

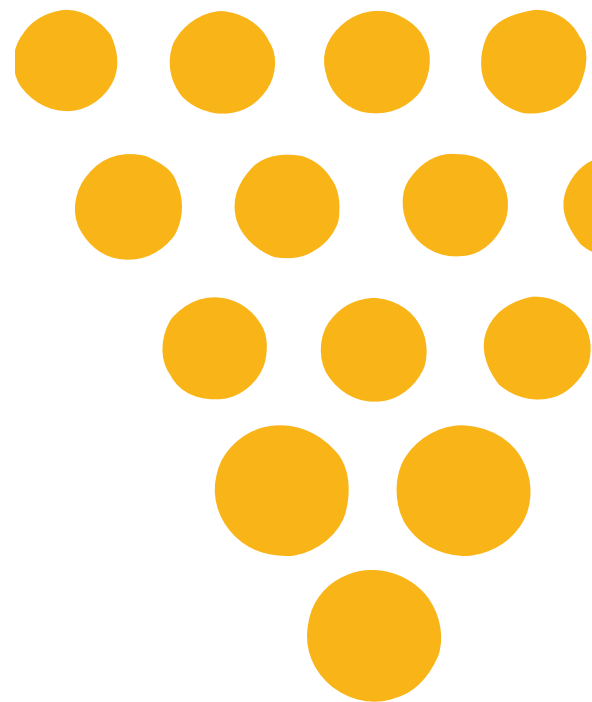


External Care Workforce - Highlight Report

Workforce Executive and Assurance Board

4th March 2025

External Care Workforce Team



Independent adult social care workforce strategy

External Care Workforce – Highlight report

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Introduction

This report outlines the work and activity undertaken between October 2024 and February 2025 to deliver against the key recommendations in the External Care Workforce Strategy. The eight priority areas are:

- Recruitment: increasing Labour supply
- Improve retention
- Training qualifications and career progression
- Health & Wellbeing
- Digital Skills
- Cross-LA strategies
- Workforce EDI
- Workforce strategy planning and integration

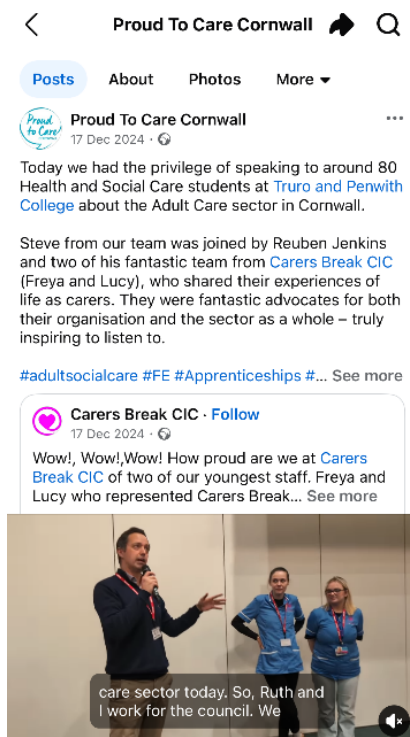
Recruitment: increasing labour supply

Engagement with schools and colleges

Since October 2024, significant progress has been made in engaging with schools and colleges across Cornwall. The team have delivered presentations to over 100 health and social care students at three of the four major college campuses.

In December, we invited some young care workers from Carers Break to join us at Truro & Penwith College to share their experiences of working in social care. The session was so well received tutors requested that a similar session be arranged for students at the Penwith campus. Three students made contact following the presentation to find out more about potential work placements, one of which has already been arranged.

We are also starting to work with local colleges around curriculum development. The team attended the Employer Advisory Board for Health and Social Care at Cornwall College, and we will be sharing opportunities for providers to contribute to curriculum development across our engagement channels.



The next stage is to engage with secondary schools for earlier intervention in course selection to increase the number of students enrolling on care-related programmes.

Apprenticeships

Promotion of National Apprenticeships Week 10-16 February has been linked to positive apprenticeship case studies to encourage uptake by the market.

