

Soft skills and hard choices. Employers' views on recruitment and retention in social care

Jo Moriarty
Shereen Hussein
Martin Stevens
Jill Manthorpe
Michelle Cornes



SOCIAL
CARE
WORKFORCE
RESEARCH
UNIT

Terminology

- Reminder that 'long term care' workforce means different things in different countries
- Health care/social care divide in UK means that long term care workforce usually means (means tested) social care workforce
- Project about workforce in care homes and home care agencies
 - Other work on support workers/personal assistants for people with personal budgets
 - Supporting people receiving some funding for care from local council and people paying for own care

Outline

- Quick summary of situation in UK
- Study methods
- Findings
 - Recruitment
 - Selection
 - Pay
- Other data
- Discussion

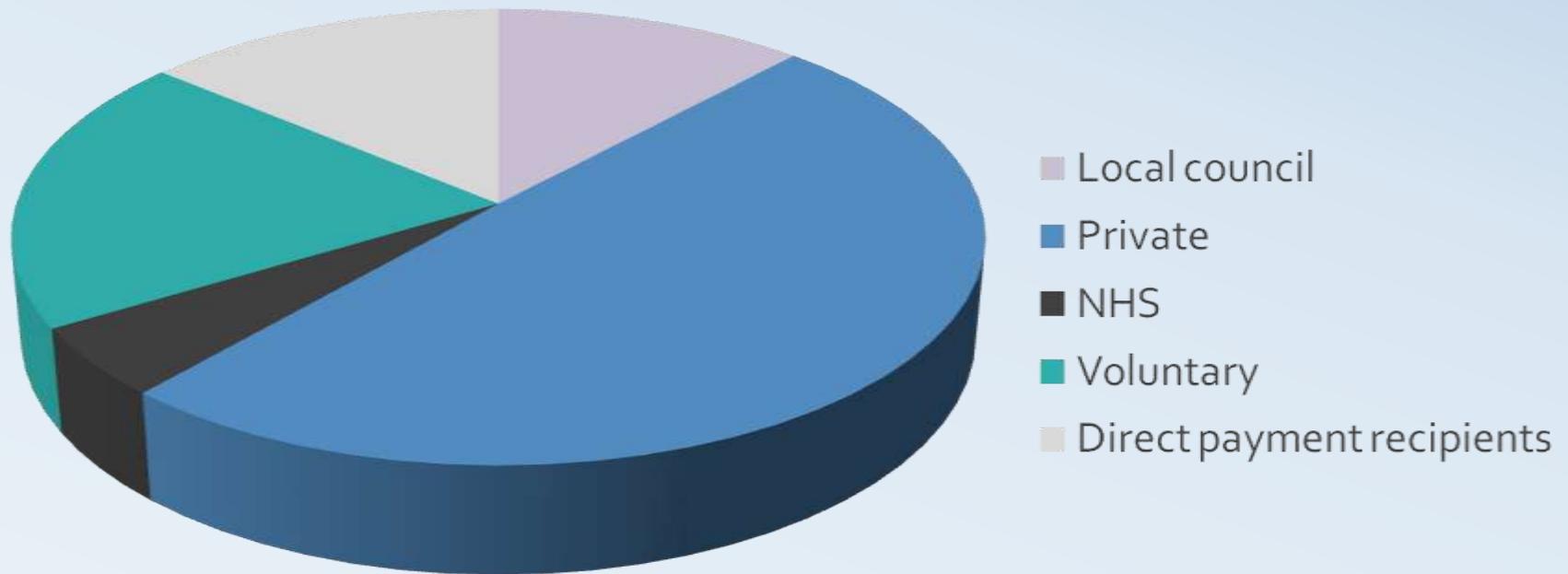
We all know that.....

