

Resolve Care: How to be Outstanding



Resolve's two outstanding Care Quality Commission (CQC) ratings set them apart from the competition. Being rated 'Outstanding' by the CQC is a badge of excellence that few achieve and all seek. These ratings are notoriously difficult to come by, with less than 5% of the total number of inspected organisations achieving this rating.

What enables a single organisation to be awarded the highest level twice? Owners Anne Graham and David King talk about how they did this.

Giving people the best chance

At Resolve, the emphasis is purely on giving the residents the best possible life. All of the residents have autism and/or a learning disability and a history of offending behaviour – in some cases, serious offences. All have been in hospital or prison and most have had limited opportunities and meaningful life experiences. This is something that the CQC has recognised, as David King remembers:

"We were obviously euphoric when we found out we were going to get [the outstanding rating]," he says. "We got a press release from the deputy chief inspector at the CQC, and one of the things that stays with me from that is it said: 'the staff at Resolve should feel very proud of the work they do. I would recommend all other providers ask Resolve about how they achieve what they do.'"



Feels like home

The philosophy behind Resolve underpins everything they do. Resolve's two homes have bright, clean and tidy living areas. The furnishings are modern, yet homely. They don't have the feel of a care home. This, says King, is one of the aims of the service – it is the service users' home and the building should reflect this.

An understanding of the service users' backgrounds – which are often of lengthy trauma and abuse – is important to King and Graham so they can develop and train staff to get to know them as people and not judge them for past experiences and instead ensure that they have meaningful lives and do not revert back to offending behaviour. King and Graham believe that providing opportunities for service users to engage in social environments as equals reduces the chance of reoffending as the community sees them "as people, the same as them".

Genuine engagement

This means the service users have genuine engagement with their local community so that they are accepted as equals in the community. "They don't get sent to day centres where they sit colouring. It has to be purposeful and what they're interested in because they have to want to do it, to get up and be motivated.

But it took a long time – and a lot of perseverance – for Resolve to get to the stage where its residents are valued in the community.

"When we were first looking for community placements for our service users, no one would have them, but once they get to know our service users it is 'can they come in and do an extra day?'; it's getting that foot in the door." says Graham.

Meaningful activity

Engaging with the community is fundamental. Resolve's model of care means that from 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday (excluding holidays), the residents are involved in meaningful occupations. This includes such things as voluntary placements in the community at a local luncheon club and similar activities such as receiving football coaching, taking part in a dog-walking project, working at a centre for older people and working at a recycled furniture project. The residents also have time to indulge in passions, such as fishing, working with horses and building models.

"It is easier for them to watch the telly. But there are no TVs on during the day, except sometimes when they have an hour for lunch. But it is cultural for us to understand that Monday to Friday the staff and service users need to be contributing somewhere, because how are the service users ever going to develop skills if they ever want a job, if they've never done some of the basics?"

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Relationships are key

Relationships are key to the Resolve way of working, and growing trust, especially between staff and service users, is central to this.

As Graham emphasises, some of the service users have come from "terrible" family backgrounds, where they have suffered lengthy abuse and neglect, and then gone into the care system and had awful experiences there too.

King adds that developing trust and an open relationship with each resident is a cornerstone of the service. "If we can't develop a relationship, how are they going to confide in us with worries they have that might lead to them engaging in risky behaviours again," he says.



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"What we do is two-pronged. We are very focused on the management of risk – but equal to that is giving the service users a quality of life. If we give someone the best quality of life possible while putting that effort in to make sure that everyone is protected, it just seems a reasonable way of approaching things.

Graham adds: "It is important the service users are involved in decision-making and their care. They are involved in the writing of the care plans; they are agreed before they try new things. In doing this, service users' anxieties are reduced and it also enables new experiences to be introduced at their pace."

The team at Resolve also understand that contingency plans are necessary in case things don't go as planned – and the service users are also involved in this. This way, service users are not subjected to unwanted attention from others in the community which promotes more positive community engagement and acceptance.

Recruitment

Of course, to develop strong relationships with residents requires a stable and dedicated staff team, and another strong part of Resolve's philosophy is in recruiting people who fit the service users.

Did you know?

86% of staff who use mobile solutions as part of their role feel that it improves their working day, cutting out unnecessary administration and freeing up more time to focus on delivering quality care.

SEHTA Technology & Innovation in Care Homes Review

King says: "We have learnt that knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications are almost irrelevant to what we do. In fact, sometimes it is better bringing in someone who has no experience because they don't have these ingrained poor value-based practices that we steer clear of.

King adds that there is a great core staff team at Resolve, but they are now focusing on ensuring that turnover of staff is as low as possible, and the service users will play a full part in this.

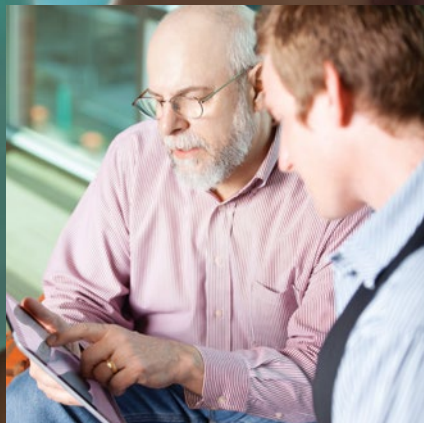
"When we talk about 'team' we include the service users in that. This is their house, they contribute to everything, everything we do is working shoulder-to-shoulder," he says.

