

THE OS MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2025



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OUTSTANDING
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**THE OUTSTANDING
SOCIETY'S MONTHLY
MAGAZINE**

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Thank you

Headline partner:



HOWDEN

Let's celebrate and share together!

If you'd like us to feature your news, events, or achievements,
contact us at comms@theoutstandingsociety.co.uk



FROM THE DIRECTORS



Samantha Crawley
Director of Leadership & Wellbeing

Transparent Leadership, Psychological Safety, and Learning in Care Homes

Strong leadership in care homes goes far beyond management—it's about creating an environment of openness, trust, and continuous learning.

Transparent leadership, combined with clear communication and psychological safety, forms the backbone of compassionate, compliant care.

Transparency builds trust.



By openly sharing both successes and challenges, leaders model honesty and accountability. Mistakes, when viewed as opportunities for growth rather than blame, help teams learn and improve together.

Clear, consistent communication—free of jargon and shared regularly—keeps everyone connected, from care companions to families.

Psychological safety allows both staff and leaders to speak up without fear.

In care, where emotional demands are high, it's vital to support resilience and well-being at every level.

At EQ Care, 'Lessons Learned Labs' encourage open discussion of errors, successes, and lessons, reinforcing a culture of transparency and reflection.

This approach aligns with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, ensuring that care is not only compliant but compassionate.

By fostering honesty, cohesion, and empathy, care homes can thrive—protecting dignity, respect, and humanity for all.

Read the full article here:

[Transparent Leadership, Psychological Safety, and Learning in Care Homes](#)



Voices of Care: A Parliamentary Reception for Social Care Nursing

The Outstanding Society is delighted to announce **“Voices of Care: A Parliamentary Reception for Social Care Nursing”**, taking place on Wednesday **19th November 2025** at the Houses of Parliament.

This special invitation-only event will bring together leaders, practitioners, and champions of social care to shine a light on the invaluable work of nurses within the sector.

Celebrating Social Care Nursing

Hosted by Baroness Watkins, the event will focus on the incredible dedication, skill, and compassion demonstrated by nurses across social care settings every day. It offers a vital opportunity to celebrate their contributions, amplify their voices, and promote the importance of social care nursing in shaping the future of health and wellbeing in our communities.

The Outstanding Society has always been committed to showcasing excellence within the care sector. “Voices of Care” continues that mission by providing a platform to share stories, recognise achievements, and foster collaboration between policymakers, providers, and care professionals.

Supported by Leaders in Care




We are proud to be supported by Leaders in Care, whose CEO, James Fowler, has shared a short video message expressing his enthusiasm for the event and his commitment to raising the profile of social care nursing. His words capture the spirit of partnership and recognition that underpins this special occasion.

The poster features a background image of the Houses of Parliament. At the top, the title "Voices of Care" is in green, followed by "A Parliamentary Reception for Social Care Nursing" in a smaller green font, with "(by invitation only)" in small grey text below it. The date "19th November 2025" is prominently displayed in green. It is hosted by Baroness Watkins. Logos for "THE OUTSTANDING SOCIETY" (with a green star icon) and "supported by LEADERS in CARE" (with a blue and white logo) are shown. Two QR codes are present. A quote from Leaders in Care is at the bottom right: "Nurses are the heartbeat of adult social care. Their skill, compassion, and expertise transform lives every day. Leaders in Care is proud to partner with The Outstanding Society to honour their vital contribution. This collaboration is a natural fit as connecting exceptional people with exceptional providers is at the core of everything we do."

Voices of Care
A Parliamentary Reception for Social Care Nursing
(by invitation only)

Kindly hosted by Baroness Watkins

19th November 2025

"We are absolutely delighted that Leaders in Care are sponsoring this inaugural reception. Together, we look forward to shining a spotlight on the incredible impact of social care nurses and the future opportunities that lie ahead."

"Nurses are the heartbeat of adult social care. Their skill, compassion, and expertise transform lives every day. Leaders in Care is proud to partner with The Outstanding Society to honour their vital contribution. This collaboration is a natural fit as connecting exceptional people with exceptional providers is at the core of everything we do."

Looking Ahead

“Voices of Care” promises to be an inspiring and meaningful gathering — one that not only celebrates the exceptional individuals working in social care nursing but also reinforces the sector’s collective voice.