- Typically a 'pink collar job' (Howe, 1978)
 - 84 per cent women (Hussein, 2009)
- High proportion of migrant workers
 - Around 20 per cent (Cangiano et al, 2009)
- Poorly paid
 - Major beneficiary of National Minimum Wage (NMW)
 - But about 12 per cent still earn under NMW (Hussein, 2011)
 - NMW is currently £6.08 per hour for those aged over 21
 - 'Living wage' is £7.30 nationally (Living Wage Foundation)



Marketisation/privatisation of long term care

% people in each sector (England)



Source: Fenton, 2011

Turnover

- Average rate of turnover is 17 per cent
 - Highest in private sector
 - Lowest in local authority sector (Hussein, 2009)
- Contrasts between social care and rest of economy (Moriarty, 2011)
 - Less likely to be made redundant
 - 'Personal' reasons more common (Hussein, 2010a)



Low status and scandal

- Low status
 - Conflation of women's paid and unpaid care
 - Interaction of gender and class in women's part time work (Warren, 2000)
 - Care work as a form of bodywork (Twigg, 2000)
 - Problems in conceptualising work (Huxley et al, 2007)
- Recurrent scandals



Daily Mirror 23 April 2012

Striking idiosyncrasies too!

- Gender pay gap
 - Exists among women and men managers but not in direct care workforce (Hussein & Manthorpe, 2012 advance access)
- Perceived to be poorly trained overall
 - Dementia care workforce contains highest proportion of workers with no/not working towards any qualifications (Hussein & Manthorpe, 2011)
 - Better levels of training in adult day care (Hussein, 2010b)
 - Probably artefact of local authority employed learning disability workers
 - Includes registered managers and nurses



Major sector in economy

- About 7 per cent of UK economically active population (Moriarty 2010)
 - 2.7 million people work in retail (Skillsmart Retail, undated)
 - 1.56 million people work in adult social care (NMDS-SC Briefing 17, 2012)
 - 787,000 secretaries (Truss et al, 2012)
- Workforce could increase between 24-82 per cent from 2010-25
 - Depends on model used for projections (Fenton, 2011)

Methods

Four locations

Midlands, London, South, North

Simple random sample of social care providers (sampling frame COC website, mix private/local authority/voluntary)

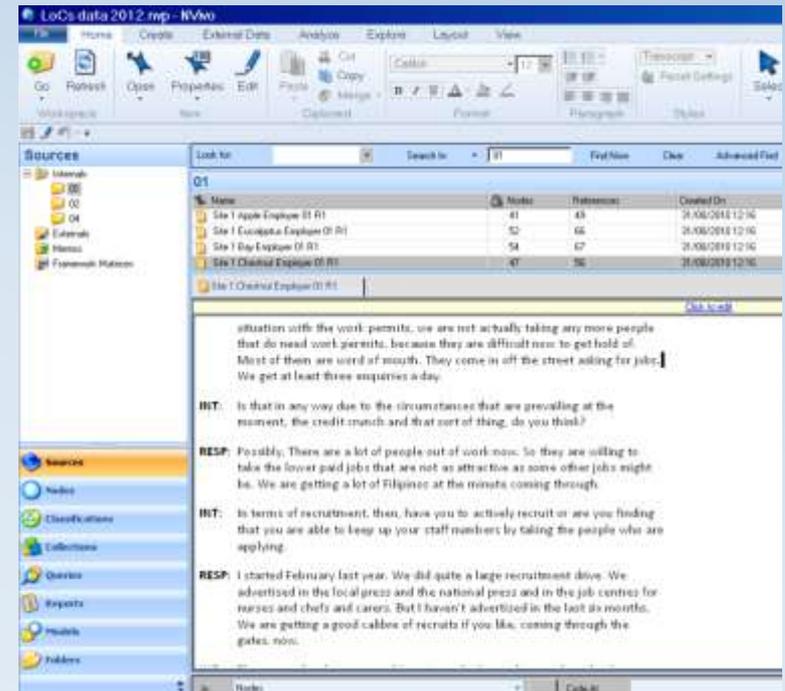
68 employers interviewed (mixture size and types of service user supported)

Face to face interviews in 2008-2009

Re-interviewed in 2010-2011

Data analysis

- Interview transcripts read by members of research team
- Agreed consensus on codes
 - Data-driven and concept driven coding
- Analysed using NVivo 9
- Discussed with members of the Unit Service User and Carer Advisory Group