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Since Resolve Care started using Eclipse, **CQC** has awarded them two **Outstanding** Ratings. Extracts from their glowing reports include:

The new system... means that people's health and well-being can be monitored closely and any changes identified, and treated without delay. People's care plans were very person centred and clearly described their care, treatment and support needs. The care plan format was easy for people who used the service to understand by using lots of pictures.

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Using technology to minimise admin and maximise face-to-face time

Staff are able to spend the vast majority of their time with service users because King and Graham have sought to streamline other areas, such as record-keeping and administration, as much as possible. They have been able to do this by using an online case management system called Eclipse. Eclipse, from OLM Systems, has a range of benefits for managers and service users – and impressed the CQC inspectors, according to Graham.

"Eclipse gives you a lot more time," she says. "The support workers use it on their tablets to update records so they don't have to go off into an office to type up their notes with the service user. Team leaders would have to spend a lot of time in the office if they didn't have their tablets, because you couldn't sit with someone's paper file out as it is all confidential information and some of our service users are good at reading."

Graham adds that it also saves space. Resolve do not have paper records, so they don't have to be kept in bulky filing cabinets, where it can be possible to lose files. It also means that accessing records is much quicker to do.

In addition, the Eclipse system is secure – more so than paper records. No longer can records be accidentally left out where someone can see them, for example. "It is

safe and secure and only those people who need to see it get to see it and that is based on our authorisation," adds King.

Eclipse is also useful for evidencing what the service provides for commissioners and purchasing authorities and how funding is being allocated. "When we record case notes in Eclipse – we are evidencing all the time, so if commissioners come in, they can see where every penny of their money is being spent," says Graham. "It can be pulled through into a report so there is a paper trail. If we say we have taken people somewhere we can show that. We can upload photographs, which is also evidence that this has really occurred."

The ability to upload photographs to Eclipse also has benefits when staff and services users are discussing care plans. "Our service users sign their own care plans and they do planning on them which is pictorial. Some of our service users can read and have written ones, but the majority prefer the pictorial ones.

"They all also have memory books. We had those before we had Eclipse but now we can upload photos directly from our iPhones into the system so that's better for them as they are safely stored if they ever want copies.

King adds: "We now have a medium of keeping records where we can have photographs and videos in – you cannot do that with a paper file."

Business

But while Resolve is focused on the care and support provided to service users, it is a business, and this cannot be lost sight of. However, they say their focus on providing the best possible service has also led to profitability.

"We are a business and profit cannot be a dirty word – we have to generate money to provide a service – but the profit, sustainability and viability side is almost secondary to the attention to detail that has made the service what it is," says King. "That came as a by-product, almost."

Graham adds: "I think by concentrating on doing everything right and not being good business people in the beginning – I'm a social worker and David's a nurse – our focus has always been wanting the best outcomes for the people we provide a service for. But by doing that, that made us a better service and people wanted to buy into it. It has increased our sustainability because we did it right because we wanted to, not because we wanted to be a massive organisation."

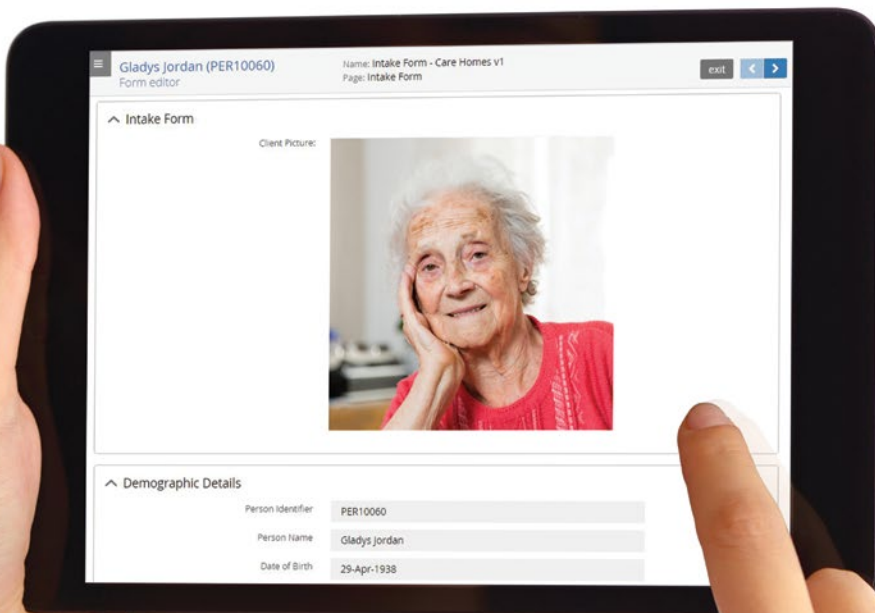
In the short to medium-term, the focus is on developing the service users' skills, with the hope that some may, in time, be able to move into a more independent supported living setting. With another CQC inspection on the horizon too, they want to keep on developing so that their hard-won outstanding rating is retained.

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