We look forward to welcoming our invited guests to what we hope will be a memorable and uplifting event.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Out of the shadows: Shining a light on registered nurses in learning disability working in social care.

This free webinar, hosted by the RCN Learning Disability forum highlights that there are many Registered Nurses in Learning Disabilities (RNLDs) that work in social care.

Their work largely goes unseen. This event aims to change that by showcasing a range of successful RNLDs who work in social care so attendees can learn about their inspirational careers and the pathways that have led them there.

[Book](#)



**Quarterly Insights with the CQC:
The Outstanding Society Panel Discussion with the CQC.**

Join us for a chat with Chris Day, Head of Engagement at the Care Quality Commission on Thursday 20th November 2025.

Secure your



spot.

[Book](#)



**RM webinar: Managing meds with confidence:
Practical steps for safer care.**

Tuesday 09 December 14:00 – 15:00

Medicines optimisation is a vital part of delivering safe, high-quality care - and a key focus in CQC assessments.

In partnership with The Outstanding Society, this webinar will offer practical guidance to help care providers strengthen their approach, embed good practice, and build staff confidence and competence.



[Book](#)



The Learning Lounge goes



We were delighted to see the return of the OSDF Roundtable, bringing together passionate voices to explore how we can push forward equality, diversity, and inclusion for all within Social Care. It was another inspiring discussion, filled with insight, reflection, and clear action points to drive meaningful change across the sector. A huge thank you to Ashfield Services for kindly providing refreshments as we closed the Learning Lounge on the first day of the show — a wonderful way to end such a thought-provoking session.

Day one at the Care Show was a huge success for The Outstanding Society Learning Lounge.

The day began with an engaging talk from Chris Badger, the new Chief Inspector for Adult Social Care at CQC.

Chris brought fresh energy and insight, clearly demonstrating an understanding of providers and the challenges they face. His commitment to rebuilding strong local relationships and reconnecting with frontline teams is a promising step forward for the sector — both in the short and long term.

Throughout the day, the Learning Lounge was buzzing with meaningful discussions focused on learning from near misses, sharing best practice, and driving improvement across adult social care. It's been fantastic to see so many people eager to engage, share experiences, and learn together.



from strength to strength

Day two began with a powerful and immersive Coroner's Court session in the Keynote theatre, offering real-world insights into risk, accountability, and learning from experience.

From there, the focus shifted back to the Learning Lounge, where discussions on staff wellbeing and managing workplace pressures took centre stage — crucial themes as we head into the challenging winter period.

Later in the day, two packed sessions explored CQC inspections — from being prepared and confident, to understanding the upcoming regulatory changes. Having the CQC directly involved in these sessions added real value, giving providers clarity, reassurance, and a chance to ask important questions.

The atmosphere throughout the second day was buzzing — with providers from both residential and home care services filling the Lounge, sharing insights, and celebrating best practice across the sector.

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us — the conversations, collaboration, and positivity are what make the Learning Lounge so special.

and finally.....

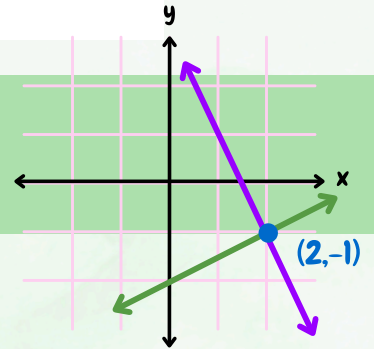
We were thrilled to celebrate Caroline Cosh, Managing Director and Registered Manager of Clifton Homecare and The Outstanding Society's Director of Homecare, who was presented with a prestigious Gold Chief Nurse Award by Professor Deborah Sturdy, Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care, at the show.



This honour recognises Caroline's exceptional leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to delivering outstanding care and inspiring excellence across the sector. Her passion for promoting quality, innovation, and compassion within homecare truly embodies the values that drive our community forward. Congratulations, Caroline — a well-deserved recognition of your remarkable contribution!

HOWDEN

Care Homes in Crisis: Financial Challenges and Future Viability



Care providers in the UK are facing increasing challenges to remain a commercially viable business. With a sector-wide deficit of £8-10 billion and workforce shortages exceeding 120,000 vacancies, this episode of **Fortune Favours the Brave** provides insights on how care business leaders can adapt to ensure their survival.

