant to all Members.

Report of Councillor Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health & Care

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. Consider and comment on the key discussion points and action points arising from the recent Adult Social Care Provider Round Table, facilitated on 14 August 2023.
2. Following the last presentation to Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2023, there was a request to provide an update on the provision of education and training to our adult social care workforce. Committee members are asked to note the intention to establish an adult social care academy, to meet the training, learning and development needs of the adult social care workforce.

Report

Adult Social Care Provider Round Table

3. On 14 August 2023, Health and Care Scrutiny members hosted a round table attended by providers from across our adult social care market. Representatives were invited from our Registered Managers Network and Staffordshire Association of Registered Care Providers (SARCP), including:
 - a. Care homes (residential and nursing)
 - b. Home care
 - c. Supported Living
4. Colleagues from the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB) attended the session as active partners in the development and on-going delivery of Staffordshire's Workforce Strategy.
5. The session commenced with an overview of how the Strategy was developed in collaboration with a range of partners, including our adult social care providers and provided an overview of our adult social care workforce:
 - a. Each adult social care service has specific recruitment and retention issues, as demonstrated by the Skills for Care Workforce Data set and the Annual Staff Survey.

An example of this service specific need is demonstrated by Staffordshire's current vacancy rate – the average vacancy rate across all sectors is 9.9%, however there is a 16% vacancy rate for nurses working in care homes¹.

- b. 270 respondents completed the local Annual Staff Survey – noting 217 of respondents worked in adult social care.

The survey demonstrated we have people with the right values and ethos working in the sector (with 88% wanting to 'make a difference').

86% of the workforce indicated they intend to remain working in adult social care, which is an improvement from the previous survey as 1 in 5 respondents noted it was their intention to vacate the social care sector, within 2 years.

It was noted, whilst the response rate was consistent with the previous year, the overall response rates require improvement.

6. Care providers shared first-hand experience of what life is like for our workforce and their thoughts and perspectives on the Strategy. A

¹ [Skills for Care](#)

summary of the key discussion points and actions arising are detailed in Appendix 1.

7. The majority of the actions arising from the discussion typically aligned to those included in the Strategy. There was a strong focus on:
 - a. Tailoring our support and actions based on the presenting needs of each service type.
 - b. The use of positive language and reinforcement – in order to both attract people to the sector and ensure our workforce feels valued and rewarded.
 - c. There is a need to expedite our actions on multi-disciplinary working, and ensuring members of our workforce are seen as professionals in their own right by a person's circle of support.
 - d. A co-ordinated communications campaign across the life course of the Strategy is critical.
 - e. Values-based recruitment and offering people opportunities to experience social care, thus making informed career decision, is fundamental to our success.
8. Educating our wider communities about the role, function and purpose of social care was proposed as a new action, in addition to those included in our strategy. This action would contribute to raising the profile and recognition of social care.
9. It was acknowledged the typically low rate of pay will continue to affect recruitment and retention.

Adult Social Care Academy

10. The ['Next Steps to Putting People at the Heart of Social Care'](#) notes a significant proportion of the workforce do not hold a relevant qualification or have access to good quality learning opportunities, which contributes to high turnover of staff. Skills for Care states turnover was reduced by more than 9% for care workers who received more than 30 instances of training².

² [Skills for Care is supporting social care teams to #KeepLearning this year](#)

11. Approx 54% of our local workforce have completed (or are working towards) the Care Certificate³, placing us slightly ahead of the England average (48%).
12. Local intelligence from our social care workforce, in respect of learning, and training can be summarised as below:
 - a. Our workforce is not aware of the full range of local training opportunities available, with capacity to research cited as a barrier.
 - b. Our workforce is not aware of the full range of funding on offer to support learning, i.e. Workforce Development Funding.
 - c. There is variation across the market, by employer, in respect of investment in learning and training.
 - d. Neither the potential or current workforce are fully aware of the career opportunities within adult social care, or the training required / opportunities to achieve these aspirations.
 - e. Individual learning and development achievements are not consistently recognised nor celebrated.
13. Sector based career academies are growing in popularity across England. They are designed to meet specific industry needs, harnessing the power of several partners to both attract and retain staff with the right ethos, values and training in a cohesive and consistent manner, reducing duplication⁴.
14. A number of academies have a strong focus on 'entry to work', supporting those receiving unemployment benefits to join the workforce, via targeted recruitment campaigns and provision of placement-based learning and training, utilising Adult Education Budget (AEB) Funding.
15. Locally, we have worked closely with our ADASS associate supporting workforce and explored other health and/or social care academies across the country to understand their structure and impact.
16. Representatives from the following partner organisations have contributed to our Strategy and are active participants in our Learning and Development Workstream:
 - a. Adult social care providers.
 - b. ICS & NHS colleagues.
 - c. Staffordshire Partnership for Employment and Skills.
 - d. Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
 - e. Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT).

