

I'm an openly gay man, I thought, yeah, you know, here's something that I really would like to look at, especially with our clients who have dementia, because, you know, from my perspective, you know, an LGBTQ plus person with dementia, it's going to be very hard for them. Because, you know, especially with the, the age of our clients, you know, some of them it was illegal for them to be gay. And then, you know, they move into a care home, and they have dementia. And, you know, sometimes they could be coming out every week, because they don't recollect you know, and it's very hard if they've got partners or family. And I just wanted to kind of get a bit more knowledge myself, but also develop my staff, and develop the service. So we got involved with them. And then within that, they kind of did audits of our home. And, you know, we're in the process of looking at training for staff. But I also came across the Skills for Care framework, which I found, I could use going hand in hand with the Circle Project, okay. And it literally gave me a complete overlook of my whole service.

Pia 03:13

So how did you use the framework practically,

Colin Scott 03:16

I kind of use it as an ongoing tool. So literally each page, I would work through my service, work through my policies work through staff recruitment, and kind of make, I'm kind of my staff call me a Post it person, because if I can stick a post it note on it, that's brilliant. So with the framework, I literally have a post it note near enough on every page that tells me what we've achieved on that part of the

we've, I've given the staff some training, based on from my experience and my knowledge, but we are looking at more formal training around it. You know, we updated our policy on, you know, supporting a client with dementia, who is LGBTQ plus, and that gave staff a few pointers. But, you know, we are looking more for a more formal training that you know, they can be accredited for. Because I think the more knowledge I give them, the more they're able to support. Yeah.

Wendy Adams 08:53

And is this something that you include in the publicity about the home and when you're having those conversations about admission to the home, because I'm guessing that there might be some people who would specifically choose to come and live with you, because of your attitude to, to these issues.

Colin Scott 09:12

That's the first thing we did as part of the circle project is we reviewed all of our advertising. So we reviewed our brochures, our website, and we changed everything on it. We made it very clear that we are an inclusive service. We made sure that there was enough evidence, so pictorial evidence, how we wrote things to kind of make everyone aware that it's not a marketing, it is who we are, and it's what we do. And we kind of have done that across the board with everything.

Pia 09:48

They sort of really linked to your values, I suppose. Yeah.

Colin Scott 09:51

Because we've reviewed them as part of the process as well, to make sure they were fully up to date and literally, it was a full involvement with every body within the service. Yeah.

Pia 10:01

So what sort of changes? For instance, just give us a couple of examples? Because I think sometimes it can be a bit hard to think well, where do I, where would I start? Obviously start with the LGBTQ plus learning framework. But you know, what, what sort of things have you changed practically,

10:16

the biggest change we made was around communication, the use of pronouns, the use of, you know, gender type, it's kind of we started there first, we incorporate that into our pre admission assessments. So whereas before, you know, we kind of avoided the questions. Now we ask the questions, you know, what are your preferred pronouns? You know, what is your sexuality? Are you are you prepared to disclose, you know, covered more history like that, we also made dramatic changes to our policies in how they were written, to make them more inclusive. So it wasn't kind of he she was more, they,

And is that part of the learning framework? Yeah. So kind of think about those, you know, terminology and, and kind of giving staff some some pointers, I suppose, is what you're saying there's some guidance around what's what's what's good. And what's not good is

Colin Scott 15:12

because I do a lot of observations. So you know, I will walk around the home every day. And I will overhear things, you know, and I will kind of speak to staff either in supervisions. Or I'll just put them to one side and just say, you know, instead of saying this, try and say this, because you might find it has a better result. But at the same time, it's also with families, because sometimes you have to kind of give them a little guidance prompts on what is appropriate, and what isn't. Because sometimes they can be a trigger. Yeah,

Pia 15:46

people coming into sectors as relatives can be really tricky, because you don't want to offend anyone, you don't want to upset people, and people have their own views. But at the same time, there's a reason why you're making these changes. Yeah,

Colin Scott 15:58

I think, to get to that level, you've got to have that openness with the families, and you kind of I think, the fact through the Circle Project and everything by getting them fully involved. You know, I think they kind of are happy for us to kind of make pointers. You know, I think, if we didn't have that relationship, they would still be very tricky questions to have. Because, you know, they wouldn't be fully aware of what your your goal is or what you're trying to do. But by being open, transparent, and involving them, it gives you a better baseline to actually be working. Yeah.

Wendy Adams 16:37

I mean, you're obviously quite far down the journey of this, this work. If you could look back now and give yourself some advice from when you started, is there anything that you would you would advise yourself or anything you would have done differently? I

16:55

think the one thing I would have done is probably not jumped in it too quickly. I think, you know, I'm happy where we are, and I'm happy, we're still moving forward, I think part of me may have rushed at the beginning, because I just wanted to achieve things. And I think if I step back and thought, right,

then this is a long term plan for the service, it's not something that is that I know is going to happen overnight, it is something that is going to take years plus to embed, because you know, especially with new staff coming in, you know, the culture could change, and it's kind of getting them on board. So it's going to be an ongoing piece of work, it's going to be challenging at times, because we have to work with individuals. But it is kind of knowing that at the end of it, there is an end goal where everyone will feel safe within the care home.