Recruitment campaigns and events

Hiring events

Since January, we have hosted two Proud to Care Hiring Events in Penzance and St Austell, with a third planned in Bodmin on 27th February. The events have been extensively promoted on social media, on Billboards close to the venues, on the Proud to Care website and on local radio.

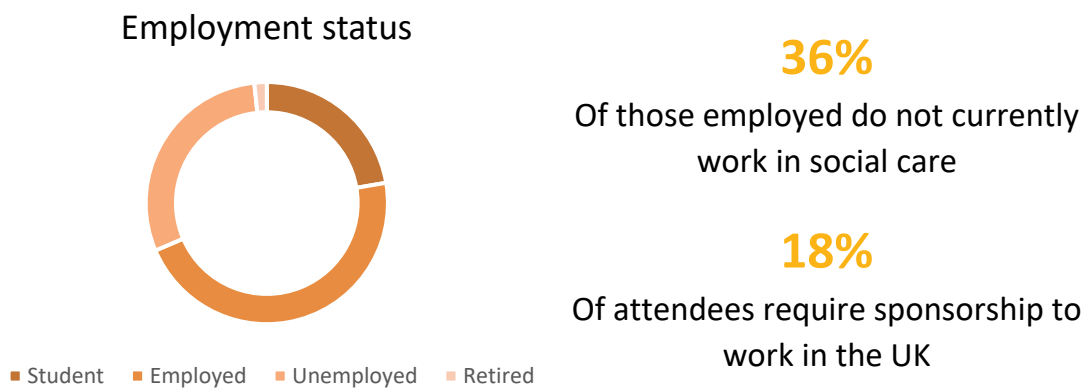
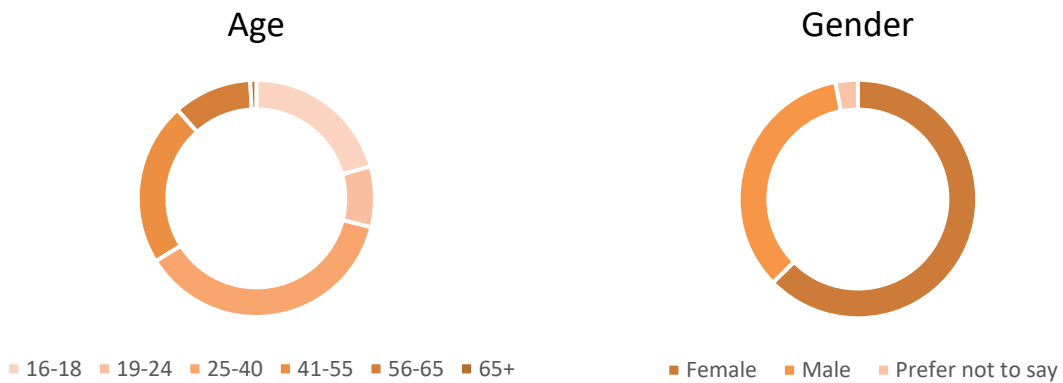
Our most popular channel is Facebook, with 1.9K followers (83.9% female and 16.1% male). Three paid adverts promoting the Hiring Events have so far generated:

- 1,032 Page engagements
- 47 Post shares
- 641 Link clicks to event information
- 277.6K Impressions (multiple views)
- 89,430 Reach (individual accounts)

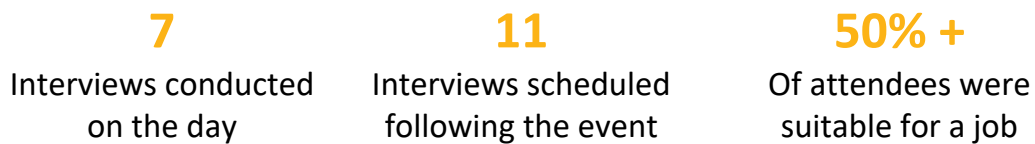
The Hiring Events have also featured five times in the Council's residents' newsletter which has generated 823 clicks through to the events page on the Proud to Care website.

