

September 2022

Newsletter



Message from our Director



Hello and a happy September to you all! Autumn is in the air and it's my favourite time of year. I love the reds, browns and oranges of Autumn and the crisp weather, nothing better than getting wrapped up and going for an autumn stroll.

I hope you find this an interesting read and if there's anything you would like us to cover in our next newsletter in December, just let me know.

I would like to thank you for your patience and kindness whilst we continue to experience a major outage of our electronic rostering system, Staffplan. This system has been down for several weeks now and is expected to be unavailable for at least another four to six weeks.

This has caused a significant amount of additional work for our office team as we now have to schedule all care visits manually and work manually in many other areas that we rely on our rostering system for. My team have really gone above and beyond working lots of additional hours to ensure the service continues to run smoothly and I'm very grateful for their flexibility and commitment to our business.

The software company has also experienced an outage of another one of their products called Aداstra which 85% of the NHS 111 services rely on. This has caused significant disruption in the health and social care sector and we're hopeful that the system will be fully operational as soon as possible. We're thankful that we have a robust business continuity plan and are already in the process of looking for a new suitable software provider in case this outage continues longer than we feel is reasonable.

I'm aware that we have not been able to send rota's out to customers during this time and I sincerely apologise for this. You will continue to receive your visits as usual however as we are only able to schedule rota's a few days in advance due to the amount of recourse it requires, we cannot send out a 2 week rota to you at the moment. If you would like to know who will be visiting you, please feel free to contact us by phone or email and we can inform you of your Care Assistants for the next couple of days.

As always, if you'd ever like a chat or to give me some feedback about our services, please contact me at our office, it would be lovely to hear from you.

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This issue features.....

- New Team Members
- Jubilee Party Memories
- Tips to help you prevent falls at home
- Join us for our Dementia Experience Training



Welcome

We'd like to introduce you to our new team members who started recently. We are very pleased to welcome:



Rachel Mawson
Care Assistant



Rachel Bailey
Care Assistant



Aoife Hawkesworth
Care Recruiter

Spotlight on a member of our Care Team



Oona-Mai Sharp Customer Relations Officer



My role at Bluebird Care is to ensure customers receive excellent quality care and support to keep them safe and comfortable in their own homes. I oversee care delivery for customers liaising with customers, our care team and other professionals such as GP's, Pharmacists, Social Workers, Nurses and Occupational Therapists on a daily basis. If any changes to care plans are required, I agree these with our customers and update their care plan. I meet customers at least every 6 months to understand how our service is working for them. I welcome feedback and like to make sure we're meeting the needs and wishes of our customers.

I have worked in care for the past five years because I like the feeling of caring and helping others. I enjoy working with the older generation and hearing about past stories they have, I love the impact I can make on each person life. I also work at a children's football academy called, Foot-Tech Academy. I work with 3-4 year-olds and really enjoy working there, it's my hobby.

In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. My Grandad and I watch my boyfriend play rugby every weekend and I really enjoy the time I get to spend with him. I also enjoy the cinema and like to go a few times a month.

I enjoy watching Married at First Sight, Gogglebox and rugby with my Grandad. (We support Castleford Tigers). My favourite film is Forrest Gump, "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get". One of my favourite places to visit is Flamborough, near Bridlington. I visited here as a child almost every weekend with my grandparents and made many happy memories there.

I enjoy listening to podcasts, my favourite podcast to listen to is 'The Girls Bathroom'.

I really enjoy going on holidays and like to go away at least once a year. When I was 18, I travelled around America for eight months and have seen a huge part of it. My favourite place in the world is Sydney Australia which I visited a few years ago. I really enjoyed the culture and the warm weather, even if I did need factor 50!



Memories of our Queen's Platinum Jubilee party!



