



Using *I Care...Ambassadors* to develop existing workers and promote the business

*I Care...
Ambassadors*

What is *I Care...Ambassadors*?

I Care...Ambassadors is an employer-led initiative designed to help tackle the recruitment and retention challenges across adult social care.

I Care...Ambassadors are people who work in social care who deliver activities to promote careers in the sector.

Organisations can nominate staff to be *I Care...Ambassadors* to improve staff retention and support the recruitment of new staff to the sector.

Curado provides support for people with mental health conditions in Surrey and they employ 13 staff.

Through *I Care...Ambassadors*, Curado has developed the skills and confidence of their staff and promoted their business in the community. Read how they make *I Care...Ambassadors* work for them.

What we wanted to achieve

Curado wanted to get involved with *I Care ... Ambassadors* to give their staff opportunities for personal and professional development, and use their experiences to promote the social care sector.

They also thought the initiative would be a good opportunity to promote Curado and their services and to grow their networks.

Yvonne Obuaya, Managing Director says

“We felt that it would give us the opportunity to promote our organisation and what we do above and beyond others in the sector”.

What we did

Curado set up their own *I Care...Ambassador* service in 2014 after hearing about the initiative through the Skills for Care network. They currently have six staff registered with *I Care...Ambassadors* of different ages and levels of experience.

Curado has delivered five *I Care ... Ambassador* events this year, including giving a careers talk in a school, being interviewed by the National press and attending the Skills for Care *I Care... Ambassador* Roadshow event.

Curado have also been involved in a number of promotional activities for the initiative, including a photoshoot for the *I Care ... Ambassador* service.

The audience for the events has tended to be younger people and they found it more effective to involve younger ambassadors in these activities.

“For the events in schools we tend to use the younger ambassadors as they are closer to their age and are easier for the audiences to relate to”.

What we achieved

Curado has experienced a wide range of benefits as a result of their involvement with *I Care...Ambassadors*.

Staff development

It has increased motivation amongst staff and has helped them develop their presentation and communication skills, as well as their confidence.

“It has boosted the confidence of our staff and enhanced their professional and personal development”.

The ambassadors have welcomed the opportunity to speak about their roles and have since shown a keen interest in their personal development.

“It makes them realise how much they know and how much they have grown in their roles”.

Establishing the service has also had an impact on the wider staff team, with other members of staff showing interest in the initiative and the work being done. It's hoped that as the organisation grows Curado will be able to recruit further ambassadors to their service.

“Feedback at our team meetings suggests that it has indirectly helped to motivate others and we have other staff who want to get involved”.

Promoted the organisation

Being involved with *I Care...Ambassadors* has helped Curado to promote their services to a wide range of people.

The events have provided the opportunity to speak publically about the care they provide and to reach a wider audience than possible through their usual activities.

Curado has also developed closer links with Skills for Care and the wider *I Care...Ambassador* network through their activities, which may offer other opportunities for the organisation in the future.

“It has promoted the business and given us connections with networks outside of our daily activity”.

Staff retention

Curado believe that the initiative has helped them to retain their staff. For example, one ambassador who began their NVQ training with the organisation and intended to be there for a short period of time, has since remained in the post and this is believed to be partially due to their role as an ambassador.

Contributed to a positive CQC rating

Since involvement with the initiative Curado has received a positive CQC inspection and they believe that being involved with *I Care...Ambassadors* supported this.

What we learnt

Curado would highly recommend involvement with *I Care...Ambassadors* to other organisations. They believe that it adds value to the business and enhances business presence, whilst developing members of staff.

“It promotes your staff and business... when you invest in your staff, you're investing in the business”.

They note that the time commitment has been worth the investment and highlight the significant benefits which it can generate.

They hope to recruit further ambassadors as they expand, and increase their level of *I Care...Ambassador* activity, to at least one event a month.

For more information please visit

www.curadogroup.com

Skills for Care Recommends

Skills for Care has a wide range of products and services to help social care employers with their recruitment and retention challenges.

I Care...Ambassadors

I Care...Ambassadors are people who work in social care who deliver activities to promote careers in care. It's a great way of recruiting and retaining staff.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/icareambassadors

Finding and keeping workers

This online toolkit has a wide range of practical recruitment and retention resources from Skills for Care and other organisations.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/findingandkeepingworkers

Think Care Careers

This website provides lots of information about working in social care including different job roles and Apprenticeships.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/thinkcarecareers

Skills for Care
West Gate
6 Grace Street
Leeds
LS1 2RP
telephone 0113 245 1716
email info@skillsforcare.org.uk
web www.skillsforcare.org.uk

[@skillsforcare](https://twitter.com/skillsforcare) 

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