

# Registered manager networks - Benefits of attending



**Name:** Janet Vernon



**Job title:** Domiciliary Care Manager

Janet has attended our Staffordshire and Black Country networks. Her service provides home care to those in later years to help them remain in their own homes, encourage autonomy, and where possible to be involved with self-care.

Here she reflects on her experience and the support she's received as a registered manager, tapping into the community spirit of the networks.

## Janet, tell us a bit about yourself...

I'm the director of small firm that I registered in 2017, and I was an advanced nurse practitioner for many years before that.

## So what was your perception of networking, before your current role?

As a nurse, I'd always tried to go to events and conferences. Networking was part of my life anyway, so when I got into domiciliary care - I think I just expected it to be there. Once I really got into it though, I realised it's a really useful thing. Nobody should be out there struggling on their own. Very often, the big help from networking is being able to just say to someone - can you have a look at this for me? I don't feel threatened by other companies, I just think it's a good idea to all share best practice and help each other.

## Do you find anything challenging about networking?

No, we've got WhatsApp groups, and we also have properly organised events. After COVID, it's been much better to have face-to-face meetings. It's so good to see people. I'm still learning, and it often feels as though I'm on my own. It's good to know people out there are feeling the same as me.

Care work is stressful. A lot of the time you're on your own making tough decisions. That's where the registered manager networks really help - knowing there's someone out there who can help you.



## Can you give us an example of something you've learned through the registered manager networks?

The networks really help - knowing there's someone out there who can help you. I've got really good workers, but there've been some really challenging situations. Not long ago, for example, I had to deal with one of my team passing away, sadly. Their next of kin was overseas, and nobody prepares you for that or explains how to handle a situation when one of your team is really ill, with no relatives in this country. I had to take on that responsibility, and the networks helped me through that.

## What part of attending the registered manager networks do you enjoy most?

Sharing, learning, connecting with people. It can be quite a lonely place to be, to be a manager, if you don't have connections with people. Being able to support others, too. You know, the other day, somebody asked me if I had a policy for something - and I just shared it, straight off. Yes, I've had to pay for my policy, but I just think it's the right thing to do, to help people. It's good to support each other and know you're not in this business alone.

Oh, and recruitment. It's so good to get other people's opinions on recruitment, and on personnel matters. You know, sometimes people come in with a DBS that hasn't passed with yellow colours, and it's good to just talk about it. There was a police presence in one of our meetings too, not long ago. It's amazing, getting a specialist in like that. Really useful.

## Would you encourage other people to join a registered manager network?

Yes, definitely. One of the worst things is, you're never off-duty in domiciliary care. Sometimes people don't need you to do anything, they just want to call you and be heard. Here I am, caring; running a business; spending time with my team, and a family, and then with other people. It's useful to talk about these things in confidence through the networks. You can connect with people and share these experiences.

## What's the top tip you'd give someone who isn't sure about attending a registered manager network?

I think I'd say it's important to put time aside to be part of the network. Sometimes, you miss meetings because you're doing something else. I think perhaps more online meetings might be beneficial but then again, I like to see people in the flesh.

But generally, just join in. Come and see what we do. I've noticed that more and more people are joining the network recently, so come along and say 'hello'.

Local networks for registered managers and deputy managers

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