



INCREASING STAFF RETENTION IN A SECURE UNIT FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

Case Study by the Social Care Permanent Team

CLIENT

A secure unit for young offenders operated by a county council in South West England.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

To provide permanent staff to a secure unit for young offenders that was struggling with staff retention. The goal was to improve the profile of candidates being hired, which would increase the number of permanent staff members. By increasing the number of permanent staff members, there would be a knock on affect of increasing starter retention and reducing the pressure on staff that was leading to high staff turnover.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

The service being a secure unit brought unique challenges. Due to the environment and highly challenging behaviours, potential residential care officers would require key experience, motivations and personality traits. Another key challenge was the high turnover rate of new recruits. The staff team were consistently under pressure and there was a high level of agency usage.

OUTCOME FOR CLIENT

By increasing the quality of candidates going forward for interview, our client had a choice of high quality candidates to hire, rather than hiring through necessity.

We helped the client hire over 15 permanent residential care officers, who came equipped with relevant experience and were able to handle the high intensity environment. By increasing the number of permanent staff, the service experienced an increase in retention of current staff and staff reported feeling less pressure.

A word from MARK BEAVER, Associate Director, Charles Hunter Associates:

Improving the morale across the entire service, including the current staff team and management, by increasing permanent staff numbers and boosting the retention rate of new hires—ultimately leading to better retention of existing staff—represents a significant achievement. Collaborating with this client has been highly positive; their openness and honesty enable us to pinpoint the right candidate profiles, saving them time and providing a strong selection through high-quality interviews.