



Locum v perm: what works for you?

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Hello, and welcome to Season 2 of *The Social Work Community* podcast, where we aim to connect you directly with the social workers and the issues affecting the sector. Our first season went down a storm and was nominated in this year's British Association of Social Workers (BASW) Social Work Journalism Awards. You can listen to all of the episodes on the leading podcast platforms, including Spotify, Audible, Amazon and Apple podcasts.

My name is Kirsty Ayakwah, the senior careers editor at Community Care, and in this episode we speak to Kayleigh Rose Evans and Le'Siran Edwards, and ask them, 'Which is better, working in a permanent social work role or working in an agency role?'

Kayleigh is a social worker in a permanent role in adults services. She is also a practice educator and best interests assessor, who holds a Master's degree in professional development in social work. Alongside her social work practice, Kayleigh works as an independent trainer and also shares reflections on social work through her YouTube channel called Kayleigh Rose Evans.

Le'Siran has 25 years of experience working with children and families, and has worked for over a decade in children's social work. After a brief period in a permanent role, she has largely worked as a locum in various local authorities. She has spent the last ten years building up her coaching service, Social Work Coaching Hub, and stepped away from her locum work last year to focus on her business full-time. She also runs her own podcast, called Dear Social Worker Pod.

We speak to them both to find out the pros and cons of agency and permanent social work roles. [0:01:52.9]

So hello, Le'Siran and Kayleigh. Thank you so much for joining us. We're talking today about locum-ing and working permanently, and I know that Le'Siran, you have, and Kayleigh, you've worked permanently throughout your career. I wanted to get you to speak a little bit more about that experience. So if I start with you, Kayleigh, could you tell us a bit more about your journey into social work? [0:02:15.3]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Yeah. So I studied, as part of my degree, in a different area than where I went into practice. But I have worked for the same local authority for eight years now. It's quite a small local authority and I've found it supportive. And I've had the opportunity to have various roles. My first role was absolutely brilliant. I was working in a rehabilitation centre amongst some great colleagues, and then I moved to have a secondment in a hospital team, which then gave me



the confidence to apply for another role in a neighbourhood hub, which was working alongside a team of district nurses and various other professionals. And that was a particularly interesting role because that project hadn't been running for that long, so it was an emerging sort of service.

And then I worked on a larger community team, which really taught me about sort of the bread and butter social work in adults services, and I got a lot of chance to do safeguarding work and work on a duty team once a week as well, just covering duty, sorry.

And those opportunities then gave me the chance to apply for my HT social worker so I could take a leading role on safeguarding concerns, and I'm currently working in a hospital again doing shorter-term work.

So I've really enjoyed that local authority work that I've done.
[0:03:33.3]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Brilliant. Thank you so much. And Le'Siran, could you tell us a bit more about your experience, where you started out and where you are now? [0:03:40.7]

Le'Siran Edwards:

Thank you for having me, Kirsty, on this podcast. It's a pleasure to be here. Once I completed my Master's in social work, I began my career as an ASYE social worker, and then I stepped into senior social work positions. But after two years I decided to take a step back from permanent work and step into locum social work. And I did that until I finished in January 2023. [0:04:08.2]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

And now you have your own business, I believe? [0:04:11.4]

Le'Siran Edwards:

Yes. So in January 2023 I took the bittersweet decision of stepping back from frontline social work practice. I was in a management position in an A&I team, and I set up the Social Work Coaching Hub, which began March last year. And that offers leadership development coaching on a one-to-one basis for social workers. I host events for social workers. I've got an online resource hub for social workers as well. And of course my podcast, Dear Social Worker, Let's Talk.

And the reason why I did that, and the reason why I could do that, was halfway through my social work career I became burnt-out. I mean, I was burnt-out several times. But there was just one particular time where I was on the phone to a friend saying, 'I don't know how long I can do this.' And she was like, 'Why have you not thought about trying something different, trying something that's an extension of coaching?' And that sent me to research what other elements or what other career paths could I choose, and that's how I got into coaching.



So alongside my full-time locum role, I always had a part-time clinical coaching practice, and that's just become now full-time with The Social Work Coaching Hub from last year up until now. [0:05:35.1]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Well, congratulations on that. I mean, there's so much to unpack there. Because I know Kayleigh also has...I'm going to say, can I call it a 'side hustle'? [0:05:43.5]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Yeah.

