

# Care Matters Podcast Values-Based Recruitment, Part Two

## Transcript (automated)

### Laura Griffith

Hello and welcome to part two of the Care Matters podcast's collaboration with IMPACT, the ESRC and Health Foundation-funded Adult Social Care Evidence Implementation Centre. I'm Laura Griffith and I'm the deputy director of National Embedding at IMPACT, where we test out ideas of actually what works in practice and try and get that rolled out into policy in practice across the four nations of the UK.

So this episode focuses on the topic of values based recruitment in adult social care and in the context of adult social care, Values-based recruitment is a relatively new term. It's being used in retail and the health sector for some time, but it essentially means working with people who align with an organisation's or employees values rather than purely being based on skills, qualifications or prior experience.

At the centre of values based recruitment is the idea that will skills can be learned. Values can at least be taught, but are essential really to providing good care and support, particularly in the care sector. So in late 2022 and 2023 impacts brought together stakeholders from across the UK networks to explore and share evidence in relation to values based recruitment.

Part of the evidence review included various resources and toolkits created by the members. So our guest today for the podcast and or took part in the network run by IMPACT and run by Kate Hamblin and colleagues. And they're here today really to share their insights about what works in the adult social care sector and the potential benefits and challenges of taking on a values based approach.

So today, I'd like to welcome Paul Rooney, who is a Professional Advisor for Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

### Paul Rooney

Hi Good afternoon.

### Laura Griffith

And Ali Upton, who is the Learning and Development Manager at Scottish Social Services Council. Hi, Ali.

### Ali Upton

Hi, Laura. Really good to be here. Thank you.

## Laura Griffith

And we've got with this also Andrew Bell. He's the Programme Manager we Care Wales at Social Care Wales.

## Andrew Bell

Hi. Hello, lovely to meet you too.

## Laura Griffith

And last but not least, we've got Jon Kerr, Head of Workforce Capacity at Skills for Care.

## Jon Kerr

Hi. Nice to be here.

## Laura Griffith

Well, thank you all for joining me today. And it will be really interesting discussion, really getting to the bottom of some of the ideas behind values based recruitment and also some of the practical applications of what it means in practice. So taking this right back to basics, I wonder if I might start with you, Paul, and to ask you how you would explain to others what a values based approach is in terms of recruitment.

## Paul Rooney

Within the context of social care, Laura and indeed social work it is be is about being person centred. It's about the value base that underpins both professional social work and social care. So we think it's really important and I suppose for people listening that's around the personal attributes, it's around empathy, it's about kindness, it's about ability to understand and be in the here and now with people as opposed to a very much bureaucratic process in terms of tasks.

So it's about putting the person central to the issues that that are around and trying to see people's perspectives from their perspective.

## Laura Griffith

That's a really helpful introduction. And Ali, is there anything you'd like to add to that?

## Ali Upton

Yes. Thank you, Laura. And thank you, Paul, for bringing people to the centre. And the approach to recruitment being values-based is a modelling and mirroring of our approach across social, within social care, within social work of not simply holding people at centre, but that person-led approach being relationship based. And when we translate that to then what becomes the relationship between an individual looking for employment and an organisation looking for people to work with them.

It's about how do we strengthen that relationship? So how do we build both the understanding of as organisation, as sector, our values, our concerns, our organisational behaviours, and how do we encourage people who are seeking to work within social care and social work to best understand what matters to them, their own value perspective, their own behaviours and attributes, and how we can support the bringing of those two together.

## Laura Griffith

That's fantastic. And Andrew, on that, if you also wanted to come in here and answer Ali's point, really that values based recruitment goes far beyond just recruitment and is actually about these wider relationships as well.

## Andrew Bell

Yeah, absolutely. I think the is as we said, it's about the person. I suppose if we think about adult social care, it's about the people, is it? That's what adult social care is about, both the people and the delivery of the support that's required and, and those in receipt of it. And I think the, the work around values recruitment and looking at values is really important because we're not looking at necessarily the skills or experience of people were saying, who are you as a person?

I think that's really it's an important shift in how we look at recruitment because, you know, things like skills and experience where people can gain that on the job. You can get experience as you're working, you can build your expertise as you move. But who you are as a person is the fundamental central part to this. And as we are social adult social care carers, that that's a critical part.