With the expertise of **Nadra Ahmed**, Executive Co-Chairman of the National Care Association, we discuss the work that the National Care Association does to support an industry battling with the erosion of appeal for its workforce.

We then discuss the proactive steps providers can take to ensure they have adequate insurance. Finally, the discussion moves onto what the future holds for the care sector and how care providers need to continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of our population.

[Listen](#)



Fortune
Favours
The Brave

A regular podcast for business leaders exploring how businesses can harness risks and use them to their advantage.

In each episode Howden Insurance Brokers will discuss a topical challenge or issue and what business leaders can do to overcome it.

[More](#)



Help shape a new toolkit for recruiting young people into care.



Skills for Care is looking for help to test a forthcoming new resource shaped around recruiting younger people into care.

The resource will explore how an adult social care provider has used apprenticeships surrounded by wider targeted support to help recruit and retain school leavers and other young people.

User-testers will gain early access, explore proven approaches, and provide feedback to improve the toolkit before wider release. Participation involves up to two hours of commitment in early December, reviewing the latest draft of the toolkit and providing feedback.

The toolkit may be of interest to frontline leaders and managers, HR and recruitment colleagues, as well as learning and development leads from providers. We are only looking for a maximum of one tester per organisation.

If you want to know more about securing young people into your workforce and enjoy learning about new approaches, e-mail engagement@skillsforcare.org.uk by 21 November 2025.

Welcome Joanna as Co-Chair of London's Social Care Nursing Advisory Council

We're delighted to welcome Joanna as our new Co-Chair for London's Social Care Nursing Advisory Council (SCNAC).

Joanna brings a wealth of skills and experience from her work in adult social care and complex home care.



Her appointment comes at an important time, as the latest CQC State of Care report highlights the growing number of people choosing to receive care in their own homes.

As nurses and care staff, we share a commitment to ensuring that this care is safe, compassionate, and meaningful enabling people to live well where they feel most comfortable. Joanna's expertise and leadership will be invaluable as we continue to strengthen social care nursing across London and champion the vital role of community and home-based care.

At the same time, we want to express our heartfelt thanks to Nuno for his ongoing contribution and leadership. While he is stepping down as Co-Chair, we're delighted that he will remain a valued member of the Council.

Nuno has played a key role in fostering collaboration between health and social care, laying the groundwork for future analyses of London Ambulance Service activity with care homes, and promoting research-active care homes and home care services across adult social care.

Looking ahead, Louise, Joanna, and the London SCNAC Council will continue to work closely with the wider system including partners across adult social care and the NHS to:

- enable care home nurses to deliver IV treatments in their place of work.
- keep championing research and evidence-based practice.
- develop a leadership offer for nurses in adult social care, in partnership with the RCN.
- create a learning module for all new staff and students working in or with social care for the first time.
- support universities and care providers (including nursing homes and home care services with nurses) to offer student nurse placements in social care settings.
- explore fun and innovative ways to improve dementia knowledge across the workforce.

Together, they will continue to build on the strong foundations already in place ensuring that social care nursing in London remains dynamic, collaborative, and focused on delivering the highest quality of care.

Help Shape the Future of Social Care Nursing



Become a Regional Co-Chair (South West)

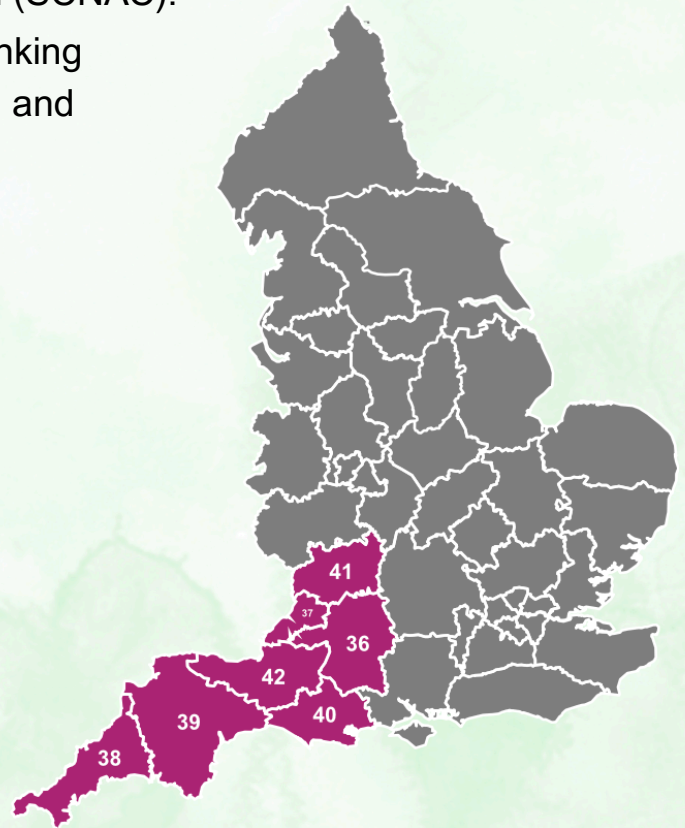
Are you a **Registered Nurse** working in **Adult Social Care** with a passion for leadership and change?

