

My Homecare: Giving back to the local community

Introduction

Katie Starr, Director at My Homecare always wanted to open a business that gave something back to the community. As demand for social care services continued to increase, Katie set up a business in the care sector established 'My Homecare'.

My Homecare is a growing domiciliary care franchise whose ethos is to:

- support local people in to work
- help employees develop the skills they need
- grow a trusted workforce who'll provide high quality care and support.

What they wanted to achieve and why

My Homecare were looking to expand into parts of West Kent, West Sussex, Chichester and Brighton and Hove. In order to establish and effectively grow their business in a competitive market, they needed to have robust processes in place to deal with some challenges to recruitment, which included barriers to the availability of staff and transport issues.

My Homecare needed to ensure that they had a competent, flexible and mobile workforce, who could react quickly to demands of clients. This involved a review of their current recruitment processes to ensure they had enough staff with the right values.

What they did

My Homecare implemented a range of innovative ideas. One of these was to target people in the community who were experiencing barriers to employment but had the right values to work in social care. They targeted specific demographic groups which included single parents, people with caring responsibilities and young people starting out in their career.

These groups were experiencing many barriers to recruitment, which My Homecare aimed to identify, understand and devised practical solutions.

Barriers	Solutions
<p>Rates of pay: low wages made it difficult for younger people to financially support themselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incentivising younger employees to start work by paying 50% more than National Minimum Wage and 20 - 40% higher than other providers in the area. ▪ Paying for work-related costs like mileage allowance or providing uniforms. ▪ Paying wages bi-weekly to help staff with cash flow.
<p>People who receive Universal Credit: understand the various entitlements and how working hours may impact their allowance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Linking with local Jobcentre Plus about Universal Credit changes to equip the team with the knowledge of if and how benefit claims might be impacted.
<p>Working hours: Single parents with children in partial childcare often need to work from 10-2pm so they can drop off and collect their children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ My Homecare tried to accommodate a (10-2pm flexible working pattern. In return they asked staff to also be flexible and work every other weekend.
<p>Transport: some areas don't have good public transport links and some carers/and potential candidates don't drive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided a bike for non-driving staff members. There was a clear company emphasis on staying safe and protected. ▪ Staff were offered the option of a monthly bus pass instead of mileage allowance, which provides the employee the extra benefit of using the pass for personal purposes. ▪ Walking rounds were set up.

What they achieved

Since implementing a solution-based approach to various barriers to recruitment, My Homecare haven't missed a care call.

This approach has enabled them to:

- build local staff teams to support local people and community

- continue to grow a loyal team which means they rarely lose a team member to another agency
- help people into work with all the positives that brings for the recruit, local community and the people they work with.

Conclusion

The feedback from employees so far has been very positive. My Homecare is carefully monitoring its initiatives to see where further investment or development is required. They are continuing to listen to their staff and Jobcentre Plus colleagues about potential barriers to recruitment and how they can respond to them. They're also looking at expanding their bike programme to include electric scooters and possibly a pool car.

My Homecare aims to treat their employees with decency and respect and instil a culture of security and family values. They continue to embed this culture by effectively and flexibly responding to barriers to recruitment and employment.

Key learning points

Here are some key learning points that you may find useful:

1. **Take a values-led approach to your recruitment** - understand your local demographic. Use this information to plan and attract people who have the right values to work in adult social care.
2. **Be flexible** - by showing potential recruits that you understand their barriers and can work with them to provide solutions (i.e. paying bi-weekly) to help remove challenges that prevent people coming into work.
3. **Provide solutions** - to practical barriers such as transport problems which can be the difference between an organisation having vacancies or having the right people on your team.

More information

Skills for Care has practical resources to help you to recruit people with the right values.

- [Planning your recruitment](#) - This section helps you understand your business needs. Planning your recruitment effectively will help you identify barriers and help you to recruit and retain people with the right values.
- [Values-based recruitment and retention](#). This includes information about using a values-based approach and how we can support you in your recruitment and retention practices.
- [Did you know, see the person, value the difference](#) – this resource includes the benefits to recruiting people from underrepresented groups.

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