Pia 18:31

I suppose that's a good goal goal to have has anything that surprised you. You done it. And then my gosh, didn't expect that I

Colin Scott 18:40

must admit, I was actually surprised with how involved my staff became, if I when I first got approached,

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and talking to the residents. And that's what I would actively encourage, it's okay, looking at all my paperwork, but get it firsthand, speak to the people that are actually feeling the benefit.

Pia 21:08

Yeah, I was gonna ask you about impact. You sort of mentioned it yourself, what impact has it had on the people that you're supporting, because that's one of the things that CQC are really keen to, to find out on anything you're doing isn't a is what impact is actually having? I

Colin Scott 21:23

have noticed that there has been a reduction in anxiety. You know, we don't have many clients who are that anxious, we have some clients who used to spend time within their rooms, they now socially engaged in the lounge with other people, it's kind of makes them feel more comfortable within the service to actually not have to isolate, but to actually be part of the service and spend time with other people. Which in general, then has an impact on not only their mental health, but their physical health, because, you know, they are getting more stimulation, more input? Yeah.

Pia 22:04

It's a really important impact. Yeah, probably not maybe not something that you had envisaged when you are like first starting that, that that's the impact that it would have

Colin Scott 22:13

not to that extent, you know, we've we've had clients who have literally spent most of their time in the room, and suddenly they're coming down, even if it's just once a week, it's kind of like, Whoa, this is a

I'm predicting that in how many years if I go into a care home to receive care, that I continue to be me, and I don't have to change because I've gone into a care home. Yeah.

Pia 24:24

And if, if nothing else, that's a good, good reason. You know, you're you're, you're kind of making it so person centred and making sure that that is meeting the needs of everybody every now and in the future. And you know, yeah, it's really good,

Wendy Adams 24:37

background knowledge in relation to the work environment, HR, employment, and stuff like that. So it kind of ticks a lot of boxes, to make sure you're kind of meeting not only clients, but also staff. Yeah.

Pia 27:16

Excellent.

Wendy Adams 27:17

And, you know, that's important, isn't it? Yeah, I think one of the, you know, we just mentioned CQC. Earlier, you know, one of the areas that CQC will be looking at is around equality and diversity in relation to staff, and what we do about our, our workforce, as well as equality and diversity in relation to, to the people that we provide care and support to so. So when you say it was it was it was good, and it was interesting. Is there a key point that you learn from that, that you think, yeah, that was that was worth going on? I hadn't thought about that before, because I'm guessing, you know, you may have been more enlightened than some of the managers on the training to start with.

Colin Scott 28:00

I think, from my perspective, I've kind of thought, you know, instead of me just picking up this training, this is something I feel should be mandatory for all managers? Because I think, you know, yes, most managers have an understanding of HR and employment law. But this kind of was very specific around LGBTQ plus, yeah, you know, because when we employ people, we don't ask them what their sexuality is, you know, and if they want to be open about it, when they, when they, during their interview process, or when they start their employment, that's brilliant, but we would never force someone to, to be open about who they are, if they're not comfortable with it. And this kind of training, kind of give you pointers about how to support someone, if they did come through your door and said, You know, I'm transsexual, so I would like to be called her, not him. And it's kind of how you would support them, to kind of into the workplace as they wish to be. Yeah.

Pia 29:04

And that's really important, isn't it? And we were talking about the people, people being supported, changing, but obviously your workforce are changing as well as society is changing, isn't it? So, you know, over over the, you know, over time, just in the last, what, 10 years, there's been a massive change, obviously, we want to attract attracts people who are diverse into the workforce, and we really wanted to change just to ask you about something else. So I wanted to ask you a little bit about offering students placements. So tell me about what what sort of placements you offer.

Wendy Adams 30:30

And is there anything in particular you do that makes those placements a success.

Colin Scott 30:34

We make it fun. That's literally it's kind of anyone that comes in and placement is buddied up with a member of staff. So they kind of become their mentor. And it is literally, you know, the staff are told you need to remember this person's here on placement, make it fun, get them involved with the residents. And see the interaction. And what we've noticed recently is, especially with the schools, some of our clients love having the younger generation here. it you know, and they, the younger generation also love to sit and listen to their stories. It is it's so nice to see that bond. Because sometimes when you have people on placements, they come in, and there's no interaction at all. But when you have someone come in who literally wants to learn something, wants to spend time with the clients, and you

have, we have previously had people who have come to us on work experience, then come and work for us part time and then come and work for us full time. And, you know, I like it when it's like that, because it's someone you know, it's someone that's you've actually helped mould really, yeah. And also, it's good for the residents. It's, you know, it's not a stranger, it's someone they've seen before. And we do that quite a bit. We've had quite a few that literally have work experience, and then come to work for us.

Wendy Adams 34:04

Good, good pay off. So we always have our time to care slot in every episode. So we're gonna ask you the same question. So what is your most time saving tip?

I say, yeah, absolutely. And there's a guidance note as well, isn't it. So even if you feel really Oh, this is out of my comfort zone, I'm not sure what I'm talking about just having those guidance notes to your team meeting, showing a film, and then starting a conversation. And I think it was interesting, what Colin was saying was that he, you know, almost wished he hadn't sort of kind of jumped so into it, you know, and wanting to make change, and all it's all at the same time, you know, sometimes just starting, okay, this month, I'm going to do one thing, then next month, we'll do something else that you're building on it, and using some of those resources to help you. So and then thinking about what what