Hiring Event data:

2	15	121
Events held	Providers represented	People attended



The first event was held at Penzance Leisure Centre and was supported by the local Job Centre. The providers who had a stand at the event gave positive feedback and a number of attendees were recruited as a result.



Feedback from Providers:

“Great event, best I have attended - Candidates were a great calibre and travelled as far as Truro down to attend.”

“I've recruited two people so far. Thank you for your support :) great event so busy 😊”

The second event was held at Cornwall College in St Austell. We are still gathering feedback, but the event provided a good opportunity to strengthen connections with tutors, and for students to speak to employers about working in social care. BBC News Cornwall attended the event and later aired a feature on Spotlight about the VR technology the team are using to attract younger people into care roles: [VR goggles give students insight into care careers in Cornwall – BBC News](#)

Several international recruits also attended the event and were offered tailored support with their job search – one has already received a job offer.

Virtual Recruitment events

An NHS SW regional Virtual Recruitment event, scheduled for May 2025, is currently being explored. EOIs to take part in the pilot must be submitted by 26th February, and we intend to use this as a learning opportunity to research the potential of the virtual recruitment space with providers in Q1 2025/26.

Working with DWP and NHS: Sector-based Work Academy Programme

Since October, the team have attended five virtual Health and Care SWAPs sessions, each for an hour, to present to a group of jobseekers and provide information about job opportunities in social care. The average attendance is c.20 people per session and data has been requested from DWP regarding success stories. The government is committed to funding SWAPs until 2026 and colleagues in the Economy of Skills service are engaging DWP about their future intentions.

Care Friends App

261 new starters recruited through the Employee Referral App since March 2023. 16 providers are currently using licences funded by Proud to Care, which will continue until March 2026. 623 licences are still available due to provider changes and a further campaign to re-offer the licences is planned in Q1 2025.

Neil Eastwood of Care Friends continues a close association with Cornwall and sponsored part of the 2024 Care Awards event.

International Recruitment

The 2024/25 DHSC International Recruitment Fund has been used for activity to support international care workers already in Cornwall. Since October, activity has included:

<p>CocoBean Cornwall have been commissioned to provide pastoral support for Cornwall's international care workers.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Drop in/community connect events arranged for international care workers</p>
<p>ESOL courses have been delivered by the Adult Education Team to support international care workers for whom language is a barrier. We have received good feedback and compliments from providers and service users about improvements seen following staff attending this course.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">international care workers completed a course and a further 10 are due to start in the February session</p>
<p>We have purchased the Piota app which is now live and available free to all international care workers in Cornwall. Content includes resources, guidance, signposting and promotion of events that may be of interest to international care workers.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">46</p> <p style="text-align: center;">users have signed up to the app since its launch in January</p>
<p>A number of international workers have contacted Proud to Care to request support to find a new sponsor. Jobseekers are signposted to relevant employers they may wish to apply to and are also provided with details for contacting CocoBean and registering on the app.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">74</p> <p style="text-align: center;">individuals have been in contact with Proud to Care</p>

We are a regular contributor to both the regional IR champions network and DASS working group, providing monthly reporting to Home Office/DHSC.

Race Equality Week took place between 3-9th February and resources and materials were shared with providers.

Provider engagement

For the second consecutive year, our 'Elf on the Shelf' campaign, featuring a different care setting each day, was well received with providers and care workers across the county taking part. Throughout December, the Facebook campaign received:

- 93.8K views
- 26.6K reach
- 782 content interactions

We also held a festive drop-in session at New County Hall for providers to meet the team and discuss any workforce challenges. Eight providers joined us for a mince pie and stayed to enjoy the Makasong Choir's Christmas singalong in the Council Chamber with Kate Kennally and 75 others.



Proud to Care Newsletter

We have continued to send monthly newsletters and special bulletins with relevant updates and information to providers/partners on our mailing list. There are 607 subscribers on our mailing list from a wide range of providers, system colleagues and other interested parties, and the average open rate is 48.6%.

