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TIPS TO

# Fix Your Care Home Staff Shortage

A successful care home relies on dedicated staff. But as nurses and carers continue to shift jobs — and the funded gap increases — care homes grapple with staff shortages. In fact, budget cuts, training deficits, and immigration have amounted to over 40,000 unfilled positions.

But with the right systems in place, you can protect your care home from these shortages.

 Read on to learn six tips to help you retain a sustainable network of dedicated staff to keep your patients and their families happy.



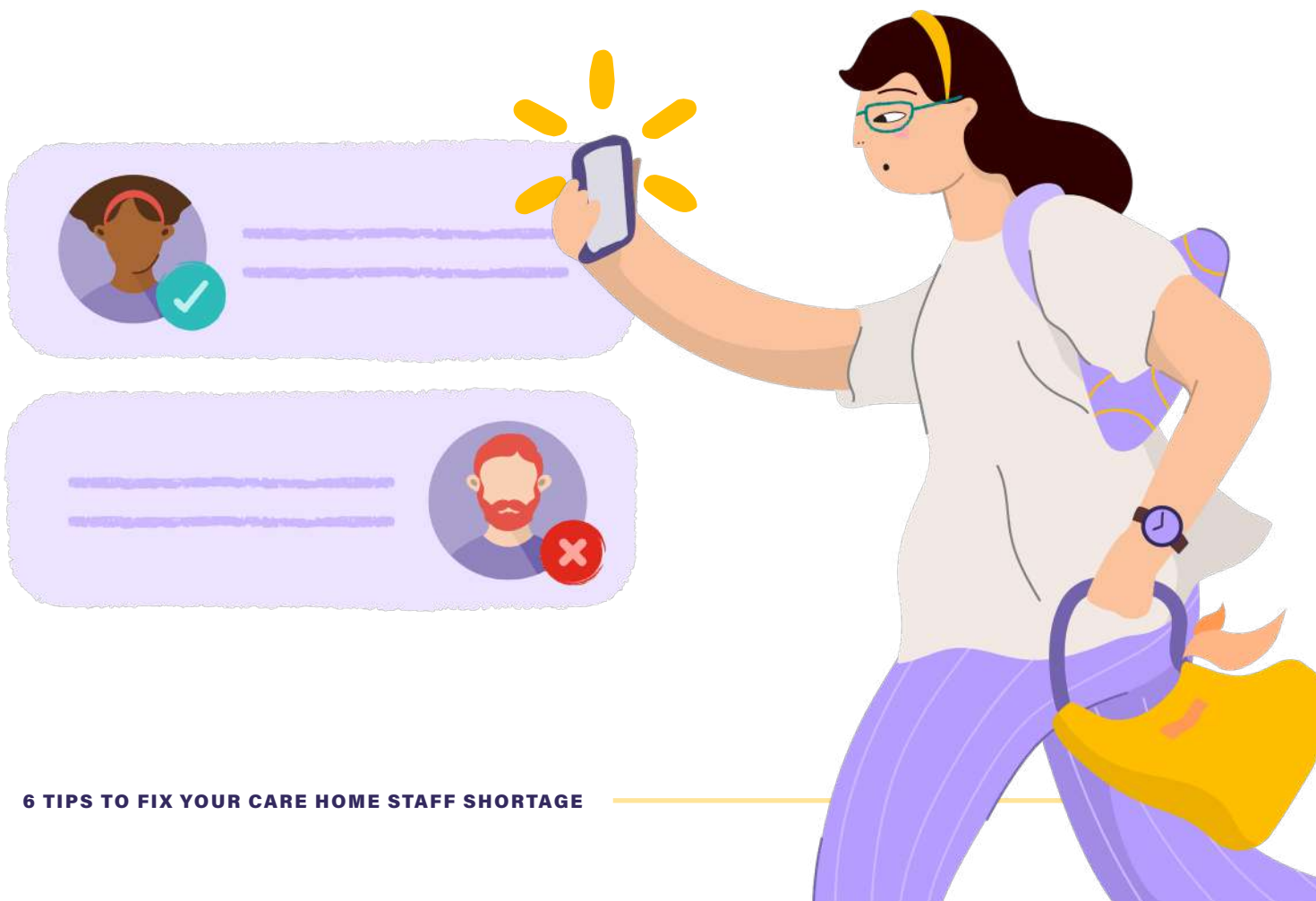
# 01 Build a culture of flexibility

Care homes operate 24/7. Throughout the day, staff transport residents, provide meals, and distribute medication. So when a carer calls in sick and no one is available to fill the shift, patients can suffer.

**“You need to remove any impediment to staff happiness,” says David Tanner, owner of Ascot Residential Homes. “Little things can make the difference between a member of staff staying with you or leaving. If you can focus on those small things, it’s more likely they will stay.”**

Otherwise, you’re left hiring less-qualified staff, who leave shortly after starting.

When something comes up, [empower your staff](#) to find a suitable replacement. That flexibility allows your team to take control over their schedules, without the fear of impacting the care of your patients.



## 02 Boost recruiting efforts for the long-term

Get the word out for your open positions. Nursing graduates and healthcare job seekers are spoiled for choice. Let them know why your facility is the best place to work for.

Staffing agencies can patch up shortages temporarily, but they're expensive and won't be sustainable for your bottom line. One of the UK's largest residential care providers reduced their agency costs by 15% by implementing a [workforce management system](#) making it easier to make changes to schedules and fill empty shifts with little notice.

Use social media and modern job sites like LinkedIn to advertise your open roles. Give your employees referral bonuses if they successfully introduce a hire. Do you have values and benefits that set your facility apart? Why have families trusted your organization for decades? Why should job seekers apply?

Make the case for your facility and you'll attract a new generation of care providers.



