



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE** | North of
England



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ASSESSMENT REPORT

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

THE HIGHLANDS

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE SPECIALIST: LESLEY CURTIS

DATE: 27th January 2014



Investors in People North of England is delivered by idg, official partner for the North East, North West and Yorkshire & Humber

T: 0844 4068008 **E:** iip@i-dg.co.uk **W:** www.i-dg.co.uk

P: idg, 1 Cardale Park, Harrogate, HG3 1RZ

INTRODUCTION

The Home, which has been accredited with the Investors in People Standard since December 2004, has been reviewed every three years since the original accreditation date. The Home provides residential and respite facilities for people with learning disabilities. This report highlights the areas of good practice identified during this review visit and includes suggested areas for further development or improvement.

METHODOLOGY

The review was undertaken on the 21st January 2014 when 10 people were interviewed either face to face on an individual basis or via telephone. The sample selected was representative of the structure of the Home, and included part-time and full time staff representing all disciplines. Immediate feedback on the outcome of the review visit was given to the Manager at the end of the on-site visit and agreement was reached that a follow up meeting would be arranged to agree the content of the Continuous Improvement Plan, a draft of which is included at the end of this report.

THE OBJECTIVES FOR THIS ASSESSMENT WERE:

- To confirm that the organisation continues to meet the requirements of the Investors in People Standard
- To identify strengths and areas of good practice within the Home
- To identify any areas for further development for continuous improvement

The Assessor would like to thank all staff involved in this Review for their co-operation during interviews. I would also like to thank the Home for the hospitality shown during the day on site.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Based upon the evidence collected during this review visit the Assessor is able to confirm that the Investors in People standard has been maintained.

Strengths and Areas of Good Practice

- There is a very positive, friendly, happy and supportive culture within the Home.
- People believe that they are valued and recognised for their efforts by managers, colleagues, residents, guests and their families.
- Training is well organised ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training to meet the needs of guests and legislative requirements
- People believe that they are trusted to make decisions and that they receive the support and advice required to support them in decision making.
- Supervision and Appraisal processes are considered to be well established and there is a good understanding of these within the Home, everyone interviewed was able to describe the purpose of these in terms of providing feedback on performance and an opportunity to discuss issues and problems.
- People have a good understanding of their job role and responsibilities and there is a genuine commitment to providing excellent standards of support and care.
- People believe that there is effective team working and people are willing to help and support colleagues for the benefit of the guests.
- There are family friendly policies in place and every effort is made to meet the work life balance needs and requests of all staff when planning rotas and shift patterns.

Areas for Further Development

1 Planning Process – Consultation

There is perhaps some potential to involve staff more overtly in business planning processes. It is appreciated that people have the opportunity to suggest improvements and put forward items for the agenda at team meetings, however it is not clear that people recognise their input or involvement in business planning (**Indicator 1.6**)

2 Higher Level of Accreditation

There were a number of areas identified during this on-site visit, which although not formally assessed, were considered to be beyond the standard and the organisation may wish to consider assessment beyond the Standard in the future.

KEY FINDINGS

INDICATOR 1 - BUSINESS STRATEGY. A strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood.

During interviews with the Manager and the deputy Manager they were able to describe the objectives and the key priorities for the Home which is around the Standard of Service provided to guests ensuring that they are able to be as independent as possible. The Manager described the philosophy of the Home and the values which she described as being important which are all about providing a happy, safe and caring environment for residents, guests and staff.

Throughout interviews with staff it was possible to confirm that they understand the aims and values of the Home and how these relate to their job role. People have a good understanding of the standards of care and support they are expected to provide and believe that the values of the Home are at the heart of how they operate. *This is an area beyond the Standard 1.23*

People believe that communications are effective in terms of the day to day tasks and priorities and the overall aims of the Home, and people could describe the methods used to communicate formally with staff including regular meetings, supervision etc. There may be some potential to increase people's involvement in planning and future development. *(See area for further development no 1)*

INDICATOR 2 - LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY. Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives.