Employer Reference Group

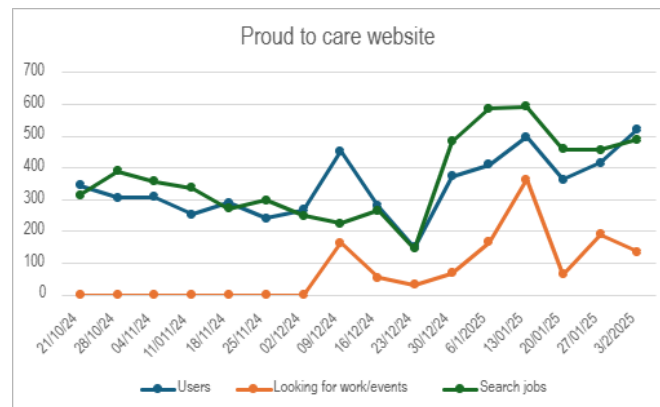
The inaugural Employer Reference Group was held in November 2024. The group was created to facilitate co-production of ideas and solutions to deliver against the priorities in the Workforce Strategy. Eleven representatives from nine different care providers attended the meeting and contributed new ideas and support for proposed workstreams around Recruitment, Induction, Retention and Development of Registered Managers.

The next meeting is scheduled for 25th February and will focus on the redevelopment of the Proud to Care website, the TEC workforce agenda and workforce development. Providers have been invited to bring a member of staff so that we can engage with them directly around the above themes. Strategic alliance leads have been invited to attend.

Proud to Care website

A key area of engagement this quarter has been consultation around the redevelopment of the Proud to Care Cornwall website. The website is central to the delivery of our workforce strategy and is our main platform for providing guidance and support to the sector. All of our public facing marketing campaigns, events and merchandise direct users to the website to look for jobs

and to find out about careers in adult social care. Since October, there have been 6,500 unique visits to the site.



The contract for the current website expires in September, so we have an opportunity to build a significantly improved site that is innovative and aligned to users' expectations.

To understand the key user requirements, we have hosted a series of engagement sessions with various stakeholders. Each of these sessions has focussed on the needs of three key user groups – care providers, care workers and job seekers. To date, we have received input from over 45 providers and further discussions around specific functionality are planned for the Employer and Employee Reference Groups on 25th February.

We aim to contract a new web developer by May 2025 and will continue to involve care providers throughout the design and build phases.

Improve retention

Support for Registered Managers

The team have attended three Registered Managers Network meetings, hosted by CPIC, to engage with providers on pertinent topics including:

- Registered Managers Development Programme
- Apprenticeships
- Proud to Care website redesign
- Technology Enabled Care (skills agenda)

RMs have expressed appreciation for the opportunity to input into the work of the team via these forums.

We have also provided funding to support the continuation of these meetings which are well attended.

Proud to Care Awards



Following the success of the Proud to Care Awards in 2024, preparations are underway for the 2025 celebrations. We have secured the Eden Project as the venue and are in the process of creating sponsorship opportunities for local businesses to support the event. We aim to build on the sense of recognition and achievement from last year's event to celebrate the great work being carried out in Cornwall.

Training qualifications and career progression

Care Certificate and Induction

Induction

We are currently exploring the appetite for a Local Authority induction for new managers and care providers in Cornwall. This will likely focus on the support available from the workforce team but could also include oversight of the wider commissioning service and engagement routes.

Care Certificate

To date, efforts to encourage uptake of the new Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate locally have not been successful. The Certificate qualification is an Ofqual regulated qualification, requiring observational assessment, and is expected to take a new learner around 6-8 months to complete, although an experienced care worker may complete this in a shorter period of time.

Care Career Pathways

We are currently designing a specification to tender a research piece which will identify and highlight current training provision available to the sector as well as any gaps in the current offering. This will facilitate conversations with providers where we believe there is an opportunity to help them accelerate staff members through a progression pathway.

