



# INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Care Homes of Distinction

Presented by Colin Winchester

Investors in People Assessor

On behalf of Inspiring Business Performance  
Limited

November 2013



Delivered by IBP, an official partner for London, South East and South West  
England

### **Background to this review**

Care Homes of Distinction (the group) was assessed against the Investors in People Standard (the Standard) some three years ago. As staff worked on three sites it was agreed that the bulk of the evidence would be gathered through a questionnaire. 29 questionnaires were completed which is an excellent sample size. Copies of the results were given to the client and are at an appendix to this report.

### **Overview of the Organisation**

The group has three care homes and share a common support administration team as well as internal support training and coaching. The group has been awarded several sector standards which reflects the high quality of care which is given to the residents.

### **Focus of this Review**

The group is subject to audits by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the homes within the group have achieved excellent CQC inspection reports.

The vision of the group is to;

- Provide the highest quality of care and services, whilst always striving for excellence
- Be responsive to individual needs
- Provide “Extra Care” and “Supported Living facilities”
- Establish a “Centre of Excellence for Training and Development”

The latter is key to meeting the first three and therefore in the context of this assessment is the aspect which is a theme throughout the report.

### **Purpose of this review**

The aim of the assessment was primarily to ensure that the group continued to meet the relevant core requirements of the Standard (there are no representative bodies within the definition in the glossary of the Standard) and six additional evidence requirements from the wider framework. Documentary evidence was seen to obtain evidence and interviews were carried out with the owner and the senior care manager as well as the office administrator.

## **Summary**

For an organisation, which has staff working mainly on their own with residents, I was impressed with the following aspects.

- The very high level of positive responses overall (in green) in the survey results.
- The thorough and comprehensive records to show the width and depth of the training and support given to and offered to all staff whatever their role.
- The evidence to show strong support within teams which is encouraged by management.
- The excellent positive feedback by staff on how they regard the way they are managed.
- The thorough supervision for all staff to help them maintain the high level of service shown to residents.
- The use of the “star” assessment to score staff against the full range of core requirements.
- Foreign staff supported to gain nursing qualifications recognized in the UK.

## **Development suggestions**

This does not impact adversely on the ability of the group to meet all the relevant requirements of the core version of the Standard. Because of the very high level of positive evidence and the method by which evidence was collected it was difficult to suggest ways the organization could improve.

- With the increase in the costs of the “standard” assessment coupled with the fact that business funding is now more difficult, it is understandable that a commercial decision needs to be taken about continuing to be accredited against a voluntary standard such as Investors in People. However utilizing survey techniques and the internet costs can be substantially reduced. Much of the evidence I saw and obtained at this review suggests that Care Homes of Distinction could gain a higher level of the award and this might help with marketing, the CQC and also in a sense “reward” the staff and managers of each care home by external recognition. I would be happy to discuss this in more detail early in 2014.
- From the survey data and the written comments it appears that three staff are “discontented”. This is a very small number bearing in mind the total for all staff and the fact that there are three locations. You may wish to explore the reason behind these individual’s responses. Initially it would appear to be based on a feeling that they were “underpaid” but there may be something deeper. What is excellent is that this had no adverse impact on other than two closely associated questions, so feeling supported with a team, knowing that training and development is sufficient and that they are treated fairly and have equal opportunities for training and development all score highly in overall responses.

### **Evidence obtained**

#### **A strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood.**

There is a clear strategic plan, which I discussed with the management. 100% of staff could explain what the group is trying to achieve and equally 100% knew the standards expected of them and what targets they had to achieve to enable the plan to be fulfilled. These are incredibly high scores and indicate a very high level of appreciation by everyone of how they “play their part” in helping the group to be successful.

#### **Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation’s objectives.**

All development has to link to one or more of the group performance targets so there are clearly defined outcomes which can be assessed. There are checks at the end of training to ensure the knowledge or skills are measured.

As well as the external qualifications (NVQs) staff attend top up in house and on line courses and these are planned and monitored by the manager responsible for training coordination. Many are mandatory in order to allow the group to continue to operate within the Care Sector. I saw comprehensive records for all staff.

This meant I was able to confirm that people were involved in identifying their development needs and could explain what these would achieve for them, their office and for the group. It also shows that the organisation and the staff are “always improving and learning” so meeting another of the values. Again a 100% positive score was achieved from all staff believing they had training and development to meet the needs of their role.

Assessments are carried out against the 10 points of the star and staff are graded against these to identify their development needs.

*“We get excellent training here.”*

#### **Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people.**

93% of staff thought they were treated fairly and they had equal opportunities for support and development. Given the nature of the group and the roles that people have to carry out, this is a very high score.

All staff have personal development plans which are reviewed regularly.

In addition job shares have been arranged to help with work life balance and domestic situations. Individual needs are dealt with in a sympathetic manner. For example staff with children are able to work on the night shift.