And the way that we look at it in Wales I suppose, and maybe it's a simplistic but if somebody has a caring has that values base, then you know they're potentially a really good fit for the workforce. And it's the kind of people that we'd want to see in such an important sector.

## Laura Griffith

That's great. And I wonder if I could come to you, Jon, and think thinking about the values this is in that sense skills and experience and that that seems somehow a fit for other, to date, more traditional approaches to recruitment. Thinking of skills and experience is something you can gain, but values as somebody is something you bring to the job. Would that be right in your experience?

## Jon Kerr

Yes, I think so. I think I think skills and social care is fundamentally a person based industry is a person based activity and actually getting the right people to work and self care, which also what we want to do, we want to have the right people, the right values and the right the right skills and linked up with, with delivering, you know, care services to people.

And traditional recruitment methods are often the wrong way to do that or not. The most effective way of doing that. Because if we can if we're asking about experience or skills, they're important. But actually it's more about what the core values of that individual. And I think beyond that, if we are looking to retain people, if we if we recruit people based on the values of our organisation or our sector, then all that is connect with us with the sector organisation and stay, and provide better care.

So it is I think the key is finding that framework that enables us to do that in a fair and rational way and allows us to actually put process in place that has the best chance of getting those right people with the right. If we still provide the right care and provide the right level of offer of safety within the sector as well.

You know, are we recruiting people who have the right, the right mindset to avoid, you know, having the wrong people in? That's the flip side to it as we want. We also to have the right values, but we also want to not recruit people with the wrong values. So how do we do that?

## Paul Rooney

Yes. No, I think that's a point well made, Jon. I think you can't really talk about value based recruitment without talking about value based retention and because retention really is the outcome that you want around bringing the right people in. And we know in social care that it is a relationship type career. It attracts people who are very altruistic in the first place.

So you often are attracting people who want to make a difference in people's lives. They want to support others, saying that we can't expect an altruistic workforce to run. What is the core services required to keep our health and social care system in and operation? And that's something that we have had to deal with around investment in this workforce.

But I think I think when you start to focus on our value based recruitment and retention process, you really need to think through what that means in organisations, what it means for the individuals, join in those organisations, the whole psychological connection around what we need delivered. We need compassionate care delivered right there. We need people who are able and can communicate effectively with our constituents that are service users.

The people we work for. So I think there are key piece pieces that need to be in place and connect between an organisation and an individual because you get a lot of people who may come into organisations and find that really the value base that they thought they were entering is maybe not there. So that leads to people to tend to leave.

We have huge churn in and social care across the UK and indeed internationally. So we need to start to learn around what people's expectations are when they come into social care. How do we best support to train and develop those individuals and to build up connectivity between the values and views of an organisation, service user needs and indeed the individual worker?

So there needs to be synergy across and often in social care at the minute we have these huge recruitment campaigns based often on pressures in the system. We need people into the work. So we're not getting due diligence around the type of people that we want to attract into social care. And then when we have them in, what do we do with them?

We need to invest in their development that investing in ensuring they're feeling competent and developing capability around some of the complexities in social care. So it's not a one fix. This is a journey for retaining our workforce and being on the same page in terms of the needs that need to be delivered.

## Laura Griffith

Absolutely. And I think your point about making the link between recruitment and retention is a really vital one here, particularly if you look at the system as a whole. Ali, is that something that you would agree with?

## Ali Upton

Absolutely. And thank you for saying that so succinctly, Paul. There's something and forgive me, this is a bit of a cliché, but there's something about a golden thread that feels really critical here that as organisations, as a sector, that we are clear in our evidence, in our communication, in

our promotion of all aspects of staff, support of demonstration, of organisational behaviours and values, not just in the recruitment process, but through staff support, through wellbeing support, through supervision, through fair work, all of those, some of them relational, some of them systemic issues within the sector of social care and social work, that there is that thread of personal and approaches throughout.

