

Smart Social Ltd – Written evidence (FFF0003)

Recruitment, retention and training

Here are ideas for you against specific questions you raise.

4) How might the public sector become more attractive as an employer?

Support future employees around alternate forms of local affordable accommodation to reduce commuting, cost and renting from private landlords. Local, stable accommodation is a limiting step to attracting early in career, new public sectors workers and keeping them in nursing/teaching/policing/etc. Consider options like Homeshare – see Homeshare International website. This has real social impact – i.e. a young person gains a spare room at a low rent and offers 5-10 hours support to the householder in return in the community. It's win:win and a way to help communities as well as create options for good accommodation locally.

5) What are the consequences for inequalities of access to public services of failing to attract high-quality professionals to the public sector?

6) How can providers of public services recruit a more diverse workforce?

Create entry routes for people with 'lived experience'. Co-produce a method for valuing experience in future employment areas where a person's emotional intelligence matters. Reach out to future employees whose background is not traditional but is relevant – their own experience of tough issues, hardship and disadvantage can be invaluable in helping, supporting, training others. Create a 'lived-experience' academy where such skills are promoted and become useful alongside the other key professional standards. This is actualising/validating people who have been through stuff in their lives and being able to use their hard-won lessons in employment to benefit others. This is a needed and untapped resource so far.

9) Preventative and early intervention services can improve the ability of the public services workforce to respond to users' needs. How might such services be embedded within any public services workforce strategy?

This needs real thought and use of Social Impact products that promote a public health approach. Social Impact products gain investment from

social investors to pilot new ways to avoid 'crisis-only' public service models. Employees want to work in such services rather than seeing the same people coming back in crisis many times. Prevention is what most employees actually want to do vocationally, and they don't so they leave. See UK Civil Society strategy 2018 – especially chapter 5 – this describes some of how to do this – sadly Brexit and a pandemic sidelined this approach.

11) Integrating public services can mean that they are delivered more effectively to users. What would be the outcomes of better integration between public services workforces?

Relates to previous point. People are complex and providing public services to them should be by definition integrated or service users go in and out of many doors to get a second-rate service. This is serial inefficiency. Integration should be achieved but at the moment Government departments promote/model silos and do not see holistic solutions. An unemployed offender with mental health needs should have a joined-up offer. That does not happen so employees get disillusioned (so does the service user too -i.e. and reoffends). Create one-stop hubs locally where public, non-profit and business sector organisations deliver place-based solutions to complex need. This is more efficient and staff would love it.

12) How might voluntary and private sector workforces be involved in the delivery of integrated public services?

Start seeing the voluntary sector staff as important as public sector staff and interweave their career paths, training and support. Plan together and create exchange all in the interest of the best service regardless of the sector (in fact include the business sector too). Aren't LEPs suppose to do this?

Hope this helps

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