

Recipient of the
Workforce Development
Innovation Fund 2015/16



learn
from others

CareTech Community Services

Care Hub

CareTech has around 1300 new starters every year, of which a high proportion leave the organisation within the first six months. Recognising the recruitment and retention challenges, both internally and within the wider social care sector, the Care Hub project aimed to engage with potential employees and employers in order to create a sustainable solution.

Founded in 1993, CareTech is a national social care provider. The company is publicly owned and has an experienced management team drawn from social services, health, charities and the commercial world. CareTech employ more than 5000 staff working in both residential and community supported living.

Throughout the project CareTech worked with a range of partners; The Learning & Development Service (BCDA), Black Country Partnership in Care (BCPC), Job Centre Plus, Further Education colleges, Skills Point and People Plus.

What we wanted to achieve

Through the Care Hub project CareTech wanted to establish a sustainable, effective model which would support both them in filling vacancies and the sector as a whole. The project had several objectives:

- To create a regionally based focal point for employers to advertise vacancies, and for job seekers to identify roles in the sector; whilst also benefitting from placement and training opportunities.

- Establish an employer led Sector-based Work Academy (SBWA) model based on employer involvement, and incorporating values based recruitment and 'I Care...Ambassador' services.
- Ensure the model was as effective as possible by introducing myth-busting events to ensure that those entering the sector had a good understanding and no mixed perceptions.
- Maximise the effectiveness of the programmes by ensuring that candidates completing the course had several options of employment open to them – not just a single employer.
- Raise awareness about the sector through local care partnerships.
- Fill vacancies at a lower cost than standard recruitment strategies.
- Fill vacancies faster, therefore reducing the need for back fill or agency involvement.
- Find higher quality candidates by using values-based recruitment.

What we did

The Care Hub model was based on utilising local care partnerships to facilitate and coordinate all activities. These partnerships had local recognition and contact with employers. They also had a commitment to developing projects which would be a benefit to the sector.

Employers were involved throughout the project. This included attending the myth busting day, which was run as a pre-course introduction to the Sector-based Work Academy.

To establish the Care Hub model we carried out the following activities:

- In the first instance a meeting was held to present the Care Hub project and concept. This was attended by Care-Tech's partners (BCPC, BCDA) and HCPC . There was also representation from some large national employers, private training providers and colleges.
- From the initial meeting two project coordinators were set up from BCPC and BCDA. Both organisations were fully briefed on the concept and were on board with the project aims.
- Review meetings were set up for the beginning, the middle and the end of the project with a final review to be scheduled following the project evaluation.

The Care Hub coordinator activities included:

- Liaising with local job centre staff; briefing job centre staff on the Care Hub concept for referrals.
- Liaising with work programme providers for referrals
- Engaging with employers
 - Identifying vacancies
 - Specific requirements
 - Awareness of sector strategies e.g. SCC, I Care... Ambassadors and VBR.

CareTech undertook the following activities:

- Identifying a range of partner organisations
- Organising venues
- Developing the programme structure; four week lesson plan with resources and learning materials
- Ensuring we had access to accreditation
- Programme delivery.

What we achieved

The project is still on going and CareTech have had discussions in Wolverhampton and other areas about establishing the Care Hub model. In the time allowed three courses were delivered, two in the Black Country and one in the Birmingham area.

The combined achievements of this initial pilot project are as follows:

- 112 people attended the myth-busting event
- 35 people started the programme.
- 32 learners completed the programme, and each gained the following qualifications:
 - Level One Certificate preparing to work in adult social care
 - Level One award in Employability Skills
 - Principles of customer service.

27 people have been offered jobs in the sector. In Birmingham, four of the candidates have been offered jobs in social care; these candidates were long term unemployed, and they felt they would not have got a job without the level of support provided by this programme.

Care Tech believes this project will continue in the long term with the aim of becoming a one-stop hub facility. They believe that the Care Hub will provide benefits to the sector by filling vacancies cost effectively, quickly and with higher quality candidates through using values based recruitment.