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Yeah. And I think it's interesting that both of you, you both started out as permanent. Le'Siran, you moved into locum-ing, and I guess that would have given you some of those skillsets for you to move into starting up your own business. So if I could just go back to that pivot that happened, where you moved from permanent to locum-ing, and I guess that leap that you took in having to do that. So the confidence in being able to move from having the stability, some of the things that Kayleigh's spoken about, to becoming locum and to be working at different spaces. [0:06:22.8]

Le'Siran Edwards:

Sure. So I'll preface my answer to that by saying prior to completing the MA in social work, I had had some locum engagements working with children and families. So I'd got a contract working in a south-Asian refuge. I had a contract working with Barnardo's. I had some contracts working in nurseries right across the region as well. And that had given me some agency experience. So I had some knowledge of the way that agencies work and the culture of agency work, how the pay works, pensions etc., etc.

So I had some of that knowledge before I stepped into social work locum contracts. But that didn't really take away the nervousness around making that leap because of course I was older, I had more responsibilities by the time, you know, I'd completed my two years post-qualification. And I had more financial responsibilities I needed to consider. So when you're thinking about job security and pension and sick pay, employee benefits, all of that was part of my decision-making, making the transition from a permanent social worker to locum social work.

But when you touched on the word 'confidence' there, I think the confidence really came from a lot of the work that I'd done before as an agency worker, even though it was in a different area. But I never took for granted, not for a moment, that I was walking into a new environment where I didn't know anyone. Didn't know the managers, didn't know the organisational culture. And to an extent you could argue that does take confidence because two years in social work we all know is nothing. You do have some really good solid experience behind you, but you need to build on that year on year. So I was nervous stepping out into locum work, but I continued with locum



work for upwards of nine years, so that confidence just grew as time went on. [0:08:31.9]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Kayleigh, so does what Le'Siran said resonate with you in terms of those appeals to being a locum, and was any of that something that attracted you at any point? [0:08:42.4]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Yeah. I mean, I have considered that sort of work before because it would give you more flexibility and freedom, and also I think sometimes working in a local authority I suppose you get one view of how social work's done, but it may give you a wider view of things from working in various areas. So I definitely think that's positive.

I also think that walking into those new environments definitely would give you confidence. And I think that for me, having various roles within the council has given me confidence in itself. But I can just imagine that that would be even more so if you'd worked in different areas as well. [0:09:18.9]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Yeah. What did you feel was the appeal to taking the trajectory that you've taken? 'Cause you've worked in different teams, you've worked within the same local authority, and you talked about the stability of having your pension and then also knowing the people that you work with. [0:09:34.0]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Yeah. So I think it gave me a really good foundation when I first started in social work. So I had a really good ASYE programme. I had a really good manager that was nurturing to me, and I felt that a lot of the challenges that I was going through – so sort of learning how to challenge within a big, multi-disciplinary meeting where maybe social services were butting heads with health staff – it was like I had people to run those feelings past, and realise that actually, sometimes you are the only voice in the room on one side of an opinion if you're challenging for people's rights and things.

And going back into an office and knowing you have colleagues that you've got to know really well, that you can talk about that with. And also especially when I was newer, having people that were also new and going through those difficult emotions, because sometimes that can be quite emotive and you don't know if you're doing it right, you don't know why you're doing certain things. And then having someone just consolidate, 'Yeah, you are doing the right thing and this is why,' and then having the training that was afforded to me as well really helped me with that structure that I needed, and gave me the foundation of my professional identity, which has helped me in my roles that I've had. [0:10:43.0]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Some social workers that I've spoken to have often talked about that support structure that Kayleigh, you just mentioned, about having people you know. And sometimes that's not the case when you're



locum-ing. So I'm interested to know for you, Le'Siran, did you feel like it was maybe a baptism of fire in some of the situations that you were in, if you had to go to another local authority and just pick up where you didn't have that support structure around you in the same way that Kayleigh's talked about? [0:11:11.9]

Le'Siran Edwards:

I have two ways of answering that question because I've had experiences of both. I've had experiences of having very good support structure in place and great management support, and I've had experiences where it's not been as strong. So I can talk from both perspectives. But what I will say about locum work overall, it truly is about the organisational culture and the individual manager that's allocated to you. It isn't so much about the fact that you're a locum that determines whether you have a support structure or not. They should exist irrespective of where you're placed, irrespective of what team you're in. That support should be there. We're all entitled to monthly supervision, we're all entitled to ensure that we have our breaks and we have holidays of some sort throughout the year. All of that is standard, whether you are locum or not. But it very much is dependent on the organisational structure, the team and the manager that you're assigned to.