There is a modelling, a mirroring, a synchronicity throughout of what matters and being ultimately led by what matters for those who are engaging with social care and social work services. And that is, if there is that that threat is there is that common core of expectation? It's an expectation that an individual who's looking to work within the sector can have just as much confidence in as the organisation can have a confidence in the individual.

And so then at the point of recruitment, how do we engage in those? And I call it a conversation, you know, yes, there are interviews. Yes, there are assignments. Yes, there are assessment exercises, etc.. But ultimately, it's that conversation between individual and representatives of an employing organisation. And how do we facilitate that conversation that everyone within it can be the best they can be so that they are in a position of confidence to demonstrate those values. There are so many kind of then specifics around how you structure those conversations to enable that.

## Laura Griffith

Thank you. And I think your point about the importance of sustainable relationships, not just at the singular moment, moments of recruitment links very much also with Paul's comments about not just responding to, you know, emergency pressures in the system and looking at much larger issues about sustainability. With that. Be your experience, Jon, when looking at this issue.

## Jon Kerr

I think so, yeah. I mean, I think the point I was I wanted to make really was about it has to be a holistic kind of approach. I think I often find that values based recruitment a little bit like personalisation if you ask an employer to adopt a personalised approach to also. Yes, but what does that mean in practice is often quite different.

It's a range from quite a limited kind of involvement to something very, you know, holistic across all across the whole organisation or sector. I think the model that we that we promote in terms of values based recruitment is very much a holistic model. So we call it the 5 As model, but it goes all the way through from that articulate saying what your values are.

So it's very important to understand what we've always had in the first place before you start recruiting people to those values through to attraction, how do we how do we put that in? How do we reflect that in the ways that we engage with potential recruits, the sets of through its assessment? How do we assess that in terms of our insecurities and how do we do that in a way that's fair?

Whereas, you know, we can have those conversations, but that how do we stack up those conversations between two different people? Either we have a robust framework for that that enables us to make a decision about who the right people as is to recruit based on those conversations. And but I think in a lot ways, the key things that assimilation is about how do we that how do that ensure that that falls through into people's employment both in the terms of their practice but also in terms of their experience with us as an employer?

You know, you know, if we recruit to set values and then actually when someone comes to work for us, that's not their experience in reality, then then they will not stay. So, you know, there's that retention as well. So I think we have to look at all the whole, the whole recruitment and retention process from start to end to embed values across all of that rather than just changing a few interview questions. I think that's the kind of the key to it as far as I'm concerned, in terms of proven.

## Laura Griffith

Absolutely. And I think that that whole systems approach, this is a sort of getting a particular sets of questions is a really pertinent point. Would you like to come in there Andrew?

## Andrew Bell

Yeah, absolutely. Just to completely agree with John's point. So it is it needs to be seen in a holistic way and not just as one part of a puzzle and actually as important are the values of the new workforce potentially coming through the door is the values of the organisation itself. And as John explained, you know, I think that's so key that people see that alignment because if there's a disconnect, then you have the retention issue coming from that.

I suppose the other thought I wanted to share really was I suppose the protest recruitment isn't like a silver bullet that's going to fix all the recruitment issues and hey presto, they were off and it's all, you know, any of those kind of aspects. But it's an act, but it's as a key part in what needs to be the positive journey and it's an in my way, I think it's almost an enabler.

It's that sort of thinking. So I think it helps organisations rethink, okay, how are we connecting? How, how? Well do we, for want of a better word, kind of sell ourselves? How do we promote ourselves? Do people really see what they gain from coming to work for us, or are they seeing as what that employer wants from us as the job seeker?

It's a turnaround of the relationship. And it's also because we know there's many factors that affect recruitment. You know, the maybe not the elephant anymore, finances and money. And there's other cost of living increases as lots of factors that impact. So having the person, seeing what they will gain from a policy in finance and gain from it.

But being part of the organisation is a really important thing. Isn't it something that people don't know or see until the inside the door and it's how do we see that before you get to that point to draw in those people? I guess.

## Laura Griffith

So I think there's two points I would even pick up on from that. Thinking about some of the nitty gritty about how you do that in the first place, but also thinking. But you made this link between the employee and the employer and the values and how you think as an employer about what your values are to look at this alignment. You know how as an organisation do you really work out what your values are and any experience on this approach? Ali.

