

Appendix 1

Key Challenges within Care Homes in Halton

It is important to note that many people staff, residents and families consulted as part of the Quality Assurance Team consultation processes are very positive about many aspects of the care they receive. Key challenges to delivering high quality care have been identified with many of them being interdependent.

- People are being admitted to care homes with more severe and complex care needs resulting in residents being placed in homes with much greater dependency needs.
- Recruitment and retention concerns are reported to be one of the top issues for care homes. A shortage of highly trained care assistants and registered nurses places additional stress on staff. It also compounds the pressure homes have with meeting the needs of residents with higher dependency and more complex needs.
- Agency staff are often used to support care homes and there is a high agency usage of staff across all areas. Whilst recognised for their valuable staffing input this can have an impact on continuity of care and they do not always have sufficient individual knowledge of the people they support.
- There are difficulties providing training to staff because if staff attend training it potentially leaves the home understaffed. The high turnover of staff leaves care staff continually supporting and training new recruits.
- Lack of a career pathway and training and development opportunities for both care staff and nurses
- The lack of leadership within care homes
- The risk of financial failure of care homes due to reliance on agency staff and increased costs over all areas.
- Internal QA processes not being applied to the learning and development of internal systems

All care homes reported the benefits from some of the innovative preventative measures developed locally. The use of the Pharmacy Team, Care Home Support Team and, to provide additional support and training into the care homes, Rapid Clinical Assessment Team