My personal experiences, when I first moved it was interesting because when I look back, I expected the good relationship and good rapport I had with my permanent manager from my locum manager. And it was a process to work with a new way of communicating. My permanent manager, we worked in an open office. When I went into my first locum position we all had separate rooms, the manager included. So you would have to knock on the door and go and see them etc. So very different. And that manager quite often closed her door to focus on her work and get her work done. And that was very difficult for me to navigate, because of course we're used to...the environment itself called for us to be able to access each other.

So the relationship with that manager wasn't as strong as I would have liked it to have been. However, it didn't impact on the support that actually was available to me. It was just the way in which she supported. It was different.

I can speak of another experience where the structure wasn't in place. It was 80, 90% locum social workers and it felt as if you were very much treated like a number. You were just coming through the door knowing at some point that you would leave again. So the support structure was weaker, I would say, in that experience. And I think that was simply because the local authority, they were clearly really struggling and having several short-time contracts and several agency staff coming in and out, I think had an impact on their organisational culture, which overall impacted the relationships that the locum staff had with their managers. [0:14:04.5]



Kirsty Ayakwah:

I hear that. It does sound like it really does depend on where you go and the culture, as you've explained. So that also must impact on those locums and their decisions to go to particular local authorities, 'cause they would have heard from word-of-mouth what it's like? [0:14:19.9]

Le'Siran Edwards:

Absolutely. Absolutely. And I'd say this to any local authority head of service or service manager that is listening to this. All locum workers, they speak to each other. All agency consultants speak to each other. Very much aware of local authorities where the organisational culture doesn't offer the support that they feel is needed, and/or there's very high caseloads, and/or there's difficulties with management structures. Any of those are always flagged. And they can be flagged by agency consultants also. It does have an impact when a slew of agency workers have difficulty in that local authority in terms of high caseloads or not having supervision, or whatever it may be. It does have an impact on how many people will be interested in going to that local authority. [0:15:15.3]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

I know that for some – and Kayleigh, please chip in if you feel like you can respond to this – I know that for some local authorities they're keen to convert social workers that are locum to permanent members of staff, and sometimes they do that through, I guess, the offer of particular training. 'Cause I think it depends – some local authorities don't offer the training to everyone. [0:15:36.1]

Le'Siran Edwards:

Yes, there very much is a push, always has been, for social workers who are locum to take up the permanent roles when they become available. I have been offered some of those roles. The training element doesn't resonate as much. I don't recall being offered that. But we are talking some years back now. But ultimately, it's the individual's choice as to whether they take up that permanent role, and most locum workers I've met over the years, the locum style of working and what they refer to as 'flexibility' – again, I think we need to flesh out what that really looks like and what that means, 'cause I certainly didn't leave work any earlier than a permanent worker! – but I think it really is dependent on the individual and what their personal responsibilities are outside of the workplace. [0:16:25.1]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

I was just thinking, I've heard some horror stories about loopholes in agency workers and being expected to work all hours and things, because they're agency and expected to work harder, and then that can only be done, you know, over a short period of time until you need a bit of a substantial break. So I'd be interested to know the timeframe of how long you've stayed in these roles. I know in some councils people find it very supportive and end up staying in the locum role for a couple of years, say, if they are struggling to retain permanent staff and they don't decide to go on as a permanent member of staff as well themselves. [0:17:00.6]



Le'Siran Edwards:

It's a really good question and a really good talking point because for me, the word that came up when you mentioned that is 'myth'. And the reason why the word 'myth' comes up, I've never experienced a more difficult caseload or higher caseload or more overtime or anything related to that in my locum experience ever. I've never worked with anyone who has had that experience.

Now what I will say is, some people may perceive it to be that they are given the higher caseload or they are given the most challenging families, that sort of thing. Some people may see it that way, and you can't take away from someone's experience of that. All I can say, from my personal experience it hasn't been that way. In terms of the children and families that you have, it very much is dependent on what comes through the door. That's the part of this that none of us have control over, none of us have any control over. So it very much depends on the caseload that you end up with, right? And because we can't determine that...