ROYAL TOAST: Enjoying the celebrations at Bluebird Care Leeds North.
Double celebration for care provider

RESIDENTS OF Bluebird Care Leeds North had a double celebration to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the opening of new offices. Joining the millions of people celebrating during the bank holiday, care workers at the West Park care provider, joined customers and families to host afternoon tea, a royal bingo session, a royal bake-off competition and a singalong to music. Donis the Dachshund, Bluebird Care Leeds North's official mascot, made a special visit for the day, and attendees were gifted a keepsake to remember the occasion. The home care provider delivers services throughout the community, including home visits, live-in care, companionship and complex care plans.

We're delighted that our first event at the new office was such a success. We were privileged to invite all our customers and staff along to chat, listen to music, play a few games of bingo, sing, indulge in lashings of tea, sandwiches, and delicious cakes.

Thank you to everyone who attended, and we look forward to hosting more activities at the office moving forward. We're hosting a free Dementia awareness fun training event on 13th September, so we hope to see you there!

We even got a special mention in The Yorkshire Evening Post, here's a clipping from the paper! (above right)



Preventing Falls

Did you know that falls are the main reason why older people are taken to A&E departments?

Even if a fall doesn't cause severe injury, it can be very upsetting and cause us to go into shock, which can have a negative impact on our health.

Each year, we carry out a review of the accidents that happen to our customers. We know that 1 in 4 Bluebird Care customers will experience at least one fall a year. Because of this, we make it our business to be well trained on falls prevention and techniques to keep people safer at home. We are usually made aware if somebody has fallen by finding them on the floor when we arrive for our visit or when someone tells us during their care visits that have fallen recently.

If you have had a fall, it's important that you tell someone because you can then have a discussion about whether you would benefit from any equipment or adaptations you can use at home to stay steadier on your feet. You might also benefit from some emotional support and good cup of sweet tea if you're feeling distressed and in shock. You can also book a health and wellbeing check if you would like a quick health check. This would involve taking your blood pressure, temperature, oxygen saturation and pulse. Our care team are trained in Falls Prevention and are able to have conversations with you about things that might help to reduce your risk of falling. We can also, with your consent, make referrals to Occupational Therapists through your GP. An Occupational Therapist helps people of all ages overcome challenges completing everyday tasks or activities and helps them to stay at home safely.

Falls among our customers decreased by 2.4 % in 2021 compared to 2020 and we will continue to monitor the data. We hope that this is attributed to the increased training we have provided to our care team and training on the reporting process within our business. We have been able to make many referrals to Occupational Therapists, Handyperson services for hand rails and other equipment and have been able to suggest various other options such as Telecare and Smart Home technology. We records falls so that we can understand how they affect our customers and help us to look at whether we can do anything extra to help prevent falls in the future.



A few simple things can make all the difference when preventing falls...

Stay active

The more you move inside and outside your home, the better your muscle strength and balance will be. If you don't use it, you could lose it! Being a little more active isn't about working up a sweat, small movements can really help.

Gentle stretches:

- While sitting or lying, bring your toes towards your shin and then point them toward the floor. Repeat for both feet.
- Sitting on a chair, lift your leg up off the seat, keeping your knee bent. Return to starting position and repeat.
- Sitting on a chair, pull your toes up, tighten your thigh muscle and straighten your knee. Hold for about 5 seconds, if you can, and then slowly relax your leg. Repeat for both legs.
- Sitting on a chair with your feet on the floor, bend your knee as much as possible. Repeat for both legs.
- Sitting on a stool, let your back drop and get rounded, then use your back muscles to straighten your back and arch it (but not too much!)



Walk between rooms if you feel steady enough and time yourself to see how long it takes. To increase your mobility you could try to beat your time each day. Only do this if you feel able to and know your own limits.



Take care of your eyes

Our eyesight can change over time and poor eyesight can lead to a fall. Have your eyes checked regularly and any vision problems can be detected and treated early.

