



How has June been treating you so far?

June and July bring a number of important awareness moments centred around identity, inclusion, and lived experience. Across the sector, we have been encouraged to see the different ways organisations are creating space for conversations around accessibility, visibility, representation, and belonging within both teams and services.

Pride Month continues to highlight the importance of visibility, safety, and representation for LGBTQ+ communities. Then July will also mark Disability Pride Month, offering another important opportunity to reflect on identity, accessibility, and how supported people feel to show up authentically within workplaces, services, and everyday environments.

This week marks Learning Disability Week, offering an opportunity to reflect on how inclusion is experienced in practice for people with learning disabilities, particularly in relation to communication, access, understanding, and everyday interactions across workplaces and care environments.

These moments can create space for wider reflection around workplace culture, communication, and workforce experience at a time when many organisations continue navigating recruitment pressures, retention challenges, and increasing demands on teams.

Many organisations are recognising that inclusive workplace cultures are not only important from a wellbeing perspective, but can also positively influence collaboration, communication, confidence, and long-term workforce stability. Feeling psychologically safe within a team, able to communicate needs openly, and supported to participate fully within workplace culture can make a meaningful

difference to how connected and valued people feel at work.

Awareness moments like these can also provide a useful opportunity for organisations to reflect on how inclusion is embedded within everyday practice, from leadership and recruitment processes to onboarding, supervision, communication styles, and wider staff support.

They can also encourage valuable conversations, idea sharing, and learning across teams and organisations, helping strengthen understanding and support more inclusive ways of working across the sector.

What conversations or reflections have these awareness moments been prompting within your teams so far?



Across adult social care, workforce pressure remains significant, with **turnover rates** consistently sitting at around **28%** and **vacancy levels** continuing to place **pressure on services and teams** across the country.

These figures highlight why recruitment alone is not enough, and why retention-focused approaches are becoming increasingly important.

This upcoming free webinar from Skills for Care, [*Strengthening Recruitment and Retention: Insights, Recommendations and Practical Actions*](#), explores evidence-based approaches to building and sustaining stronger teams within adult social care. Designed for frontline managers, the session will look at current workforce trends, practical recruitment strategies, and the changes organisations are making to improve retention and workplace culture.

In our work supporting clients across the sector, we often see that the organisations making the most progress in this area are those taking a more joined-up view of recruitment and retention together. When there is clarity in processes, consistency in communication, and a stronger focus on values-led hiring, it often has a direct impact on retention, reducing pressure on teams and supporting more stable, long-term staffing outcomes.

Youth unemployment is currently at a concerning level. Recent UK estimates suggest that around **1 in 8 young people are classed as unemployed**, with approximately 900,000 young people aged 16–24 not in education, employment, or training (NEET). These figures highlight the ongoing barriers many young people face in accessing and sustaining work.



In the care sector, there is real potential to create meaningful pathways for young people through values-based recruitment, structured induction, and clearer progression routes. In an industry where values are so integral, skills can be taught to the right young people. However, this depends on environments where early career staff feel supported, understood, and able to develop, rather than simply being brought in to fill immediate gaps.

While this requires more investment upfront, organisations that focus on early career support often see stronger retention, improved workforce stability, and more resilient teams over time.

With Youth Skills Day taking place on 15th July, why not consider how your team could support young people into meaningful employment, while also strengthening your own future workforce. This might include exploring partnerships with local colleges, offering structured work experience opportunities, or ensuring recruitment processes offer fair and accessible entry routes for young people at the beginning of their careers.

The government also offers a number of schemes designed to support employers in bringing young people into work, including funded work experience opportunities, apprenticeship incentives, and programmes aimed at reducing barriers into employment. [Learn more here.](#)

With the right support, young people can develop into long-term staff who grow within the organisation and move into more complex or hard-to-fill roles.



Home Office estimates show that approximately **15,500 children were identified as at risk of, or involved in, child criminal exploitation** in the year ending March 2025. Understanding the risks and realities linked to gangs, county lines, and child criminal exploitation is of increasing importance, as these risks continue to grow.

This upcoming webinar by Safeguarding Somerset, [*Gangs, County Lines and CCE: The Foundation Practitioners Need*](#), provides an opportunity to strengthen that foundational understanding and reflect on how these issues can present in practice. The session is designed to support practitioners in recognising early indicators of exploitation, understanding contextual safeguarding, and responding in ways that are informed, proportionate, and centred on the safety and wellbeing of the young people involved.

This is a valuable free webinar for frontline teams who may be supporting children and young people in residential, educational, or community settings, where vulnerability and risk can change quickly and often present in complex ways.

There have been a number of changes to employment law recently, with more still to come. Undoubtedly, you will have heard a lot about these changes; however, understanding what they mean in the context of the care sector is often most useful.



This upcoming webinar, [*How new employment rights will impact adult social care*](#), will explore the Employment Rights Act 2025 and what it means for providers across the sector. It will look at the key policy changes being introduced and how these reforms are expected to impact workforce practice, compliance, and day-to-day operations.

Rather than focusing only on the legislation itself, the session aims to translate these changes into practical understanding for the sector, helping organisations consider what the new employment rights may mean for their teams, their responsibilities as employers, and the way services are delivered moving forward.



Skills for Care are keen to find more care providers to take part in the **Care Workforce Pathway** support programme, a national framework that sets out the knowledge, skills, values, and behaviours needed across adult social care roles.

It is designed to support clearer career development, stronger workforce planning, and improved recruitment and retention outcomes across the sector.

They aim to ensure adoption is practical and achievable, offering structured guidance, tools, and peer learning to support providers in integrating the Pathway in a meaningful way, rather than as a standalone initiative.

If you are interested, this [upcoming webinar](#) introduces their support initiative, which is designed to help organisations embed the Pathway into everyday practice.

We'd love to hear from you:

As we move towards the halfway point of the year, what challenges are you currently seeing across your teams in relation to wellbeing, productivity, and retention so far this year?

Thought for the month:

June is often a month where visibility and reflection come into focus, with Pride Month offering organisations an opportunity to consider what inclusion really looks like in practice, beyond awareness and symbolism.

Pride is often one of the most visible moments in the calendar, with colour, celebration, and symbolic gestures playing an important role in representation. These moments can matter deeply, especially for people who have historically not always felt seen. Pride covers a vast range of communities, identities, and lived experiences, and even for those outside the LGBTQ+ community, visible commitment from organisations can be encouraging and can help create a sense of openness where people feel able to be themselves.

Celebrations, flags, and rainbows can be powerful symbols of belonging. However, the impact is strongest when those symbols are backed by everyday practice that helps people feel safe, respected, and valued all year round. Around 1 in 5 LGBTQ+ employees (approximately 18–20%) have experienced some form of bullying or harassment at work because of their identity, and nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ+ employees have hidden or disguised their identity at work due to fear of discrimination or negative consequences. This highlights ongoing

gaps between organisational intent and lived experience for many LGBTQ+ employees.

For organisations, this can be a useful moment to reflect on how inclusion is experienced across different levels of the workforce, and whether it feels consistent regardless of individual, role, team, or setting. It can also be helpful to consider where further support or shared learning can make a difference, particularly in relation to everyday language, communication, and team culture.

Often, it is not the larger, planned moments that define whether someone feels included, but the small and repeated interactions that build a sense of psychological safety over time.

 **Further reading/watching:**

 [Taking back control of your compliance – A QCS Product Spotlight Session](#)

 [Webinar - Recognising and Responding to Blocked Care in Residential Settings](#)

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Warm wishes for the month ahead.



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