



NCF Blog
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Honeymoon heaven!

Vic Rayner reflects on her first week at NCF

Over the course of my first week at NCF I have been reminded of the joys of a new job. The fact that in this precious 'honeymoon' period, there is a moment to ask the 'naïve' question, a chance to listen, and importantly an opportunity to reflect on the weight attached to information provided on past, present and future.

I am delighted to be joining NCF at this critical time for adult social care. It is an organisation that has an excellent reputation for its work with third sector providers of care across the UK, and is supported by a strong body of membership. I have had a chance this week to dip my toe into a range of issues including meeting with the regulator, joining debates around sustainability and getting engaged in debates about the representation of social care. I know that these are areas that will become my bread and butter - but I thought it might be helpful at this point to give an 'outside' view on these issues.

It strikes me that discussions focussed on sustainability and the future of adult social care which do not account for the importance of the public perception of the sector will miss a trick. The acknowledged shift in focus required by whole populations, in order to address the pressure on services of all types, requires urgent attention. It needs debate inspired not just by funding arrangements or meeting the requirements of the regulator or by 'selling' a vision of the sector - but needs to understand what the general public – both current and future users of services - believe that social care is there for. This seems to me a critical part of the jigsaw that I need to understand to help me in leading NCF to support its membership in charting the journey ahead.

I have no doubt that I will be in sensory overload for the coming weeks - and am particularly looking forward to joining NCF members and partners at the annual conference next week. But throughout this time I will be keeping in mind how best NCF can use its influence and expertise to 'join the dots' for those across the sector grappling with these critical issues - and remembering that honeymoons don't last forever!

Vic Rayner | Executive Director | National Care Forum

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