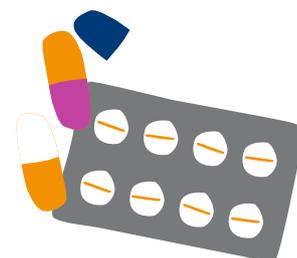


Take care of your ears

Our hearing affects our balance and our hearing abilities can change over time. Ensure you have a regular hearing check with your GP. Sometimes hearing problems can be easily treated, for example if you have a build of ear wax or have an ear infection. Hearing aids are very powerful for helping people with longer term hearing problems.

Be wary of side effects of medicines

Certain medicines can cause us to feel dizzy, do speak to your GP or Pharmacist if you think you are experiencing side effects that make you feel dizzy, as this could put you at risk of falling.



Eat for strong bones

Calcium rich foods such as dairy foods, green leafy veggies and bread are all good ways of supporting bone health. Vitamin D also supports bone strength so oily fish, red meat and eggs yolks and of course sunshine are all great for boosting your Vitamin D levels.



Wear comfortable and safe footwear

Always wear a pair of good fitting slippers whilst moving around your home. They should fit well and have good grips. Never walk in bare feet, socks or tights at home and these can be slippery. If you are experiencing pain or discomfort in your feet, talk to your GP or podiatrist if you have one.

Look for and fix trips hazards in your home

You may need a little help to move trip hazards in your home. Our Care Assistants can help you with small items and if you need something large moving such as furniture, we can recommend a trustworthy and DBS vetted Handyman to provide this service for you.



Consider technology to help you stay safe.

Many older people benefit from wearing a personal alarm, this can come as a pendant worn around the neck (it can be tucked under clothing to be completely discreet) or a wrist alarm which looks like a trendy watch. If you feel unwell or fall and can't reach your phone, you can press the personal alarm and it will alert a 24-hour response centre, they will then contact the best person to help you e.g. a loved one, neighbour or emergency services.

Sensors can be provided as part of a telecare system. A sensor could alert someone if you have got up from your favourite chair but haven't return within the normal time period for you.



Would you take a minute to leave us a review on  [homecare.co.uk](https://www.homecare.co.uk)

You may have noticed that our Care Professionals have left you a free-post review card in your home. We would be really grateful if you could take a couple of minutes to complete this card, seal it and post it. If you would like your Care Assistant to post this for you, once you have sealed it, they will be happy to do so. If you use the internet and have an email address, you could leave your review on www.homecare.co.uk/submitreview Thank you in advance!

Do you care for someone living with Dementia?

Would you like to understand a little more about dementia and how you can best support the people you love?

We're offering a **FREE** life changing Virtual Dementia Tour through our interactive Dementia Bus.

Tuesday 13th September between 9:30 am and 5:30 pm

The bus will be parked outside our office at
2 Woodside Mews, Clayton Wood Close, Leeds, LS16 6QE.

If you're interested in taking a 10 minute tour or being fully accredited with a 2 & 1/2 hour session, then please contact us at the office on **0113 2589677** or email us at **leedsnorth@bluebirdcare.co.uk** and we'll reserve you a space!



This worldwide, scientifically and medically proven method of giving a person with a healthy brain an experience of what dementia might be like, allows learners to enter the world of the person and understand which simple changes need to be made to their practice and environment to really improve lives of people living with dementia.

The Virtual Dementia Tour has been proven during research produced by Ulster University to improve techniques and approaches for 95% of learners, improve knowledge in 97% of learners and improve outcomes for 100% of customers.

Everyone can benefit from this experience and it's in our city's best interest to become more Dementia Friendly. This Virtual Dementia Tour has an impact that just cannot be matched in truly helping people to experience what it's like to live with the condition.

Whether you're a relative of someone living with Dementia, have a shop or service in our community, having a new perspective on dementia really can make the difference. With 1 in 3 people expected to die of dementia related diseases and an aging population, now really is the time to learn more about Dementia and how we can improve the lives of people living with the disease.

Places for the experience are limited and will be offered on a first come first service basis. We are prioritising customers and their loved ones and our care team but can also accommodate other members of the public also.