

providers on workforce planning, development and funding. Hazelwell has been directed by Care Focus and guided by Skills for Care, in terms of accessing the Workforce Development Fund.

Claire is very proactive and attends networking forums and events run by Care Focus and has been an iCare ambassador for Skills for Care for two years, promoting working in the social care sector. She is well supported by the owner of the business and two heads of care that already have the Level 4 Diploma in Health and Social Care. In the near future, Claire has plans to use the WDF to support their development further towards Level 5.

"It's important that we have a fully trained team that will provide the best quality of care to every individual within our home. By continually developing the team, they can understand our residents' needs and preserve their dignity, whilst respecting their independence."

What was achieved

Hazelwell Lodge has a longstanding ethos for learning. It has made significant progress in training its workforce through the support of the Workforce Development Fund, from supporting its apprentices to care support workers. The care home has used the fund holistically across the business, being primarily used for staff to obtain credits towards their diplomas. Modules have included food hygiene, first aid and health and safety. Distance learning packages have also been completed by all employees for specialist areas like dementia care, including cleaning and kitchen staff.

"We are using the fund for continuous staff development. 99% of care-related staff at the home have achieved the Level 2 or 3 diplomas, as

a direct result of the Workforce Development Fund. It is supporting their professional development through the sector, even if they leave us to go into nursing. I know there are some excellent nurses out there because of the support we've given them through this fund."

Claire states that the WDF has been used to benefit employees and in turn, Hazelwell's residents. The funding has led to the greater personal development of staff, whilst building the knowledge and skills towards greater confidence and competence in their roles.

Accessing this fund has been

What was learnt

The key challenge for Hazelwell Lodge has been tracking the units that have been obtained. Maintaining the NMDS-SC has been relatively straightforward due to the low turnover of staff and ease of data inputting.

For a smaller care business like Hazelwell Lodge, sometimes paying for the training upfront can impact the training budget. Over the medium to longer-term, however, the financial support from the Workforce Development Fund has been a huge boost to the training strategy and the positive outcomes that have arisen from that.