Step into a strategic role by becoming a Co-Chair of your Regional Social Care Nursing Advisory Council (SCNAC).

SCNACs are dynamic leadership platforms—linking frontline social care professionals with regional and national decision-makers.

As Co-Chair, you'll:

- **influence policy and strategy.**
- **amplify the voice of social care nursing.**
- **grow your leadership profile.**
- **collaborate across sectors.**
- **drive real, lasting impact.**



We're especially keen to hear from professionals of all backgrounds and experiences—your perspective is vital.

Step forward. Be heard. Lead change.

To learn more about this exciting opportunity [Click Here](#) or to express interest, please click on the button below.

[Email](#)



Cheryl Angco & Sarah Wytrykowski

A huge thank you to **Sarah Wytrykowski** for all her hard work during her time as the Co-Chair of the South West Council.

We wish you all the very best in your new role.



by Lara Bywater, Outstanding Society Director of

24th October saw the launch of the CQC state of health care and adult social care in England 2024/25. The timing although challenging in the wake of the resignation of Sir Julian Hartley, Chief Executive of CQC, was a very helpful event.

The event had a cross section of stakeholders in attendance. Sir Mike Richards stepped in to host the event and was supported by Chris Day, Chris Badger, Arun Chopra (interim Chief Executive of CQC) and Dr Toli Onon, Chief Inspector of Hospitals.

I was struck by the openness of CQC from the moment I arrived at the event. The Chair, The Chief Inspectors, other CQC colleagues and many CQC Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) were circulating and chatting with attendees prior to the event. It was clear that they wanted it to be an event where people were engaged and as a space for honest conversation and collaboration.

Sir Mike Richards set the scene for the launch of the report with some honest reflection on CQC's current status – he acknowledged the ongoing frustrations with the CQC technology – both for providers and for the CQC itself. He reassured us that the system is being re-designed and rebuilt.

He also spoke about Wes Streeting, who has an aspiration for the CQC to be the best regulator in the world.

He went on to acknowledge some of the key pressures on the health and social care system as a whole. He gave particular attention to the consequences of long term lack of investment in mental health services, exacerbated by the unprecedented increase in demand for such services.

Sir Mike acknowledged the ongoing pressures in terms of workforce. He gave particular mention to Homecare and referenced the impact on vacancies with the end of Migrant Visas.

Sir Mike also spoke about the impact on the system around the newer Local Authority Assessments and how this has led to the increase in needs assessments which, of course, leads to an increase in demand.

Chris Day and each of the lead inspectors then took questions from the audience.

My first observation was that the majority of the questions indeed focused on social care. This may have been a skewed audience (I don't know the spread of attendees in terms of health and social care). Most of the questions were directed to Chris Badger and Arun Chopra.

Key areas of conversation during the question panel were;

State of Care Report 24/25

Reflections



Learning Disability, Autism & Mental Health Care

- Inequalities and concerns for specific groups of people.
- Importance of neighbourhood services that meet the needs of the community designed with input from the local community
- The success of the pilots in delivery of 24/7 crisis mental health support as opposed to a model of care that relies on future support by way of appointment.
- The desire for CQC to be a permissive regulator. A regulator who doesn't get in the way of progress and innovation.
- The openness to collaborate with Local Authorities to discuss joint working in terms of regulation to reduce duplication of provision information by care providers.
- Trends and challenges in the commissioning of care was mentioned several times

Chris Badger also stated that in his opinion care for people with learning disabilities and autism is amongst the most fragile part of the system. The demand for care is increasing in volume and complexity and is also further complicated by the increase in the number of people with intersectional needs.