During the interview with the Manager she described the resources and priorities for learning and development and explained that appropriate training is made available to all staff. The priorities are around ensuring mandatory and legislative training is carried out in a timely manner and that any refresher or remedial training is also provided. Specialist training required to meet the guests needs is also sourced along with appropriate NVQs.

During interviews employees were able to describe the learning and development activities in which they have been involved and some were able to give examples of how they had been developed through the training they had received both formally and informally. Examples of training in, medication, food hygiene, moving and handling, Fire Safety, Safeguarding, Health and Safety etc. were all described during interview as being made available to staff

People confirmed that they have an opportunity to discuss their learning and development needs as part of the supervision and appraisal processes in place and everyone felt that any training required is made available, either through distance learning, courses or through on the job training, shadowing or coaching.

INDICATOR 3 - PEOPLE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY. Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people

During interviews and discussions it was possible to confirm that there are strategies in place to promote equality and diversity and that people's differences are valued. The Manager is very accommodating in terms of working hours and flexible working arrangements and people could describe how their availability to work was discussed and agreed to meet their home and family commitments. *Once again this is an area of good practice beyond the Standard 3. 29.*

There were some excellent examples of team working and people believe that everyone works together to ensure the safety, happiness and comfort of guests. All of those interviewed could describe how they receive the same opportunities for development as their colleagues and that people are encouraged to make the most of their talents and expertise.

INDICATOR 4 - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY. The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood.

The Manager has overall responsibility for management of the Home and undertaking people management related tasks, e.g., Appraisal and Supervision, she is supported by the Deputy Manager and both are considered to be approachable, available and act as good role models. There are clearly defined responsibilities and staff are aware of what they should expect from managers.

A number of those interviewed could give examples of how they have been encouraged to develop leadership capabilities particularly since the Home was re-registered as residential, rather than nursing. *Once again this is an area of good practice beyond the Standard 4.13.*

INDICATOR 5 - MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS. Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people.

The Manager during interview described her responsibilities which include supervision and appraisal, in addition to providing advice and guidance and, where appropriate, supporting training and coaching employees. The Manager is very well organised and disciplined in her approach to supervision and maintains documentation and records of all relevant activities in relation to learning and development of staff. Both the Manager and Deputy are considered to be effective in respect of leading and managing the team and people gave numerous examples of personal support they had received from managers.

There are a number of methods used to provide people with feedback on their performance including regular supervision sessions, feedback from the Guest Forum Meetings, Staff meetings and an annual appraisal process. People believe that they receive regular and constructive feedback on their performance both formally and informally and people described how they respect and trust the management team and people also believe that the manager motivates and inspires people. *These are criteria beyond the standard 3.21 & 3.23.*

INDICATOR 6 - RECOGNITION AND REWARD. People's contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.

The Manager and Deputy described how they recognise people's efforts and achievements through informal praise and thanks in addition to formal recognition through the appraisal process. People believe that their contribution is recognised and valued in different ways including receiving thanks and praise, through feeling that they are trusted to do the job with minimal intervention, and through the feedback received from guests and their families.

Some examples were cited of people having developed to assume new roles or take on additional responsibilities and this was a demonstration and recognition of their contribution. Some examples were cited where people felt that their opinions and views were sought and as such they felt that they were valued. Everyone understands their own job role and how they contribute to the reputation and success of the Home. This was confirmed during interviews.

"I definitely feel valued"

"The manager always says thanks"

"I feel that I am trusted to get on with the job"

"It's a great place to work"

INDICATOR 7 - INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT. People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision-making

People could describe how they are involved in decision making in respect of their job and people believe that they are empowered to assume responsibilities for their job by taking decisions where required. People believe that they are trusted to make decisions and examples were provided throughout of people having taken appropriate decisions. People could confirm that they have access to appropriate support in terms of decision making and that there is always someone on hand to provide any additional guidance or support required. People are clear about their level of responsibility in terms of decision making.