**The capabilities of managers to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood**

Given the size of the company I would not expect to find a set of managerial capabilities which had been introduced by a consultant who had worked with multi-national organisations. What I would expect to find is a consistent way of managing staff, which is understood by all those who work at the group. This was the case (see below). This showed me that the supervisors who had the most contact with the carers knew and appreciated how they should manage their teams. 100% of respondents stated they had regular contact with their manager and received feedback on their performance.

**Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people.**

The supervisory review process is effective as is the appraisal scheme and both are appreciated. I was pleased to find so much positive evidence from the responses. The fact that 100% of staff thought their manager supported them and developed them effectively shows there is a consistency throughout the group. Again 100% had confidence in the management to “lead the company” to meet its goals. These are very high scores.

The impression I gained was of a “family firm” where the fact that some people were managers or longer serving did not make a difference to how anyone was treated. What came through strongly was that all felt supported and encouraged to develop themselves. New staff were being supported to grow their expertise and others had been developed into new roles. I saw training records which showed how well this had been done.

Comments that helped me to understand the culture of the company and how it met the core requirements of the Standard included;

*“We have a good friendly management here.”*

*“The managers are very supportive.”*

**People's contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.**

It is very easy when there are trained people in a relatively small business to think that people know if they are doing a good job. However whatever the size of organisation feedback is important in maintaining motivation.

100% of staff who took part in the survey stated they got customer feedback and this enabled them to feel they were valued and appreciated.

**People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for being involved in decision making.**

By the very nature of the fact that most staff work on their own on a one to one relationship with the residents means they have to take ‘ownership and responsibility’ and to make relevant and appropriate decisions on a daily basis. In addition 97% of staff felt they were encouraged to put forward ideas, to use their initiative and contribute to decisions.

**People learn and develop effectively.**

Apart from the core industry requirements for the carers there are additional training events and on line sessions to help staff learn about how to care for developing needs in their clients.

I could see from training records how those who had joined you recently confirmed that both their initial induction (mainly delivered through coaching and observing) had been effective and at the correct pace. I was pleased to hear that the Director met with all new staff so he got to know them individually and they him. The fact that 100% of staff thought they were better able to do their work as a result of the support and training they had received is almost unknown from any survey with any other client. This shows the training was focused; effective and that there had been follow up to check how it was being implemented.

**Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation.**

I have mentioned the external qualifications that carers are required to meet and the support they have to enable them to pass the exams. What they learn is not just how to meet the standard but they show they have the necessary knowledge. The fact that group continues to gain residents, had obtained Sector Skills Council awards and has had excellent CQC inspections confirms that the investment of a pragmatic combination of NVQs, in house training sessions and on line courses has proved its worth.

*"We provide a high standard of quality care because we are trained well."*

**Improvements are continually made to the way people are managed.**

The group will continue to improve and to learn from its experience. A better external e-learning provider was identified about a year ago (Redcrier) and this is proving to be effective. A feature is that all individual learning using their system is accredited and certificated this giving external consistent feedback. I am sure that it will be better for that and I look forward to discussing progress at the Improvement Planning Meeting shortly.

**Additional evidence requirements**

**Top managers make sure the organisation has a clear set of core values that support its purpose and vision.**

The core values are displayed on the web site and in the office and are used in one to one supervisions, annual appraisals and supervisory team meetings.

**Top managers make sure the organisation has key performance indicators to improve its performance.**

Like any business there are financial targets as well as client and CQC requirements which have to be met in order for the firm to stay in the business and be able to attract new clients and to meet national sector standards. All staff are fully aware of the individual care plans for their clients and the overall standards which they have to meet in the context of the group

**Top managers can describe the learning and development strategy they have in place to build the organisation's capability to achieve its vision.**

All staff have individual training requirements, which are tracked on a skills matrix and renewed as required. There is a mix of coaching by supervisors, external trainers and on line training. Remedial training and coaching is given where this is needed. NVQs are offered as and when they become available.

**Top managers can describe how they have created an environment where giving and receiving constructive feedback is valued.**

The whole culture of the group is based on giving supportive and constructive feedback to the staff. This is not just through the supervisions, spot checks and appraisals but also through the supervisory team meetings and at the end of a shift. The appraisals and team meetings are opportunities for staff

**Top managers can describe how they have made coaching part of the organisation's culture.**

As the majority of the carers work by themselves they are coached on an individual basis when they start work and by their supervisor on a one to one basis when they meet with them at a client's to carry out an observation.

**Managers can describe how they support people in their personal development activities and encourage them to broaden their knowledge and skills through learning.**

I was impressed with the fact that 100% of staff felt they had opportunities to develop themselves, even though not all of them wished to "grow" their careers within the group as their current work suited their personal circumstances. They were asked and encouraged to develop themselves at supervisions and through appraisal reviews.

