

Case Study

ECH. South Australia

Home Care & Residential Care

700 staff

Matt Mulvihill – GM People & Culture



Background

With a major growth strategy in play, and despite staff turnover being consistently below the sector average, ECH needed new ways to secure quality client facing staff. Having explored a variety of strategies (recruiting/training unqualified staff, partnerships with education providers and employment agencies as well as targeted recruitment campaigns) other channels were needed. Early attempts at putting in place their own referral program showed promise but a traditional approach and largely manual processes made it hard to unlock the full benefits of referral.

Why Care Friends?

Care Friends launched in the UK in early 2020 after 2 years development and testing. ECH took an early interest in the work of the developer, Neil Eastwood, recognising the quality and retention benefits achievable through an effective employee referral program. They were keen to be involved in the Australian trials, based on the results being achieved in the UK.

Results after 8 months

In early 2021, ECH was the first provider in Australia to trial the employee referral app. Their first Care Friends-sourced employees started in late March 21 and 8 months later the following results were achieved:

Quantitative results:

- 19% of all starters were sourced via referral using Care Friends. Given the ECH growth program, many of these starters were additional headcount.
- In eight months Care Friends referral delivered 25% of the annual (turnover related) recruitment task and is on track to deliver 35% for the full year (this excludes growth-related starters).

Qualitative results:

- Referral-sourced employees have delivered strong retention results with turnover for this group sitting at less than 50% of ECH's current turnover figure.
- Almost 1 in 3 referred candidates was offered a role.

"Care Friends has been a great investment for ECH. We couldn't be happier with the results and the response from staff; Care Friends has made recruitment everyone's business at ECH and the benefits flow to our clients, our staff and our business"

Dr. David Panter – CEO



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"The eight-month result exceeded our expectations, producing 19% of all starters during the period. Based on results and our learnings, in partnership with Care Source, we are now finetuning our scheme with a view to activating additional bonus functionality, adjusting reward levels and launching strategies to further increase active users across the organisation.

The effectiveness of Care Friends as a source of quality recruits will also allow us to reduce our reliance on job boards and transfer advertising spend to staff through referral rewards.

As with any commitment of this nature we had questions about what the product would offer, combined with early hopes for a process that was easy for our staff to access and use. We wanted something that offered a genuine incentive for staff to refer jobs to the quality people in their networks.

For a new product, the roll-out of Care Friends was very smooth. The process for staff was simple and well thought through. Feedback from staff is that Care Friends is easy to use and keeps job referral at their fingertips allowing them to refer to their network with ease. Support from the Australian vendor Care Source has been consistently responsive and proactive.

Care Friends has redesigned employee referral and that has significantly bolstered ECH's recruitment capability at a time where candidates per vacancy are reducing consistently across the care industry. Indicators for candidate quality are promising and the ability to improve on our early results with Care Friends seems very feasible. The results show that employee referral has made a meaningful contribution to our business and is a strategy we intend to take full advantage of."

About ECH

ECH (Enabling Confidence at Home) is a leading not for profit provider of services that enable older people to remain living independently in their own home and have the best life possible as they age. This includes independent retirement living, home services, allied health and wellness services as well as respite care and providing opportunities for social connection.