In terms of staying in roles, when my longest period of staying somewhere has been approximately four years, maybe three and a half, four years. My other role has been two to three. So it hasn't been a case, for me, it hasn't been a case where it's six months here, one year there, three months here. That is quite unusual for me. I tend to stay.

The caveat to that is, if people are locum because they want to experience different types of roles, which can sit in the flexibility pool shall we say, that's the part that offers a bit of flexibility, then they may have, and choose, certain shorter-term contracts so they're able to widen their experience. But equally, as you mentioned earlier Kayleigh, you've chosen to opt for secondments, and those secondments are for short periods of time as well. So it can work both ways, really. [0:19:01.1]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

And I was just going to add in there, I feel that I have had a bit more insight now into these opportunities that are out there. But leaving university, obviously you have your placements, and luckily my final one was in a local authority and it was a statutory placement which then led me quite easily into a role that I was able to get pretty much straight away. But I feel that you don't really get that much information on alternatives that are out there. I felt for me, like, oh, I just wanted to grab that opportunity. But I wouldn't have even known where to start with getting a locum role, really. And I think, you know, I was always thinking about the benefits of the local authority. You have the stability, you're working for your pension. If you want to have children you've got your maternity leave. But then I suppose on the flip side you can save up money and plan that out in a different way if you are locum, so... [0:19:57.9]



Kirsty Ayakwah:

I was going to add also, do you think that it depends where you are in that stage of your career? And this is open to both of you. Because I have spoken to social workers who feel like locum-ing is the best thing for them at this time. They're single or they want to earn as much money as possible. And then I've spoken to social workers who have, you know, become married or they've decided to buy a house, and for them being permanent makes more sense. Do you think it depends on where you are in your life? [0:20:24.5]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

I think it does. But sorry, you go ahead.

Le'Siran Edwards:

I completely agree with you, Kayleigh. It definitely does depend on where you are in your life because you know, as I'm coaching social workers, I'm coaching quite a few who are either getting married, just got married or planning a family, and they're looking at career progression options. But funnily enough, locum is not on the table. It's all about secondments or career progression in the local authority where they are. Or, of course, just moving local authorities.

So I think, as with everyone in every profession, you choose what works best for you in your personal circumstances and your family setup and your financial responsibilities at the time. [0:21:08.6]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

I mean, Kayleigh spoke earlier about the stability elements, pensions. She didn't mention it specifically but all of that, annual leave. These are some of the benefits of being permanent. Do you feel that you...I know you're no longer locum but when you were, did you feel like maybe that was something you lost out on? [0:21:27.3]

Le'Siran Edwards:

One thing I will say with that, Kirsty, is I would say my family were far more aware of that fact than me. And I say that to say this. When you're a locum you have a mindset of, 'You need to be in work. If I'm not in work, I don't get paid.' Right? So that in itself inadvertently sets you up for burn-out because you think, 'If you're not in work you don't get paid.'

But then you're in this place that Kayleigh was referring to earlier where you think it's only local authority work that exists. And then you literally just end up in this cycle of just working. And I think it's important for people to understand that you've got to look after yourself. And looking after yourself isn't just in the job, as in have your lunch break, work-life balance, wellbeing. This is about your future. This is about your pension and looking at your kind of end-of-life care, if you will. So it was something that was mentioned to me more so from my family's point of view than me, because I'm in it every day. I'm focused on getting this work completed, I'm focused on being there for children and families. I'm focused on getting paid. That's kind of where it was for me. But on the outskirts, I had family saying, 'Well okay, so what about pension, you know? What about sick pay? And what about these sorts of things?' And that's what led me to do



some research. And I was able to identify a pension company. Particularly when the IR35 came through it was more, that was more of the motivating factor, thinking, 'Things are changing here. I need to start really thinking about the end of life, really, and what does post-65, -67, may -69 by the time two years pass, you know, what does that look like?' So again, there are pension companies out there who will support you, but you have to work with the umbrella company that you're assigned to. My umbrella company in the end was SWES, which was the BASW umbrella company, Social Work Employment Services. I do recommend them because they're not-for-profit and they just give you the information straight-no-chaser. And they recommended a pension company who I got in contact with. Did my research around there, looked at some others, and made my final decision. And you just link that up to the pay that you're receiving from the umbrella company, and that's how you can have a pension in place. [0:23:58.2]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Okay, thank you for that. Kayleigh, we've talked a lot about the benefits or the opportunities, I think, of being a locum. What about being a permanent member of staff? [0:24:09.6]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Yeah. So I guess I just have a really good relationship with so many people who I've been able to learn from, and who I've felt has really invested in helping me to grow as a person and as a social worker. And it's just not something that I could sort of take for granted. And I think there's an element as well of building a reputation for yourself within a local authority and getting some confidence from people saying, 'Oh, that was a really good piece of work,' or, 'I remember when you worked with that person and it was a really good outcome and...' Things like that help to build your character and I think that that's been something that's been really beneficial for me.