## 03 Invest in training

Provide your staff with professional development opportunities. They will feel more valued and want to stay with your care home if they can advance their careers, earn better pay, and acquire new skills. Consider training through distance learning, virtual classes, or onsite workshops.

Investment in your staff training can't be a one-off event. While their **onboarding** experience is important to their first few months, make sure they can keep learning well beyond their start. That continuous engagement can help motivate staff and keep them happy to work at your care home.





## 04 Practice open communication

Keep your employees aware of the ins and outs of your care home. They'll appreciate leaders who are open and transparent, even on things like new protocols, finance projections, hiring updates, and quarterly goals.

Lack of communication can create uncertainty and push your staff to look elsewhere for a job.

Use your team meetings or a [central communications tool](#) to provide these updates, and make sure your staff can provide their feedback as well.

## 05 Recognise your employees

Your facility is more than just a business — it's a community. Create volunteer opportunities for people to pass out refreshments, decorate, and transport patients. You can even train them for more technical roles to help offload your employees.

In times of crisis, volunteers are inspired to make an impact. If you're trying to fill staffing gaps, volunteers are a great short-term fix. Depending on the qualifications needed, you might even be able to recruit your volunteers onto your staff full-time.

# 06 Protect staff from burnout

The continuous pressure to provide quality care on top of funding shortages leads to staff burnout.

Thankfully, there are a few ways you can ease the stress and boost your team morale.

Build a culture where employees aren't afraid to take time off. [Mental health](#) needs to be a priority at your facility so that your staff will want to stay and care for their patients. There's a reason your staff wanted to work at your care home — it's up to you to help them staff there.

## \* Mind the (staffing) gap

Whether you oversee one care home or multiple sites, your staff should be focusing on the best care. Be proactive about the factors in your control.

Equipping employees with tools to eliminate paperwork and admin means they can focus all of their time supporting and providing high-quality care. And on top of that, you can help reduce staff turnover. For more tips, download the ebook [Taking Care of Business: Tackling the Trends Driving Up Care Home Costs.](#)