During interviews people described how they are proud to work in the Home and a number of people described how they are committed to the success of the Home ensuring that the excellent reputation is maintained in the standard of care and support provided.

There are established formal processes in place for communicating information and people believe that they are kept well informed through communication books, handovers at the start of shifts and through regular staff meetings. The culture in the Home is very open and Managers operate a genuine open door policy.

INDICATOR 8 - LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT. People learn and develop effectively

During interviews with managers they described how training and development needs are supported via in distance learning, access to NVQs, through on the job training and coaching and mentoring.

During interviews a number of people commented positively on the support and encouragement they had received to develop their skills and knowledge to enable them to develop into their role or take on additional responsibilities. Confirmation was received that new staff are involved in an induction which includes Health and Safety Training and job specific training and this was considered to be effective.

INDICATOR 9 - PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT. Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation.

During interview with the Manager she described achievement of excellent standards of care and the reputation the Home has maintained in respect of Respite Care. The Home had just been involved in a CQC inspection prior to this assessment visit and positive feedback had been given as to the maintenance of appropriate systems and procedures. Changes to the registration for the Home has resulted in a restructure and delegation of responsibilities from Qualified Nurses to Support staff, which has in turn required development of skills, expertise and confidence. There have been additional rooms built to accommodate increasing demand for the services provided by the Home and people explained how many respite guests return many times with some only willing to be placed for respite at The Highland.

Staff interviewed were able to provide examples of how they have developed their knowledge, skills and confidence as a result of the training and development they have undertaken. Some staff could explain how they were now able to assume additional responsibilities for work as a result of the training and support they had received, e.g. working as a senior support worker. A number of staff have been personally developed as a result of the support and training they have received and people believe that they are encouraged to develop to achieve their potential.

INDICATOR 10 - CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. Improvements are continually made to the way people are managed and developed.

The organisation uses feedback from external audits including CQC and the Local Authority to identify areas for further development or improvement. Residents and Guests meet on a regular basis and their feedback is also used to identify areas for improvement.

People believe that they are encouraged to suggest ideas for improvement and there is a culture of openness and honesty where people do believe that their views are listened to and acted on appropriately.

CONCLUSION

This was a very positive review visit everyone interviewed demonstrated a high level of commitment to the values of the Home. People feel valued and recognised for their efforts, in part because they are appreciated by managers and colleagues. There is excellent team working and everyone feels supported, whatever their role, by colleagues and managers. It is considered to be a good place to work and people are proud to be part of the Home. People commented on the friendly, relaxed and happy environment in which they work and everyone interviewed was extremely enthusiastic about their role and their level of job satisfaction.

There were a number of areas which were perceived to be good practice and some of these are noted within the report as being beyond the Standard.

Having carried out this assessment process in accordance with the guidelines provided by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) I am satisfied that The Highlands continues to meet the requirements of the Investors in People Standard. On behalf of Investors in People North of England I would like to congratulate you on this achievement.

Following the Review visit, you will be asked to complete a feedback questionnaire. I would be most grateful if you would complete this following the receipt of your report as I am performance managed through this mechanism. It is now a pre-requisite of Investors in People that an 18 month development visit is undertaken – the scale of this activity can range from a telephone call to a full scale assessment. We can discuss this in more detail when we meet to discuss and agree the content of your Continuous Improvement Plan, a draft of which is attached to this report.

APPENDIX 1 : CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Issue What	Suggested Action(s) How	Potential Benefits / Impact of Taking No Action Why	Suggested Timescale When	Potential Solutions / Support Available Who
Business Planning	1 To introduce a more overtly consultative approach to business planning.	Benefit Consultation and engagement of staff in using a bottom up approach to planning helps develop ownership in achieving business goals and priorities.	TBA	
Higher level of Accreditation	1 To review the current good practice against the full framework of the IIP Standard by accessing the IIP website 2 Implement appropriate developments and improvements in line with the gaps identified.	Benefit Recognition of existing good practice and further development of the business	TBA	