Or when you're moving into a new role, you're always learning from different people. But you can bring those same skills into different teams. I just feel that I've met a lot of great people, and a lot of them I enjoy seeing. Maybe I don't see them every day but I go on training sessions and then you get to catch up with those people. And you're always sort of learning from those. And I think you support each other. The best support, really, I've had has been from my peers. And I think that that's something really important.

But also, the training in general that I've had, I've had sort of the best interests assessor training has been good, and the council funded that. And then that has fed into me getting a Master's qualification, 'cause I was able to build up my credits. So part of it I funded myself and part of it I was able to build up from actually those modules I was put on by the local authority as well. So it's been a bit of a mix, and that ended up in me getting something that's helped me progress in my career as well. [0:25:48.3]



Kirsty Ayakwah:

Do you think that that would not have been possible if you had been doing agency work, or it might have taken longer? [0:25:55.1]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

I think that I could have still done it if I was an agency worker, with the Master's. But the ASYE counted towards it with the credits and I think that definitely helped me. Because it felt like a natural part of my progression within the local authority, aside from also picking up bits myself. So I think it did help me to do that while I was working there, while I had sort of the structure around me and I was settled in where I was, I was able to do that. [0:26:23.6]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

So would you ever consider locum-ing? [0:26:26.3]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

So, I definitely would but it's more so since I've developed my side hustle, as you mentioned it before, where I do sometimes do the independent work. But not in the immediate future because I feel I'm getting a real good sense of the bread and butter social work I'm doing. Lots of different things in my role, it's really interesting and diverse, and I feel that that is actually benefitting my independent work. So I actually feel I've got a really good balance.

For example, I said that I'm interested in the Mental Capacity Act, and I've managed to collaborate with a social work academic and we're developing some practical guidance around the Mental Capacity, actually doing those assessments and how we can help practitioners. But that has really grown from the day-to-day assessments that I do in my frontline practice. And then also speaking to colleagues and trying to help other people. It's something that's then fed into that. So it just perfectly benefits everything for me. So I've decided that, you know, I'm happy where I am, and being well supported. So at the moment it's not something that I would consider. But it's definitely something maybe when I don't have as many responsibilities maybe I would consider it in the future. But for me, I have a really good work-life balance in this current role, and having a small child and another one on the way, it works for me to have that stability. And I do work just my hours now, in this role. And I know that that's not the same for everyone. [0:27:53.8]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Okay. And you, Le'Siran, would you ever consider maybe going into a permanent role? [0:27:59.7]

Le'Siran Edwards:

Not at this time, Kirsty. I think I'm on a different trajectory now, I'm in a different stage of my career. And I feel like I achieved what I wanted to achieve whilst being a social worker/social work manager.

I think for me, locum work was a great way to build confidence, network, you know, learn about different roles and responsibilities. But equally, what Kayleigh was saying there around networking with others and being able to build your reputation, I completely agree that permanency does give you that benefit. People know you're the go-to



person if you're the children-in-need lead or, you know, the lead that goes to the MARAC meetings etc. And I think that can add some stability for the children and families as well. Then you know there's a clear line of communication of who to go to.

When you go in as a locum you have to find all of this out, and if that person that goes to MARAC is an agency worker, for example, that can create some delay for children and families and sharing of information.