## Ali Upton

Just to say in in Scotland and our support to employers in that very positive article as you described Andrew the they articulation of our values and our and finding in the language of that a sufficient ordinariness that it makes sense to those who are not already in in the story, as it were. So there are a couple of opportunities.

One is at an individual level, the PSC, the Scottish Social Services Council's codes of practice for social services workers and employers gives statement of expectation of values, of professional values and the application of those through different roles, but wider than simply within social care and social work. We have in Scotland what we call the Common Core, which is a set of values, attributes, behaviours that are have been have been collaboratively co-produced to demonstrate the expected values and behaviours working with the people of Scotland's working across public services.

And they are used by individual organisations as descriptors, as exemplars of those values to which organisations hold. And also to which they would expect individuals to be drawn to and work with. I'll leave it there. There's a couple of other examples, but I can see others want to come in.

## Laura Griffith

Jon, thinking about the ways in which you articulate and indeed reach those values as an organisation in the first place. What's been your experience of that?

## Jon Kerr

Well, I think I think my experience and I agree with Ali about the common Core principles been quite useful with, you know, what are our sectoral values, I think I mean, I'm not sure about in the rest of the rest of the United Kingdom, certainly in England, you know, 90 plus percent of the social care sector is delivered in the private sector.

And so sets signed a statutory service. So there's this thousands of individual organisations each trying to articulate their own values. I think those from my experience, those that do successfully do it in a co-produced way, it's, you know, rather than it being done in a kind of a dingy room with the board or whatever actually involve involving the workforce, involving the people that you provide services to often can be a really effective way of doing that.

And I think the important thing then is how are those selected in the communications that you put out in terms of trying to engage potential social care recruits? So if you look at your job adverts, do your values change through those? If you read that view, you get a sense of the values of the organisation often. And I think that's often driven by the way that the job adverts go through, you know, online boards and that can be quite difficult to do that.

But actually if you're looking at, you know, 50 different care work vacancies, how do you look at those and go, Oh, I see, I want to work for that organisation because I can tell their values connect remain, and that can be a real challenge.

## Laura Griffith

Thank you. And Andrew, how have you and your organisation addressed some of these challenges, which are real.

## Andrew Bell

They are, absolutely. It is. It's it is in the articulation of how you present yourself, your shopfront, I suppose that people will see and that's making that really clear. And as John says, you know, allowing the values to shine through in the language you use and the way you present that. And I think the, the other aspect that creates challenge, I guess in regards to this is I see that with the

adult social care sector is a very broad mix of different organisations, different sizes, different scales.

So when we're looking at, you know, getting an organisation to identify their values base is challenging because you've got very different dynamics for a small family or a business to what would be a corporation potentially. So across the different scales. And but that's that's the key thing. I think what we found in Wales, one of the first steps is about helping understand what is value, what do we mean by values, and starts to unpack that to help begin the journey to sort of see its value.

And then it's not want to use the word too many times, but it's its relevance and how important it is in helping people, you know, think about their recruitment. But the other part that we try and work around for, whereas when we were talking about it, calling it values based recruitment is really helpful, but it does make it feel like it's locked into one part of the puzzle.

And as we've said already is today, isn't it? It's actually it's almost like values based. I don't know what the word is, but a much broader, whole holistic. It is that, isn't it? Because it's it should be part person's induction. It should be part of that journey is that is part of the career progression, even part of their exit potentially.

You know, it's needs to be it's the golden threads. You know as I mentioned earlier I think it is. But so it's helping employers across our nations really see it in that broad sense.

## Laura Griffith

And how easy is that to articulate it to people that you're you know, if somebody hasn't heard about Values-based recruitment, being a small provider, or a really much larger organisation, how do articulate what that is?

## Andrew Bell

Yeah, it is. It's quite tricky. I mean, what we've done in the past is created like short video clips that kind of show it. The other thing that we do is we as we all do, the different campaigns that run as far as recruitment, helping raise the profile of care across our nations. And I think it's about building in in everything you do.