The latter part of the event adjourned for round table discussions facilitated by CQC colleagues. Areas of discussion focused around long standing hopes and challenges, including frustration with the way care is commissioned, the inequalities that this leads to, the financial (NIC, NMW, inflation) and infrastructure (workforce, housing) pressures, the future impact of the Fair Pay Agreement and Employee Rights Bills as well as the involvement of unions in social care in the context of the National Care Service.

These topics lead to conversations about the importance of the voice of the people who access services. Another discussion topic was the systemic negative view of social care and how we are often seen as unskilled with low value to society, in spite of the fact that social care is very similar in size to the NHS and has such a rich tapestry of expertise and the impact on people accessing services.

The event felt honest and in my opinion, the report gives a true reflection of many of the challenges that we face in social care each day – as well as the innovation and resilience. CQC were consistent and clear that their aim is to be a regulator that ensures people receive excellent care.

We were especially delighted that VIVALDI Social Care has been included in the report (P60).

VIVALDI Team Visit Maypole Grove: A Celebration of Care, Community, and Research



The VIVALDI team had a truly inspiring visit to **Maypole Grove** in Birmingham recently — a and welcoming home that supports adults living with complex needs arising from mental health and neurological conditions including dementia and Huntington's disease.

With 30 bedrooms across three purpose-built, small-scale units, Maypole Grove offers a homely, person-centered environment where people are supported to lead meaningful lives and achieve their personal goals.



From the moment we arrived, we were met with an incredible welcome — stunning balloon arches, delicious VIVALDI cupcakes, and a beautifully decorated room courtesy of the fantastic activities team.



Home Manager, **Zoe Shears**, Head of Nursing, **Lianne Ford**, and their dedicated team made us feel right at home. Their warmth and enthusiasm set the tone for a wonderful day of sharing, learning, and celebrating the power of research and compassionate care.

We were joined by CQC Inspector, **Andreas Blackwood**, and ENRICH Lead for the West Midlands, **Nicola Standen**, adding further depth and insight to the discussions. The VIVALDI team had the pleasure of presenting to both staff and residents, sharing updates about ongoing research and hearing directly from those who make Maypole Grove such a special place.



[Read more](#)



Congratulations to Lianne Ford and Victoria Longstaff – Celebrating Excellence in Social Care Research

The **VIVALDI Social Care Team** is delighted to celebrate our colleagues **Lianne Ford** and **Victoria Longstaff**, who were both named finalists for the **Social Care Research Award** at this year's prestigious Leaders in Care Awards, with **Lianne** going on to **win the award**!

This national recognition shines a well-deserved spotlight on their exceptional work through VIVALDI Social Care which aims to make a profound difference to the adult social care sector.

The Social Care Research Award honours an impressive nurse-led research initiative that demonstrates passion, dedication, and expertise in delivering or informing evidence-based practice. It recognises those who not only lead with knowledge and compassion, but who also inspire others to engage with research that improves outcomes for people receiving and delivering care.



Making a Difference Through Research and Collaboration

Lianne and Victoria's work embodies the very spirit of this award — showing how nursing leadership and research can come together to drive meaningful change. Through their involvement in VIVALDI Social Care, they have helped to strengthen the sector's evidence base and promote opportunities for collaboration.

Their passion for improving care, supporting innovation, and raising the profile of nursing in social care has created a ripple effect that benefits people, providers, and professionals across the country.

A Moment of Pride

We are incredibly proud of both finalists for their outstanding contributions and for showcasing the vital role of social care nurses in research and system improvement.

Congratulations, Lianne, on this fantastic achievement, and well done to Victoria for your ongoing leadership and impact. Together, you exemplify the best of social care — compassionate, evidence-informed, and committed to making a lasting difference.

From all of us at the VIVALDI Social Care Team — thank you and congratulations!



From Curiosity to Partnership: Bridging the Gap Between the NHS and Social Care

At this year's Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) Summit, adult social care took to the main stage to lead a powerful conversation about collaboration, leadership, and the future of integrated care. The session, titled "From Curiosity to Partnership: Bridging the Gap Between the NHS and Social Care", brought together leaders from across the health and social care landscape to explore how the professions can work together to deliver the ambitions of the 10-year health plan.

The session invited the audience to reflect on the opportunities for closer alignment between the NHS and social care. Highlighting the importance of shared values, the panel spoke about how curiosity and openness can help bridge long-standing divides and support transformation across the system.