**Conclusion**

As your assessor I am pleased to report that I found sufficient positive evidence to show that Care Homes of Distinction continues to meet the core requirements of the Standard. The management is to be congratulated in implementing processes to support staff development through the current difficult trading situation.

**Recommendation and Next Steps**

Having carried out the assessment process in accordance with the guidelines provided for Assessors by Investors in People – United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills, I as the Assessor am totally satisfied Care Homes of Distinction meets the requirements of the Investors in People National Standard.

Investors in People recognition is granted indefinitely, with a proviso that reviews take place no greater than 3 years apart. Reviews can be undertaken at any time

and more frequent reviews are recommended to maintain levels of good practice and continuous improvement. The organisation should discuss the timing of the next review with their Assessor, using the Improvement Planning Meeting to agree the best strategy for future use of the Investors in People framework

Both the Assessor and IBP would welcome your feedback on this assessment / review and you will be supplied with a Client Feedback Questionnaire to complete on line.

Should you wish to contact a Client Relationship Manager at IBP for any reason, please telephone 0800 612 3098, use the contact option on our website [www.ibp.uk.com](http://www.ibp.uk.com) or send an email to [info@ibp.uk.com](mailto:info@ibp.uk.com)

I would like to thank those I interviewed for the open and frank manner in which they replied to my questions. I look forward to returning in April 2014 to have a follow up meeting to review progress. In the meantime if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Signed:



**Colin Winchester**  
**Investors in People Assessor**

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013

## Support Available

### Investors in People Interactive

This **free** online support tool is designed to guide you through development activities and help you maintain the benefits of using Investors in People as an organisational development tool. Obtain an on-going understanding of your organisation's current strengths and development areas by using the tool's diagnostic function which is built around 5 management practices which relate directly to the Investors in People indicators

You can also review and update your progress within the tool and access a wide range of downloads, good practice tips, templates and other resources to inspire and inform - no matter where you are on your Investors in People journey

[www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/interactive](http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/interactive)

### Promoting continuous improvement

IBP offers an integrated advice and assessment support service, workshops, surgeries and networking events to promote continuous improvement and maximise the benefits of working with The Standard. We also work with a team of highly experienced consultants to offer an extensive range of tailored business support and organisational development solutions to help improve business performance. Details of the support available to you can be found on: -

Internet: 

[www.ibp.uk.com](http://www.ibp.uk.com)

Telephone: 

**0800 612 3098**

Email: 

[info@ibp.uk.com](mailto:info@ibp.uk.com)

**Outcomes Table - Evidence Requirements Framework Matrix**

<b>Core Standard</b>										
Total number of core evidence requirements assessed - 37										
Total number of core evidence requirements met - 37										
	<b>Indicators</b>									
<b>ERs</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>
1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
2	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
3	na	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
4	√	√	√		√				√	
5	na		√						√	
6	√									

<b>Wider Framework</b>										
Total number of wider framework evidence requirements to be assessed – 6										
Total number of wider framework evidence requirements met – 6										
	<b>Indicators</b>									
<b>ERs</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>
4	Core	Core	Core		Core				Core	
5	Core	√	Core						Core	
6	Core									
7	√									
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**Survey results – green=excellent, yellow=potential development point**

<b>Care Homes of Distinction</b>		<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Can explain what the company is trying to achieve.	1	0%	0%	55%	45%
Know the level of performance expected of me and have clear targets to aim for.	2	0%	0%	59%	41%
QA standards expected of us in our work are made Clear and we work to achieve them.	3	0%	0%	38%	62%
We're kept up to date on new tenders, orders won and customers gained.	4	0%	0%	66%	34%
We're encouraged to make best use of resources and be as cost effective as we can.	5	0%	0%	45%	55%
We're doing a good job of satisfying our customers and get customer feedback.	6	0%	0%	48%	52%
The company recruits the right people in the right job and strives to keep them.	7	3%	7%	62%	28%
The company is good at improving its practices and procedures.	8	0%	3%	52%	45%
Priorities are clear and agreed regularly so that everyone knows what's important.	9	0%	0%	55%	45%
I feel I am valued and appreciated by the company for the work I do.	10	3%	7%	55%	34%
I'm treated fairly and have equal opportunities for support and development.	11	0%	7%	55%	38%
I'm encouraged to put forward ideas, use my initiative and contribute to decisions.	12	0%	3%	66%	31%
My manager/supervisor discusses my job with me and gives me regular feedback on my performance.	13	0%	0%	62%	38%
My manager supports and develops me effectively.	14	0%	0%	48%	52%
I have confidence in managers to lead the company effectively towards its goals.	15	0%	0%	38%	62%

Commercial in Confidence

The company provides the training and development I need to do my job well.	16	0%	0%	45%	55%
I am able to do my job better as a result of the support training and development I receive.	17	0%	0%	41%	59%
I'm consulted about changes and developments within the company.	18	0%	3%	66%	31%
Working together we work well as a team and teams work well together.	19	0%	3%	48%	48%