So we showcase the values. When we're showcasing a role in care, we must show social worker or a care worker, whoever it might be. So it's part of what we do, part of every aspect values is central to it. So then when you start to help people understand and communicate, it aligns with everything that you're doing, if that makes sense.

## Laura Griffith

It does indeed. And I think getting out of that sort of abstract model because, you know, values in themselves can feel quite abstract. So getting some examples of how you do it, not just in in job adverts, but as you say, in an induction and then more broadly in, in the culture of organisations. Ali, are there some examples you'd like to highlight?

## Ali Upton

Thank you, Laura. And it was building on what you shared. Andrew It's not just so the descriptors such as the Common Core, such as health and care standards, as, as codes of practice, think they give a terminology around, around those core values which are accessible to all organisations and known by all organisations here are, are registered in Scotland.



So but it's also those exemplars so we to offer video clips and materials that are there on careers websites for individuals. They're there in materials for schools. They're available for employers to use so they can give a just a more human just a more ordinary way of demonstrating these approaches, that golden thread that that modelling and mirroring a person led approach and in care and support to how we support staff, how we support each other, care for each other.

But I suppose the other thing I wanted to bring in, because I don't think we've touched on this yet, is that the opportunities and kind of witness to a number of organisations in Scotland to take this approach of people, those organisations support being actively involved in that promotion and community nation of, of values. That is, sometimes they're present within recruitment materials, within campaign materials.

But it's absolutely demonstrative of a personalized approach to the work, to the organisation. The whole feel of it is so informed by people's own experience. And that really shines through and resonates. And certainly the feedback we've had from those organisations is, is the effectiveness of that approach of bringing people to people, whether it's is face to face, whether it's digitally. But making those connections prior to employment as well as through the recruitment process and beyond.

## Laura Griffith

Would I be right in saying emphasising the co-production not only but co-producing the values in the first place, but also very much including people in all aspects of producing resources, facilitating something.

## Ali Upton

Absolutely.

## Laura Griffith

Fantastic, and Paul getting down to the nitty gritty of the how, not just the, the what, how have you found effective approaches that have worked in this field?

## Paul Rooney

Well, within the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, we are the regulator and one of our major responsibility is around raising standards in care. And I think when you talk about values in employment, you need to look at valuing and that means valuing our workforce. And I think one of the big issues around for us is that we need to do more research around this workforce in terms of what works for them, what are the things they feel are not good in terms of supporting.

We have we can't ignore the elephant in the room. The social care workforce in itself is a huge workforce across the UK. It's very diverse. It interconnects with every aspect of care and support. It's central to the many challenges in the system at the moment around supporting people in the communities, ensuring that we have effective acute services that aren't blocked by people.

So we have huge responsibility on this workforce. And do we evaluate the does the system values of care? And I'm sorry to say I don't think it does. So, you know, to expect this all singing, all dancing, value based workforce requires a lot of ingredients, and those ingredients need to come from every aspect of society. We know that our citizens should always value social care,

support and services in the way they need to with professionals in terms of nursing, we know that investment and training and development, there's a lot of inequality across the social care system around how we support staff, how we train them, how we develop them, how we actually view them.

You know, they're seen often as a workforce that provides very basic support, yet we know the complexities this workforce have to take on and indeed have been delegated down over the years is extremely complex and requires extremely complex solutions around how we support the workforce going forward, how we look after them, how we ensure that they have meaningful terms and conditions.

All those things are really, really important to someone feel and value. So there are really fundamental issues there and how we value this workforce going forward and how we invest in them, how we ensure that their wellbeing because they're going out, dealing with very challenging situations with, with families and individuals from adults, children, complex needs, people who are the most vulnerable in our society, and they need intensive support and training and development.

And most of all, we need to ensure that they're happy with their training, happy with the support they get in organisations. And in terms of qualification frameworks, all those things are really important about feeling valued in an organisation. So what organisations have and should have really good value base is that that needs to carry through their staff need to feel that also.

And I think that's the challenge in our social care system at the moment. When you look at the churn that we have, it is really, really poor. And if we're going to track two millenniums into our workforce going forward, we have a lot of work to do around making sure that this workforce is developed and supported to be fit for purpose into the into the future.