The discussion, chaired by Zoë Fry OBE, Lucy Gillespie and Dr Zena Aldridge showcased the collective voice of social care nurses and leaders across the sector. The panel shared examples of how social care nurses are leading change—demonstrating innovation, building partnerships, and driving quality improvement at local, regional and national levels.

Each panellist reflected on how collaboration can strengthen the workforce, improve outcomes, and create a system where nurses can understand each other's roles across health and social care and the part they play.

The message was clear: social care is integral to health, and partnership is the key to lasting impact.



[Read more](#)



Successful interns for the Researcher Development Programme for Social Care Nurses

The National Institute for Health and Care Research are delighted to share the names of the social care nurses selected for the 2025 Researcher Development Programme for Social Care Nurses.

Congratulations to the successful interns listed below.

East Midlands

Ruth Abell

East of England

Blessing Omolola Ogunniyi &
Carmela Fulgencio

North East and North Cumbria

Bablee Dasaudi, Emma Gatenby,
Fameeda Lennon & Ntombikayise Ncube

North West

Daniel Flerin, Emma Costigan,
Fungai Danha, Karen Lowe
Memory Chinganyama,
Michelle Tennant & Sailus Maphosa

South Central

Sean Daly

South London

Fiona Kriksciunas & Victor Awuja

South West Peninsula

Joanna Jones & Oluwanifemi Folorunso

West Midlands

Md Abdur Razzak Mondul,
Megan Hobson & Samantha Doody

Yorkshire and Humber

Nicola Bindley

To find out more about the successful interns areas of expertise please [click here](#).

To find out more about the programme, please click the button below.

[More](#)



Reflections of the Care Show Birmingham



Co-founder Karen Hedger and Senior Consultant Emma Everett attended the Care Show in Birmingham, an event that continues to be one of the most engaging and insightful in the social care calendar.

The show offered fantastic opportunities to meet and catch up with providers and social care professionals, alongside a wide range of learning sessions.

One of the highlights was the mock Coroner's Court, which vividly demonstrated the coroner's process in action. The session provided valuable insights into what needs to be in place to help prevent errors, a very thought-provoking experience.

The 'Starting Strong' session included Sam Crawley, Ruth French and Sanjay Dhrona where they discussed how to overcome the challenges of setting up as a new provider.

The panellist's detailed the very real level of commitment and passion needed to set up a new care provision. Along with a top tip of surrounding yourself with the right people.

Our involvement in the panel for Outstanding Society session on 'Burnout to Balance', gave both ourselves and providers the chance to share ideas and initiatives from the sector on how to support the well-being of your team, right from the point of interview through to continuous in role support. There was great engagement all round with really good, practical examples and strategy to promote well-being across the workplace.



Karen Hedger - Co-Founder



Emma Everett- Senior Consultant

Reflections of the Care Show Birmingham



As ever these sessions are a really useful tool for our team to focus in on what we see and hear as best practice in the sector, we always take the opportunity to speak with both our clients and social care leaders to gain both their thoughts and experience on what has worked well for them as both a providers and as an employee.

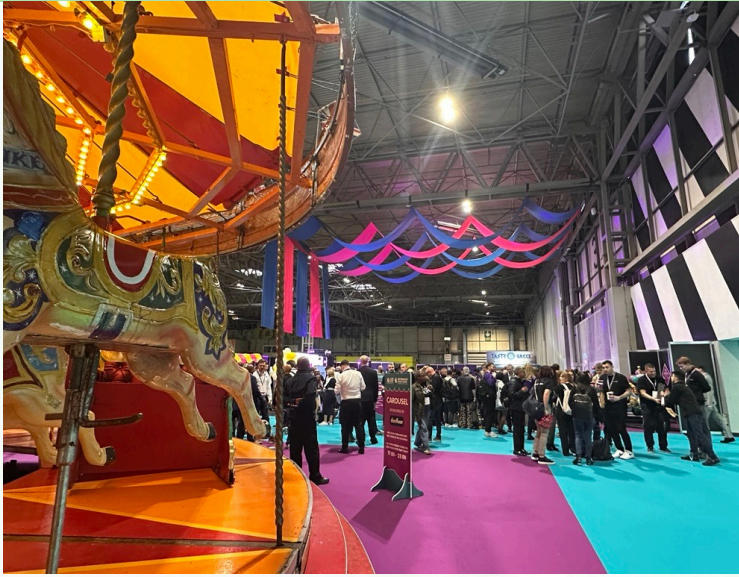
What is so inspiring is that in our conversations, leaders were sharing their ideas in order to help improve the sector overall, which perfectly aligns to the purpose and values of the Outstanding Society in their mission to share best practice with everyone.