Registered Manager Development Programme

The contract for a course designer to develop our RMDP is currently out to tender (82 requested and have received the ITT) and we know of 20 suppliers who are intending to respond. Applications will be evaluated and the contract awarded in early March 2025.

The application process for RMs to register for the course has been proposed and is currently awaiting endorsement. We anticipate the first course starting in May 2025.

Funding for training

Since October, the External Workforce team have engaged with 70 providers to promote completion of ASC-Workforce Data Set in order to access funding for training. Out of 323 CQC locations in Cornwall, 222 complete the ASC-WDS which equates to 69%. Cornwall are now the 1st in the Southwest for completion, and 7th out of 152 local authorities nationally.

We are also engaging with Cornwall Council colleagues regarding the Skills Bootcamps which could potentially be used to fund up to L5 qualifications.

Health & Wellbeing

Care Coins

Since 2022 we have been funding Care Coins via CPIC to support the mental health and wellbeing of the adult social care workforce. In 2024, 291 coins were used for 1:1 counselling sessions and 210 for Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) and other training activity.

Feedback from providers is that Care Coins have helped:

- Staff returning to work after long term sickness
- Improve retention
- Reduce overall sickness
- Crisis solving/avoidance

We have enough Care Coins left to support additional 1:1 sessions over the next 12 months and to run a series of 6-8 MHFA training sessions, something we are seeing providers starting to ask for again. A collaborative campaign to continue the promotion of Care Coins is planned for April 2025.

Reducing Stress

Stress Management and Mental Health Awareness eLearning from Social Care TV (SCTV) has been offered free to providers on a 'trial' basis with a limited number of licences available. This has been promoted primarily via the Proud to Care Newsletter at the end of January 2025 and was also shared at Employer/ee reference group. We are awaiting feedback.

Wellbeing support

Wallet size [Z-cards](#) with information about Health and Mental wellbeing have been designed and printed. We sent 10 physical copies of the cards to each of the 325 providers in Cornwall in February and the remaining cards will be distributed to care workers at various engagement events or on request.

OH Preventative Health Checks

We have developed a preventative healthcare initiative with the Council's Occupational Health team to deliver free health checks to staff in care settings aimed at:

- Improving the health and wellbeing of staff.
- Provide early identification of health risks.
- Offer tailored, achievable interventions to improve overall staff health and wellbeing.

A member of the OH team spends one day at a different care setting each week to provide 30-minute appointments to staff. Each appointment involves a health check and lifestyle discussion which focuses on key health metrics.

This initiative is being trialled between January and March 2025 and, at the midpoint, 54 health checks have been conducted across five different care providers.

Staff and Manager Feedback:

100%*

of staff were very satisfied and would recommend this service to colleagues

100%*

of staff said that the session promoted positive health awareness and a platform to help make positive health modifications

*Of the staff who have completed the feedback form

“Chris was brilliant, with myself and my colleagues. Good atmosphere, not like walking into a doctor and trying to justify what's wrong!! Good advice and pointers given to help progress with my lifestyle change. I love that it was a focus on 'small' changes, little at a time so you don't feel overwhelmed with the thought of making a huge change.”

We currently hold a waiting list of care settings who were not able to access the trial but would like to receive a visit from the OH team. We are in the process of

obtaining the costs to continue delivering a similar service over a 12-month period.

Digital Skills

Digital skills training

As part of the Workforce Strategy and the developing TEC Strategy, we have secured free access for 10 users to trial the TSA Virtual Home platform for a 2-month period. The TEC Services Association (TSA) Virtual Home e-learning platform is designed to train and engage users through interactive virtual properties. It features two training modules, risk assessment scenarios, and tools for service user assessments. The platform allows learners to revisit and explore content freely, enhancing flexibility and engagement.

The temporary licenses have been allocated to five TEC Advocates within Cornwall Council, one External Care Workforce Team member, and four external care providers. The trial will run until the end of February 2025 and data collected from participants will be used to inform the business case for investing in this tool.