## Laura Griffith

But you raise a string of very important points there. And it's interesting how we've moved it just only in this podcast from thinking about recruitment to recruitment and retention, thinking about the values of a whole organisation and sustainability, and then very much towards end the value of care work in society, the parity of care work with health and how care work is valued as a professional and into a profession.

## Jon Kerr

Yeah and I'd like to pick up on some of the things Paul said. Yeah, I think that's absolutely right. I think people receive esteem and understanding of what social care is, is fundamental to Scots. Meaning in England one half million people work in social care, one in 20 people in the is working in social care role is a huge sector employing huge numbers of people.

And actually there's not necessarily the level of understanding of what the sector does and the impact that it has amongst the population at large. I think that's critical. I think people often understand what the health sector is better, but actually, you know what social care is, it's quite vast. It's a it's a range of different things. And actually it's not always very institute in terms of trying to bring it back to values and trying to find people who have similar values.

What's actually understandable why we don't want to create and care? Why then why might that fit with my value base as an individual, you know, and pushing those messages by, you know, being able to work in a job where you can have a positive impact on people's life, work in the job

where you can develop a longer term relationship with some of the supports in and how some of connection about, you know, improving some of these quality of life over a longer period of time is very attractive to a lot of people.

But getting that message across can be quite, quite challenging. And I think in terms of valuation, recruitment, self-involved recruit and retention, there's different ways of doing that. So, you know, you know, in terms of things that we promote as an organisation, we you know, we, we promote a, a detailed framework in terms of the five eight model, which some organisations might be able to employ.

But actually not everybody is in the space to be able to do that at a particular time. So actually, other things that we can do as an organisation are small steps towards that. And we recently launched a values based recruitment retention toolkit this year, which aims to kind of provide a more light touch approach to the fundamentals of thinking about how do we do that across the whole gamut of our recruitment and retention activity.

And so, you know, I think there's lots of different things and lots of things to be able to influence. But actually, how do we bring people along with us? And had we been employed along this in terms of that journey.

## Laura Griffith

There's something about both articulating what work is to wider society through those values and what it can bring along with some really practical resources, it sounds like. And by the developments here of toolkits. Absolutely. Ali, did you want to come in here?

## Ali Upton

Yes. Thank you. And to stay within Scotland and the Scottish Social Services Council, where we are, we're in the first year of a new strategic plan. And for this strategic plan, we have added a strategic outcome of a valued workforce. Recognizing the critical threats that you have shared, Paul, are not new, but they are of particular criticality at this moment in time.

And we have a range of strands of work around. And I a more societal promotion of the value of social care, doing that through the sharing of workforce intelligence, as you've just mentioned, just now, John, in terms of the size of the social care workforce, in terms of its contribution, but also through the Fair Work for social care agenda, highlighting where those differentials sit in relation to pay, in relation to terms and conditions, in relation to effective voice bargaining, etc., but to bring back not I mean, I'm not meaning to diminish it because absolutely we need to stand within the reality of this critical challenge, but to highlight an opportunity that this conversation

around values based recruitment brings because it's creating this different conversation about be it it's an individual level or an organisational level, what social care is, what it really is about. And it's I we know by way of creating that conversation at this level, is there an opportunity for us to spread, to scale, to raise up that positive value based relationship narrative about why society needs care and why society?

Well, of an entirety in this challenging cost of living crisis, climate crisis, world crisis, times surely be sustained. And it's as a society we acknowledge and value care in a different way.

## Laura Griffith

Both fantastic and I think really well placed within the context of a number of other very significant debates. And I think it's possibly something that these levers that we pull to push forward some of this. Andrew did you want to come in here?

## Andrew Bell

Yeah. Thank you. That's a really good point. And, you know, it's like I said, it's an enabler. It gives us a warm a framework, a structure, a way of thinking that can address some of these big wider issues. Because if we think of the adult social care sector as a whole, it's a huge complex with many, many facets to it.

And I think the workforce and all the parts to it and we know we've seen that when we look at the work in Wales, the perception of care there is a challenge there. How do we help people and because you don't understand it, are you going to value it? And if you don't value, are you ever going to see it as a place for you to work in regardless of other?

