

WE.care¹ Story

[1]: Meet Mara

Over celebratory tea and cakes with her core team, Mara reflects back on her first year as CEO with the WE.care cooperative and is delighted with what the team has achieved. WE.care was formed just over five years ago when six privately owned Care Homes in the east of England came together under a cooperative structure to provide quality, compassionate care in a residential or community setting.

Mara loves to spend as much time as she can in the field talking to as many of the 1,000 WE.care staff as possible and hearing directly about the opportunities they see for WE.care and the challenging they face every day. Around one third look after their customers (patients) in care facilities and half in the community. The balance work in business services functions. About 60% of WE.care's staff are partners (employed by WE.care) and 40% are associate partners provided by agencies. WE.care's turnover was around £200M in the previous financial year, and their margins and cash reserves were about normal for the industry.

Mara has been particularly pleased with progress on WE.care's strategy and transformation over the past six months. Encouraged by the senior partners and non-executive directors, Mara brought her core team together to build a vision for WE.care's long term future and a roadmap for getting there. Mara and her team were determined to plan a long term way forward for WE.care to delivery quality care to her customers whilst driving financial stability and making good returns for the partners. As a self-confessed technology enthusiast, Mara is passionate about using technology to improve partner and associate partner's efficiency and job satisfaction.

[2]: Default future

About six months into her leadership of WE.care, Mara engaged Jake as an external facilitator to take the team through the 'Beyond Default' strategic planning process² in a series of workshops. The sessions mixed senior partners, partners with care specialisms, partners from business services and WE.care tech team members.

After explaining the planning method, Jake split the group into smaller teams and asked them what WE.care's default future would be. After discussion and 'playback' the common points were:

Near term - maintained market share and moderate revenue growth, margins hold.

Medium term - eroded market share, revenue plateaux, moderate margin decline.

Long term - extensive decline or existential threat.

Inspired by their work so far, Mara and Jake have decided to run a competitive tender to select a team of consultants to help them move through the next stage of the 'beyond default' planning process.

¹ WE.care is a fictitious organisation in the UK care sector

² <https://beyond-default.com>