Existing literature

- Extensive literature on theory of recruitment and retention (Breugh & Starke 2000)
- Some empirical studies of recruitment and retention in long term care workforce (Mittal et al, 2009)
- In UK, majority is guidance (e.g. Skills for Care, 2008)



Recession/cutbacks

- 'There may be some good news for the care sector. As a sector that has suffered from recruitment shortages and also from quite high staff turnover, the economic downturn may deliver more people into the workforce and will also reduce the incentives for people to leave it'
(Community Care, 5 March 2009)



Martin Green, Chief Executive
ECCA:

Recruitment (1)

- Multiple strategies
 - Job centre
 - Website
 - Local newspaper
 - Word of mouth (existing employees)
 - Leaflets/cards
- Key issue was cost
 - Job Centre free but applicants variable
 - Agencies only in emergencies



Selection (1)

- Extent to which managers controlled selection process influenced by company size and culture
 - What happens is the recruitment consultant will... before the advert has gone in, she ...meet up with the relevant case manager... She will go through with the case manager the applicants they have received and look at the ones that ... follow the criteria they are asking for.... It doesn't mean that at that point we're going to say 'No, they're no good. We're not going to use them.' They may be suitable for another client, so they're always kept. We have a file for miscellaneous. So then we'll organise interviews, and for that process we'll have a set of interview questions, and quite often there will be one or two in there that are client specific, you know. We'll interview from that point (Nectarine)

Selection (2)

- Key contrast between those who described procedures and those who talked about 'gut instinct'
 - I look for their references being correct. I look for - if they haven't had experience and knowledge - a willingness to learn. I look for their manner and approach. I rely a lot on how I feel, that at the end of the day it's sort of gut instinct, you know, as they say. But I do encourage them to talk to me a lot. They come in thinking they're gonna answer questions and actually, I ask very few questions and I expect them to tell me an awful lot. It's how they talk. It's how they talk about people. I love to hear them talk about the last job that they were in because that tells me an awful lot. Not what about they did but how they feel about it (Fig)

Pay (1)

- Recognised that this was an issue in terms of attracting and retaining workforce
 - Mainly attributed to local authority contracts
 - Another factor could be local competition
- Issue was the lack of differentiation
 - Unsocial hours
 - Those with NVQs and those without



Pay (2)

- Family businesses/small medium enterprises had more ways of using pay to promote attendance and retention
 - We pay higher than minimum wage. I don't mind telling you what we pay. We have what we call an attendance bonus scheme, so someone who is a care assistant or a housekeeper will earn a minimum of £6.10 per hour, but with the attendance bonus, they'll get £6.85 per hour (Fir)
 - Contrast with homes owned by large private equity companies



Effect of National Minimum Wage

- More nuanced views
 - I don't agree with the single rate, I really don't because each, you can't say that each thing is the same. You can't say that doing very very complex care is the same as going and making a cup of tea or going and doing someone's domestic or taking someone out on an escort. It is not the same (Sequoia)

Retention

- Balance between achieving retention because you have selected because of right personal qualities and role of training
 - I think it's still a vocation. I think that that's always going to be a bit of a problem. If you are not vocationally minded to take up care work (Sequoia)
 - The training is another big thing. I think that's something that I am very passionate about. I think people need to know why they are doing things and the rationale behind it (Acer)

Other data

- Includes mixed mode (online/paper) survey
 - Includes work history and data on job satisfaction
- Other interviews
 - Care workers
 - Service users and carers
- Will give comprehensive picture

Discussion

- Tendency to consider 'private' sector as single entity is outdated
 - Involvement of venture capital and private equity firms
 - Ethos and value of organisation as a variable to measure and compare?
- Effects of recession and cuts by local councils complex
 - Agency supporting children in need and adults more affected than nursing home for self funding people with dementia

Disclaimer

- The Social Care Workforce Research Unit receives funding from the Department of Health
- The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors, not necessarily those of the Department of Health

Thanks to

- Employers who agreed to be interviewed
- Sessional interviewers (Carolyn, Sarah, Jane, Rosemary, Joan, Phillip)
- Transcribers Laptop Confidential and Voicescrypt
- Unit Advisory Group
- And you for listening!



Acknowledgements