



See our training



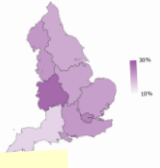
Download the research

Sector led review on vacancies for Registered Managers of homes; and Why are children's homes in England getting smaller?

The problem

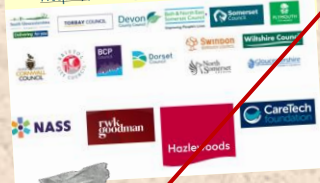
Almost **20%** of children's homes had **no Registered Manager**

Lots of hypotheses, but no actual evidence about **WHY** this was the case



The approach

- ✓ Sponsorship from local authorities, companies and charities
- ✓ Independent steering group with providers, local authorities, Government and inspectors
- ✓ Focus group activity
- ✓ National survey of children's homes – 378 responses – 125,000 words
- ✓ Full report available at <https://dialogueltd.co.uk/research>



It's a thankless task. There is so much responsibility and expectation within the role, the nature of the work, the protection, transference and counter transference from the children, their vulnerability, the risks they take, the trauma, the staff. The regulatory standards, the safeguarding, risk management and it feels that it all hangs on the RM.

Registered Manager



BUT... vocation is sustaining
I love the children, I am thankful for my RI, [my local authority] is a great place to work and my senior leaders are very visible, there is a lot of support available to me. The hours are long, and the job is very stressful, but it is the children that are the priority, and I stay in touch with many children who leave us, long into their adulthood.

Registered Manager

The findings

Many interacting factors explain the vacancy rates, including the administrative processes in registering managers, and huge rises in number of homes, but **the more we found the more questions we had!**

Retention? – 16% of managers plan to move on this year – this would give 5-6 year tenure which is OK for UK (tho' far behind others)

However, they no longer plan to move to other homes – they plan to exit sector... why?



Why RMs are leaving the sector?

- Stress and burnout – 35%
- Work-life balance issues – 25%
- Career progression – 15%
- Financial concerns – 10%
- Organisational challenges – 10%
- Retirement and long-term sustainability – 5%

- What prevents people from becoming a Registered Manager**
1. Ofsted/Regulatory Pressure
 2. Stress/Mental Health
 3. Work-Life Balance
 4. Responsibility
 5. Lack of Support
 6. Inadequate Pay
 7. Lengthy Registration Process
 8. Fear of Failure
 9. Observations of Current Manager

Containment of Anxiety

'Internal working model' of a children's home

Reconnect our Language

We cannot just 'Fix the Market'



10 expert sector perspectives

1. Steve Porchall: History Agency & reform
2. Andrew Rome: The economics of smaller homes
3. Dr Kevin Gallagher: Size & the therapeutic 'treat'
4. Jonathan Stanley: Evidence – or anxiety?
5. Jacqui McCann: Solo placements & deprivation of liberty
6. Nick Sorbinius: Local experience, where I belong
7. Wendy Williams: Commissioning: the reality in practice
8. Victoria Elworthy: Small is not simple – leadership POV
9. Dan Hope: A global perspective
10. Emmanuel Apan-Inwang: Alternative European models

Relationships at the Core
A workforce that stays Risk-sensible, not risk-averse
Shared, co-produced planning
Purpose before size
Trust across the system

Recommendations

- Recruitment & Reward
- Culture
- Training, supervision and support
- Regulation
- Applying to be an RM
- Inspection
- Further research



Caring for children in complex situations: Five learning points and a case for change

Findings of the Peer Collaboration