Digital leadership

In February we joined 40 Registered Managers at their network meeting to facilitate an interactive session exploring attitudes, awareness and barriers to use of TEC solutions in their respective care settings. Insights from the workshop are being used to support the development of workforce training programmes, the TEC Strategy, Digital Inclusion programme activity and the development of a Proud to Care Workforce Innovation Network. Following the event, 15 providers registered an interest to join the network.

Workforce EDI

EDI Framework

To promote diversity and inclusion, a coproduced Care Provider model EDI Strategy will be drafted in Q1 25/26.

The team have been exploring national EDI frameworks, participating in Diverse by Design coaching workshops to research best practice and forming links with Milton Keynes, Rutland and North Lincs workforce groups. We await guidance from Skills for Care on viability of rolling out the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) to all employers and would like to better understand the links between the two frameworks.

EDI support activities

Through our new Digital Champion, trained as part of the Digital Inclusion Programme, we have facilitated the loan of 12 laptops to international care workers who have enrolled on ESOL courses but do not have access to a computer. These laptops will enable them to maximise the benefits of the course and engage fully with tutors and peers in the group.

Training

In January, CocoBean Cornwall in partnership with Black Voices Cornwall, provided free training to deliver guidance on cultural sensitivity and anti-racism to care provider managers.

This session was held face-to-face and tailored specifically for care providers, using scenarios and discussions focussed on situations experienced in social care.

- No of Providers represented: 6
- No of attendees: 14



CocoBean intend to arrange more sessions to be delivered via a mix of face-to-face and online learning so they are accessible to all care providers.

Modern Slavery

We will be completing the regional Modern Slavery survey from SW ADASS. In addition, the Worker Rights Centre will be running a series of online sessions aiming to support attendees to better diagnose, advise and support migrant workers who are exploited by their employers, and details will be shared with the target audience.

Workforce strategy, planning and integration

The need for a Workforce Programme Group (WPG) was identified by the ICB and was validated through ICS stakeholder engagement between August and September 2024. Its core purpose is to lead and enable the development and delivery of a workforce response to the evolving health and care ICS service strategy across long, medium and short term time horizons as well as developing a system-level workforce strategy and plan to ensure the combined CloS health and care workforce is best placed to meet population need.

The ICB has endorsed the establishment of a system-level Workforce Programme Group which makes recommendations to the multiple health and

care employing organisations and to the Strategic Executive Group. The Workforce Programme Group will also provide an assurance role on the adequacy of system workforce arrangements to the ICB System Workforce Committee.

The Workforce Programme Group is authorised by the System Executive Group to:

- Provide recommendations on the design and delivery of workforce plans across the system in response to emerging service requirements.
- Ensure robust and effective discussions take place to establish and focus the combined ICS workforce on key strategic objectives.

The work and effectiveness of the group shall be subject to regular monitoring by the employing organisations, the System Executive Group and the ICB Workforce Committee

The External Care Workforce Strategic Lead, the Care and Wellbeing HR Business Partner and Assistant Director of Public Health have been invited to join the board.

Communications and Engagement

We are in the process of drafting a Communication and Engagement Strategy. As well as supporting the individual workstreams above, it will promote the key workforce priorities.

Our key objectives are to:

- Increase Awareness: Ensure that all relevant stakeholders, including independent care providers, care workers, service users, Council Members, the Integrated Care Board, educational institutions, members of the public and other relevant stakeholders, are aware of key milestones and actions arising out of the workstreams.
- Engage Stakeholders: Foster engagement and support from various stakeholders by clearly communicating the benefits and positive impacts of key workstream actions.
- Promote Collaboration and co-production: Encourage collaboration across different sectors and organisations to achieve the strategy's goals.
- Support Implementation: Facilitate the smooth implementation of the strategy by providing stakeholders with the necessary information and resources.

Prepared by:

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External Care Workforce Lead (Workforce Planning)

Care and Wellbeing People Commissioning

12 March 2025

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