So there are pros and cons, of course, you know, around that. But I wouldn't be considering at this stage going back into permanent work. [0:29:15.2]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

I think what I like about both of your career journeys is I feel like you're quite similar. Because you both have your businesses. And I think that is really great that you've been able to do both of these whilst doing these jobs, which are different in terms of one being permanent and one being agency. So Kayleigh, does that resonate with you? I know you've worked permanent but you've also got your own YouTube channel. [0:29:40.9]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Yeah. So I can be creative with the people I support but there is a little bit of a limitation to that in other respects. So, I had the opportunity to do a bit of training as part of the teaching partnership that the council had with the local university, and I really enjoyed that day. But you do get this sense of...you're very much expected to just, you know, get through the day-to-day work. You've got a caseload and you can't be going off and doing these things. But I felt that that was like a skill-set that I had, that I wanted to develop. So I kind of took it upon myself to think, 'Right, what do I want my career to look like?' I saw an opportunity because there wasn't much on YouTube, for social work, and I decided that I needed to build the confidence to go ahead and do that. So that's when I decided to go to a local public speaking group and get over my fear of talking in front of people. And then off the back of my YouTube channel I now get asked to go and do talks to local authorities, and it's always on the things that really I want to talk about, which is just ideal.

So I have a lot of creative control with that, whereas I think that that's just meant that I have had a bit of control over what I'm doing, that I get to do a bit of my passion, and I'm also building something up that will help me. You know, even if I don't end up just doing this as an independent thing, I could then apply for a role because I've got these unique skills that I've built up myself. It just kind of opens the world up to you a little bit more. And I think for me, even though I work for a local authority, I sort of have the mindset that I am still my own sort of person and, you know, I have to think about my career development as a whole as well. And I think that that's something that I do think about.



And yeah, really grateful for, like, all the support that I've had, but I also don't want to let myself not get these opportunities in areas where I have passion and I see that I could actually help people. Like, people turn around all the time and say that I've helped them get a job or something because of the interview tips that I've put out there. And it's because I didn't really feel like there was stuff like that out there for me. When I went for an interview for the local authority I felt completely out of my depth, and it was an area I thought needed something putting out there, and I did it. And it's rewarding.

So I think sometimes as social workers we think about the impact we can have on people day-to-day but we don't think about sort of the wider impact of our communication skills. And we do have transferable skills that can be used in others, so that's been beneficial to me. [0:32:17.0]

Le'Siran Edwards:

I completely agree with Kayleigh there. I think it's important to recognise the skills and strengths that we have, and the ways in which we can share those online. And similar to what Kayleigh was saying, she got some coaching from a lecturer, whereas I'm offering coaching to others and making a difference in that way. [0:32:36.5]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

I think also at the beginning of this this discussion the focus was on locum v perm, but I feel like in just listening to both of you speak, you've just highlighted how it's more than that. This might be how you start out, but there's a lot of other opportunities for you to develop and progress your career. And sometimes if you are in particular roles – so if that is permanent but you're moving around and you're working in lots of teams – it's an opportunity for you to gather those skills that will later inform you in a particular business that you might start up on your own later. [0:33:10.6]

Le'Siran Edwards:

Nothing is wasted, Kirsty. Nothing is wasted. It doesn't matter what team you're in, it doesn't matter what role you're in. There are so many skills you can pick out of just one day of being a frontline social worker, whether you're in children, adults or mental health. There's so many skills and strengths. And if you just sat down and thought about all the different things you had to do in that day, the different communication skills you've had to use, the IT equipment, the software, managing conflict etc., all of that plays a part in whatever passion project, side hustle or business you'd like to start up. You just marry all of that with your creativity. [0:33:52.1]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Yeah, absolutely. And I don't think it's always versus each other either because, for example, I pay into BASW for insurance on both sides. So for support as an independent and then also as a permanent member of staff. So you can do a blend of both, really. It's not like I am a locum but I do the independent work alongside the statutory work. So you can do different things. [0:34:18.3]



Kirsty Ayakwah:

I mean, I hear a lot of courage in both of your, you know, your trajectories, what you've told me about what you've done. And I think maybe what you do as a job, there's a lot of risk and there's a lot of uncertainty. Maybe it feels safer for some people to just stay in one place or be around people or systems that they know. And that's not a negative. It just is what suits you, I think. [0:34:40.5]

Le'Siran Edwards:

I would agree with that. I think it's all individualised and it's all subjective. It's what suits you, your family, your financial responsibilities etc., and that's got to be matched equally with the reward and your purpose of being a social worker. [0:34:55.5]

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

I was going to say, I totally agree. I think there's no one way of doing things. And just being open-minded that there's different options out there. [0:35:02.2]

Kirsty Ayakwah:

Yeah. You both are really exciting. I love what you're doing, both of you. Very different but also very similar. And I think it is really courageous.

Kayleigh Rose Evans:

Thank you. That's lovely of you.

Le'Siran Edwards:

Thank you.

Kirsty Ayakwah:

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