

## Caring company looks after its own

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Caring for its staff has helped a company set up to look after others make rapid progress in recent months.

A commitment to the training and development of its people has played a key part in business growth and the creation of new jobs for Tynedale Care, which provides anything from a monthly shopping trip to round the clock care for 170 people in the Tyne Valley.

One of those people, Multiple Sclerosis sufferer, Neil Robinson from Hexham, said: "I have had help from Tynedale Care for a number of years and have always found the services offer the flexibility and level of support I need at a consistently high standard."

According to registered manager Gill Glendinning: "The training we have done has undoubtedly improved the quality of the care we provide which has, in turn, led to new contracts."

And the statistics back up the claims. Hexham based Tynedale Care has 20% more business than it did six months ago and it now employs the equivalent of 43 full time staff. "Recruiting and keeping good people has always been a challenge in this business," added Gill: "So we decided to make this a priority and looked to see what kind of help we could get."

That help came through the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Train to Gain initiative. Train to Gain aims to help organisations get the training they need to stay ahead in a competitive environment by improving the skills of the workforce. Developed as part of a wider effort by the Regional Skills Partnership in the North East to increase the productivity and further regenerate the region, Train to Gain will ensure that skills brokerage is available to employers in the region.

The service offers impartial advice and matches training needs to local learning providers, to ensure that flexible, responsive training programmes are delivered to meet employers' needs. A core element of Train to Gain is the access to appropriate funding of Skills for Life, first Level 2 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), Level 3 NVQ's and Management and Leadership learning opportunities.

Northern Care Training put together and delivered the programme of NVQ training and assessment for Tynedale Care which has created a greater understanding within the business, improved motivation and driven up performance.

Chris Roberts, Regional Director, LSC North East, said: "While the benefits of training are often easy to see in manufacturing due to improved productivity, they are not always so obvious in the service sector. However Tynedale Care's experience shows that the results can be equally dramatic and the company is an example to other service businesses that training really does positively impact on the bottom line."

Ends

**Note to editors:**

In the North East, the LSC and One NorthEast are working closely with other agencies to ensure that the design and delivery of Train to Gain is fully integrated with other types of support on offer to business. This includes ensuring the skills brokerage services is integrated with the Business link branded support service and that support available is fully aligned with the support to employers from other agencies in the region, such as Jobcentre Plus – which can assist with recruitment of staff.

Train to Gain service provides:

- A comprehensive analysis of an organisation's training needs, which also identifies the elements that may be applicable for funding, as well as those for which the employer must pay.
- Easy access to relevant, flexible, high quality training, delivered mostly in the workplace using an "assess-train-assess" model, which takes the employee's prior learning and experience into account.
- Information and support to access a wide range of training packages including higher level qualifications (including Level 3) and training which may not lead to a qualification.
- Information and advice to employees on qualifications and training, eligibility for LSC funded learning opportunities, financial support, skills shortages and priorities.
- Support to develop strategies to address future training needs, which are aligned to wider business objectives.
- A contribution to wage costs to help employers when staff are absent from work due to training (available only to companies with under 50 employees).

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