A range of nationwide organisations, partners, local authorities and employers' expressed interest to be involved in future Care Hub projects. If you are interested in discussing this further with Care Tech, please see the contact details below.

What we learnt

CareTech found a need for the Care Hub model for both employers and employees. They learnt that employers required help to fill their vacancies, and that there was a potential workforce which required training and development.

CareTech found a clear need for a defined recruitment programme for people who are

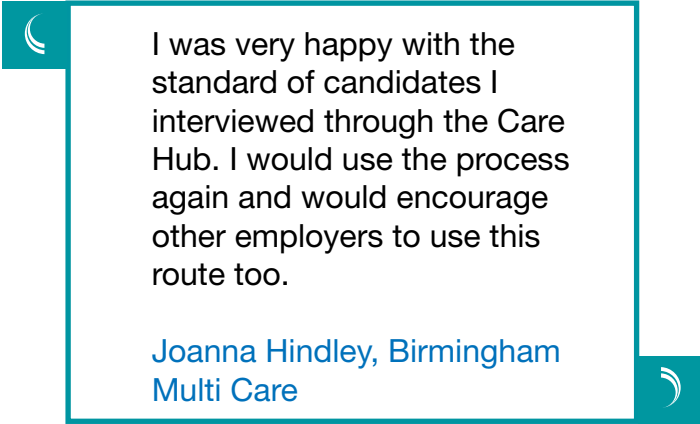
interested in a career in social care. They felt that the most effective training approach was to provide a work placement alongside classroom learning, allowing the candidates to get hands on experience whilst gaining an accredited qualification.

The following aspects of the project were seen as challenging:

- Gaining engagement from large national employers
- Job Centre staff referral processes and planning time-scales.

However, a number of successes were also noted:

- The myth-busting event using sector values-based recruitment tools and literacy/ numeracy tests as a de-selection/ selection programme.
- The establishment of an employer-led programme, with employer intervention throughout the programme and in the delivery.
- A Sector-based Work Academy that is customised to the care sector.
- Working with established network/sector partners BCDA and BCPC.
- Establishing a partnership with work programme providers as a referral source.



I was very happy with the standard of candidates I interviewed through the Care Hub. I would use the process again and would encourage other employers to use this route too.

Joanna Hindley, Birmingham
Multi Care

The care hub concept has been embraced positively with potential roll out in to other areas. There has been general agreement within the Black Country to maintain a Care Hub, specifically with Wolverhampton Health and Social Care Planning Group. CareTech has also established many links that will support future care hub projects, including effective resource web sites which could be linked to individual care hubs.

This project addressed the 2015/16 priority on:

Projects which explore the benefits and efficiencies achieved by improving collaboration when delivering learning and development, including the delivery of the Care Certificate. Projects should focus on collaboration between employers and within supply chains in the social care and health sector.

For more information please visit:

www.caretech-uk.com

Project leads: Nigel Taylor
Group Head of Learning and Development at Care Tech
nigel.taylor@caretech-uk.com

Skills for Care recommends

Skills for Care produces a wide range of products and services related to recruitment and retention.

Pre-employment training: sector routeway and sector-based work academies

Offer work-based training to people thinking about a career in care.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/preemployment

Finding and keeping workers

This online resource supports health and social care providers of all sizes with their recruitment and retention challenges. It includes a range of useful products, services, videos, case studies and websites

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/findingandkeepingworkers

Values based recruitment and retention toolkit

This toolkit contains guidance, suggestions and practical resources to help you find people with the right values, behaviours and attitudes.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/values

Skills for Care
West Gate
6 Grace Street
Leeds
LS1 2RP
telephone 0113 245 1716
email info@skillsforcare.org.uk
web www.skillsforcare.org.uk

[@skillsforcare](https://twitter.com/skillsforcare) 

www.facebook.com/skillsforcare 

www.youtube.com/skillsforcare 

www.linkedin.com/company/skills-for-care 