So this there is a real shift, and I think the whole changing the approach to thinking around values based work or recruitment rates pitched will help kind of challenge and help kind of reinforce the positives and show, you know, how critical it is really. You know, and I think it is an ongoing aspect. We know the media can sometimes pick up negativities and all that kind of so it's a it's about bringing balance.

But I do think it's is an enabler. And I think that's a really good way of thinking about how values based recruitment can really support you support the workforce. And an early point, a pause then. I quite like the whole to not lose sight of the existing workforce because there's a risk, I guess you could always look outside your door and how do we get here?

And actually if, as Paul mentioned, which are you talk about the value, the workforce is so key, isn't it? Because if they're not valued, they don't stay there. And so we have retention and then you have a hole in a bucket. You're trying to fill almost scenario. I think it's about as an organisation employing organisations to look both at your front door, how we're going to bring in the right people that match our values, but actually how we embedding that to our current workforce and how to really help that.

## Laura Griffith

And you've spoken a little bit there about the enablers of how you do this and how you progress society. And we you also mentioned some of the key challenges, not only about retaining and having a good relationship with the existing staff, existing workforce, but also, Ali, you mentioned pay. And, you know, that is to me one of the elephants in the room.

So I don't know, Paul, whether you want to come in here about some of the challenges that you're facing when you really try and have it take values based recruitment and retention and further.

## Paul Rooney

Yeah, I mean, certainly in in Northern Ireland, I mean, this is one of the biggest workforces in the system right across to you kids. We're talking about million plus workers. So when we talk about enabling, we you know, this workforce enables people to live their lives in in the way they

choose in their local communities. Often it enables those family members to go out and earn their level in there in order to pay into the economy.

The staff, the workforce in itself pays considerable amounts of money into the economy. So I think how we view this workforce is critical in terms of, I suppose, creating an evidence base that this is a worthwhile workforce in the system. And I think often we might only see the actual support or the care provided. We don't see what lies underneath the added value and a sense of what this workforce does for our society.

And I think there's a lot of work to do to, I suppose, make sure that our workforce is able to articulate what they do and the difference that makes on the organisation as they work for. Because I think, you know, historically this workforce has been seen as, you know, back 25, 30 years ago, a home help went in and supported someone to get up in the morning.

There was no family members around often. WOMAN So there's issues around, you know, gender identity. We need a much more significant, diverse workforce in our system going forward. And I'm very well made a point there around we need to not ignore the existing workforce and how we deliver better for them in terms of development and training and supporting them.

And I think, you know, we developed the current practice framework in Northern Ireland similar to what is going to be rolled out in the in the UK around developing a continuous professional learning framework, career pathways for people and looking at trying to develop a qualification based register. So, so we were the first regulator in the UK to, to, to, to ensure that the domiciliary care workforce in our system were registered and were the most vulnerable workforce.

In a sense, they're often non workers and often going into really different difficult, complex areas of work. So I think training and development is really, really essential. They're understanding this workforce, understanding the difficulties that they have and the challenges that they have help us and others to ensure that we start to develop proper responses that so the agencies are really, really important, are part of the solution.

And I think when you look at post-COVID, you know, this workforce was seen in a different light in a sense than it might have been before when people watched on TV of social care, stop walking out of nursing homes and people died. So that's how important this workforce is. It's the glue in our societies, the glue to the system.

And often there are the eyes and ears of the system. And what could we not do with this workforce if we train and develop them and promote them and get better understanding out there across the system with policymakers and others around what they really bring to society. And that's really, really important because it's not social care is not easily defined because to do so much.

But one of the first things I'll end here is that we need to start owning them as a workforce because often they're called every name onto the sun Day care worker dumps don't care. We have all these titles and roles, but they are one of the biggest workforces in the system. So we need to start calling them that.

We need to start calling them a social care workforce because we know what a nurse workforce looks like or a doctor or workforce or a social worker, police. So the identity of this workforce needs to be worked upon and promoted across the system.

## Laura Griffith

Thank you for joining us for part two of this episode on values based recruitment. Join us for part three, where we will discuss how our guests are finding solutions to challenges facing recruitment in social care, and how new informed perspectives on the workforce could lead to improved retention of staff.