Here are our takeaway points for employers in the care sector

- 1. Ensure you have a Well-being strategy that is clear, measured and accountable**
- 2. Checking in/Catch up sessions – making time to book in regular catch up sessions with your team specifically focused on well-being**
- 3. Run internal leadership programmes to support leaders to support others in managing well-being**
- 4. Introduce Mental Health First Aiders into your organisation**
- 5. Be creative and look to offer flexibility**
- 6. Develop and offer platforms to share, connect and provide access to well-being tools**
- 7. Quarterly employee feedback and respond to that feedback with action**
- 8. Consider mixing teams to share experience, skills and personalities that can support**
- 9. Technology – ensure you utilise the best technology to help your team and utilise data to spot trends/changes**
- 10. Consider accessing assessment tools to understand how best to support those in your team**



Building Inclusion Through Connection



This year's **Care Show Birmingham 2025** brought together thousands of professionals, innovators and organisations united by a shared commitment to shaping a more inclusive and sustainable future for the care sector.

Held at the NEC in Birmingham, the two-day event filled the halls with conversation, collaboration and genuine energy. With more than 200 expert speakers, 120 sessions and eight themed theatres, the atmosphere was vibrant, purposeful and full of optimism.

From insightful panel discussions to the lively funfair-themed social events, there was a tangible sense of community.

Every conversation, big or small, reflected the collective desire to make care safer, more compassionate and more inclusive for everyone.

The Social Care Nurses Lounge

Cheryl Angco attended both days in her voluntary role as Southwest Co-Chair of the Social Care Nursing Advisory Council, sponsored by Ashfield Services.

"It is so motivational attending the Care Show alongside my peers in the SCNAC and also NIHR, RCNi, Skills for Care and FoNS."

To share the Social Care Nurses Lounge with such greats in our profession and engage with so many visitors who wanted to know more was a true privilege."

The OSDF Roundtable

Honest Conversations About Inclusion.

Ashfield Services was proud to take part in the Open and Safe Delivery Forum (OSDF) Roundtable, a powerful and thought-provoking session exploring what true inclusion looks like across the care sector.

Paula Gee, who attended on behalf of Ashfield, shared her reflections:

"This was my first time attending the OSDF Roundtable, and I found it a really powerful and thought-provoking experience. The atmosphere was open and collaborative, with people being honest about what's been achieved and what still needs to change."

Building Inclusion Through Connection

As someone new to the group, Paula reflected on how the OSDF position paper and model have evolved, highlighting both the passion behind the work and the challenges in translating inclusion into everyday practice.

She was particularly moved by the discussion around intersectionality, and the shared recognition that LGBTQ+ inclusion should be an integrated part of the wider equality agenda, not something separate or secondary.

Connection Beyond the Roundtable

Following the roundtable, Ashfield hosted a drinks reception for attendees, providing an informal space for continued conversation and deeper connection.

These one-to-one discussions allowed participants to explore real-world challenges within the LGBTQ+ community and identify ways to collaborate beyond the event.

“Off the back of those chats, we’ve made some brilliant new connections that I’m confident will lead to collaboration and help strengthen our training and awareness work in this area,” Paula said.

“The drinks reception was a huge hit on broader topics as well and a great opportunity to introduce Ashfield Services to those who took the time to stay, enjoy a drink and talk to Billy, Paula and myself. It was also brilliant to be able to offer solutions to the needs of those we spoke with.” Cheryl reflected.



Billy Parish
Sales Director



Paula Gee
Education & Business
Development Lead



Cheryl Angco
Clinical and Quality
Assurance Team Lead

Using the Care Workforce Pathway to support career development



Empowering care professionals to take ownership of their careers is central to the Care Workforce Pathway. This universal career structure for the adult social care workforce sets out what a career in the sector means and helps make it a more attractive choice as a place to work.

Career progression in adult social care can take many forms; some people are keen to move into leadership or specialist practice, while others want to develop further within their current role. The Pathway fully supports this individual approach by providing clear development and progression routes and outlining the level of knowledge, skills, and values needed for each role.