³ [Skills for Care](#)

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sector-based-work-academies-employer-guide/sector-based-work-academies-employer-guide>

- f. Local Universities, including Staffordshire, Keele and Wolverhampton.
 - g. Local colleges, including South Staffordshire, Newcastle & Stafford college group, Buxton & Leek college and Burton & South Derbyshire College.
 - h. Department for Work & Pensions.
17. Following consideration of local intelligence and national directives and the intention is to establish a Staffordshire Social Care Academy. The Academy will provide learning training and development to:
- a. Support our current workforce – clearly articulating the local opportunities for them to be the best they can be at their current job and support them to progress in their career.
 - b. Support our potential future workforce – clearly articulating what a career in social care entails including career progression and the local opportunities to support them to enter the sector with confidence and the required skills/
18. The objectives of the Academy will be:
- a. Values Based Recruitment:
 - i. Increase the number of filled posts.
 - b. Support effective retention:
 - i. Reduce the current turnover rate.
 - ii. Increase the number of people who remain in the sector.
 - c. The provision of high-quality care by a skilled workforce.
 - i. Increase the number of staff who have started or completed their Care Certificate.
 - ii. Increase the number of staff who report to have a qualification relevant to social care.
 - d. Offer work-based learning & experience.
 - i. Increase the number of workplace learning programmes offered by adults social care providers.
 - ii. Increase the number of people who are subsequently offered employment after completion of a workplace learning programme.
19. The Academy will offer bespoke learning, training and development to meet the needs of our workforce, using local intelligence and engagement.
20. The Academy will not duplicate any existing learning, training and development opportunities – instead it will bring all existing opportunities together virtually in one place for ease of navigation.
21. A local quality assurance framework is under development, utilising existing nationally recognised accreditation schemes and registers, to

reduce bureaucracy whilst ensuring the provision of quality training. In addition, we will consider the application of a quality assurance mark, that is locally recognised, to provide both our workforce and employers with a level of reassurance and confidence in the learning, training and development opportunities delivered.

22. The Academy will be supported by a Learning Management System (LMS) that will enable our workforce to book and complete learning training and development delivered by the academy and were requested by our partners.
23. Our workforce will be able to track their progress, store the associated certifications and provide feedback about the quality and impact of the course using the associated LMS, which aligns to the intention of the Adult Social Care Reform pledge to introduce portability of training to prevent duplication. Our local offer and LMS functionality have been designed in partnership with our providers.
24. As part of our wider Strategy actions, we have noted we will consider further workforce recognition and celebration events – we are building on feedback gained during creation of our Strategy that asked us to consider local ‘graduation’ events and celebrating our workforce’s individual learning achievements.
25. The Academy will act as a single collective voice to drive change in respect of learning training and development, whilst seeking to better co-ordinate the use of local resources to maximise the impact on adult social care. Two prime areas for exploration are:
 - a. Sector Based Work Academies – greater local co-ordination and reach to maximise their effectiveness and impact.
 - b. Apprenticeships – demystifying, promoting and driving up numbers at every stage of the career pathway – whilst continuing to participate in discussions about the associated rates of pay for those who are new to care.
26. The Market Sustainability Improvement Fund will be utilised to support with establishment of the Academy Infrastructure. We are currently exploring utilisation of other local resources to support with both capital and revenue costs.
27. Phase 1 of implementation will focus on delivery of a virtual academy – with our infrastructure fully operational by March 2024, subject to the preferred LMS model we pursue (if there is a required to complete a commercial process).

28. Phase 2 of implementation will focus on development of a hybrid model – which will be fully operation by March 2025.

Link to Strategic Plan

29. Have access to more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth.

30. Be healthier and independent for longer.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

31. An update on the provision of education for our adult social care workforce was requested following our attendance to Health & Care Scrutiny on 20 March 2023.

Community Impact

32. See CIA

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Health & Care Scrutiny ASC Provider Roundtable key discussion points and actions.
Community Impact Assessment

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