The Pathway includes eight role categories, from new to care to registered manager, with additional role categories, such as nominated individual, activities coordinator and care / digital technologist, being developed. This will help the sector to recruit and retain talent by showing the diversity a career in care can offer.

In a recent [blog](#), Glassmoon Services shared how they are using the Pathway, including to support personal growth and practice, stating: “Career development is now a fully integrated process enabling all colleagues to embrace possibilities and unlock potential”.

Practical tools and resources that support the Pathway have been developed to enable care workers to identify and understand their own strengths and motivations, and consider how these attributes can advance their personal career goals.

The Pathway is also helping to shift care cultures towards a focus on continuous improvement, a challenge common to many social care organisations, by facilitating more open career conversations and enabling care professionals to make informed decisions about their career development.

Find out more at [Skills for Care](#) and the [Gov.UK](#) websites.

Care Show Birmingham 2025 was a highlight of this year's social care calendar. And we had plenty to highlight at Nourish. With two floors and three new products to share we were very excited for the opening bell on Wednesday morning.

Over two days at the NEC Birmingham, the event brought together hundreds of care professionals, thought leaders, suppliers and change-makers. The energy was electric, the conversations rich, and we captured highlights in our recap video for you. A special shout out to Heather Taylor, National Digital Projects Lead for the National Care Forum for joining us and sharing their experience!

From sessions on workforce development to digital transformation, regulation, and assistive technology, Care Show 2025 offered a snapshot of where the sector is going. And, crucially, how we can shape it together.





Chris Amys
Associate



Adrian Henderson
Associate

Sick pay reforms – top tips for health and social care providers.

The Government's upcoming Employment Rights Bill (ERB) is set to transform Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from April 2026, and the implications for social care providers are significant.

SSP will now be paid from day one of sickness absence, ending the three-day waiting period, and the lower earnings limit will be scrapped, extending eligibility to lower-paid and part-time staff.

While the SSP rate remains at £118.75 per week, these changes mean providers will face higher costs, both from paying SSP earlier and to more staff.

With sickness absence already at a 15-year high, the sector may also see a rise in short-term absences as employees feel more secure taking paid sick days.

Providers are advised to audit absence data, forecast financial impacts, strengthen wellbeing support, and update absence management policies to prepare.

Read the full article here: [Sick pay reforms – top tips for health and social care providers](#)

Recent Changes to the Immigration Rules Affecting the Care Sector

The government's recent overhaul of business immigration rules has left care providers scrambling to adapt, with major reforms taking effect on 22 July 2025—just three weeks after being announced.

The most significant shift is the end of overseas sponsorship for care and senior care workers. Providers can still sponsor existing staff already in the UK or those changing employers, but only until July 2028, when the skilled worker route will close completely for these roles. This forms part of a wider policy shift prioritising graduate-level (RQF Level 6) occupations.

Employers are no longer required to consult displaced overseas worker pools before issuing new sponsorships. Meanwhile, the government also plans to extend the qualification period for indefinite leave to remain from five to ten years, raising further uncertainty for sponsored workers.

These rapid and far-reaching changes will reshape the care sector's recruitment landscape, demanding urgent planning and workforce strategy reviews.

Read the full article here: [RWK Goodman – Business Immigration Changes for Care Providers](#)

The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England 2025



Skills for Care's newly published report highlights significant growth in England's adult social care sector. In 2024/25, the sector contributed £77.8 billion to the economy—a 12.2% increase—driven by more filled posts and a higher National Living Wage. The number of filled roles rose to 1.6 million, while vacancy rates dropped to 7%, returning to pre-pandemic levels but still triple the national average.

International recruitment remained vital, though numbers fell from 105,000 to 50,000 new recruits. Domestic recruitment declined, with 30,000 fewer British workers entering the sector. Looking ahead, an additional 470,000 posts will be needed by 2040 to meet growing demand.

The report also reveals that 62% of employers do not offer enhanced sick pay, and 57% lack improved pension contributions. Only 38% of care workers hold a Level 2 qualification, raising concerns about workforce development. Staff retention is notably higher among those with better pay, training, and full-time roles.

Skills for Care calls for urgent investment in domestic recruitment, fair pay, and training to build a resilient workforce capable of meeting future care needs.

Read the report [here](#).



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