



NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2023



Newmarket & Fenland, King's Lynn & West Norfolk |
Cambridge & South Cambs | Bedford

Hello again everyone....



As we start a new year it's a good time to not only look ahead to the coming year but also reflect on the previous 12 months – and what an eventful few months it has been! Many of us have experienced challenging and changing times, particularly around energy with fuel costs spiralling and the beginning of a new Reign with the passing of HRH Queen Elizabeth and the ascension to the throne of our new King, HRH King Charles III.

Bluebird Care also had an exciting year with the expansion of our territory through the acquisition of the Bedford office and many of our wonderful team members celebrated achievements and success. Well done to our fantastic team and a warm welcome to all customers and team members involved with the Bedford office.

During December we encouraged our team members and our customers to get into the festive spirit by joining in on our Christmas Fun Fridays. Every Friday in December members of the team (and some customers too!) got involved by dressing up in festive outfits and handed out treats. You can see photos from the festive period on page 10. Take a look at our website to see more photos.

As in previous years, we also ran our Winter Warmth campaign and Christmas Hamper draw, customers were nominated by their care teams to be entered into the prize draw. We gifted Christmas hampers to Mr & Mrs T, Mr B and Mr K. We also gifted Bluebird Care winter blankets to Mrs H, Mrs G and Mr F. Take a look at the pictures on page 10.

Of course, as well as a time of joy and new beginnings, winter can be a testing time for vulnerable people in our communities. So, we are urging everyone to keep warm and well this winter. You can find our top tips and more information on staying warm and healthy over the winter months on page 4.

We have also put together some of our favourite winter meal ideas for you to try. We would encourage everybody to take the time to ensure friends, family and neighbours are warm enough when the weather gets colder. As it is too cold and frankly too risky to walk around outside this winter we have also included in this newsletter, some indoor chair-based exercises you can do to keep yourself as healthy as you are able to over the coming months.



A Warm Welcome to

Bluebird Care Bedford

We are very pleased to welcome Bluebird Care Bedford into our care community. As you may already know Carolyn and Keith Dailey have acquired Bluebird Care Bedford as they continue their mission to provide outstanding care and support to people in their own homes across the East of England.

Here is a re-print of an article that was published in Homecare Insight from November 2022.

Award-winning Bluebird Care franchise owners, Carolyn and Keith Dailey, have acquired Bluebird Care Bedford as they continue their mission to provide outstanding care and support to people in their own homes across the East of England.

Keith and Carolyn arrive at the Bedford franchise with over nine years of experience with Bluebird Care. Having first begun their journey with Bluebird Care Newmarket & Fenland, during which time they demonstrated incredible leadership and an acute understanding of quality care, the franchise grew into a large, award-winning home care provider.

In 2019 they extended their network and took ownership of Bluebird Care Cambridge and further expanding the areas. Bluebird Care Bedford was founded nine years ago. This latest development represents a new era for the home care provider, as Carolyn and Keith look to bolster its presence and reach in the local community.

Keith and Carolyn's passion lies in the progression of people's career opportunities and providing a positive work-culture in which to thrive.

Their commitment to demonstrating exactly what a career within the care sector can offer has been embedded throughout their journey in care.

In turn, this helps achieve their broader ambitions of providing outstanding care to their customers, with a well-trained, enthused team motivated to deliver the best quality of care possible.

Among their first acts as owners, the duo will be launching a substantial and bespoke live-in care team into the local Bedford community, specialising in providing round-the-clock care to customers in their own homes.

As part of their growth plan, they will also be creating an initial 8-10 jobs within the Bedford area, offering fantastic employment packages, with many more opportunities to come. In keeping with this ambition, they will be opening an exciting new office at the end of 2022, offering a fantastic training facility in a great location. This will enable their team to have their own improved care hub with specialist dementia training facilities to operate from.

New owner of Bluebird Care Bedford, Carolyn Dailey, said: "We are very excited to be taking ownership of Bluebird Care Bedford. Whilst there have been some changes for the team, we have now given them the confidence of a fantastic career and training opportunities which in turn will further enhance the excellent customer service we can offer to our customers.

"Keith and I have many years of experience of running successful Bluebird Care franchises, offering exceptional career opportunities for our teams. In a short space of time, we have structured our businesses to ensure that our teams have security, and our customers have continued care.

"We will be working hard to now grow the home care provider into what we know can be a very successful one, just like our other communities"

<https://www.homecareinsight.co.uk/home-care-provider-prepares-for-expansion-under-new-ownership/>



Keeping Warm & Well this Winter

“Having regular hot drinks and at least one hot meal a day is a great way to keep energy levels up during winter.”

This winter it may be very tempting to turn off the heating with gas and electricity prices spiralling ever upwards but remaining cold for sustained amounts of time could have disastrous effects on the elderly and vulnerable. Every winter vulnerable and older people die unnecessarily due to the cold. Many deaths and illnesses can be prevented by keeping homes warm and dry.

Why?

As we grow older, we gradually lose the muscle mass that helps us keep warm and moving about. Our immune systems become weaker and less able to fight off viruses and the cold makes health conditions harder to manage, it can affect our hearts and circulation. Every winter vulnerable and older people die unnecessarily due to the cold. Many deaths and illnesses can be prevented by keeping homes warm and dry. This is perfectly natural it's a part of the ageing process but these changes to our bodies as we get older mean that cold weather and winter bugs affect us more than they used to.

People who are over 65 years of age and have pre-existing medical conditions that affect the heart, lungs, and immune system, are more likely to be at risk.

Our bodies work in a way that ensures our body temperature remains at the correct level to protect cells and organs from damage.

The cold weather can make this more challenging, particularly for those who are elderly as their bodies may be less effective at regulating body temperature.

Those who live with dementia may also be more at risk as they may not be aware of the precautions needed to stay warm and without realising and wear clothes unsuitable for the colder weather.

Your blood pressure will rise when you move from a warm place to a cold place. That's because low temperatures cause blood vessels to temporarily narrow. If you have heart or breathing conditions, then you could put yourself at risk if exposing yourself to extremes of temperature.

Let's look at what we can do to combat this and help keep ourselves warm and well in winter.

Remember - Stay warm

The most important time to heat your home is first thing in the morning before you get out of bed, as your house will lose a lot of heat overnight so set a timer for half an hour before you usually rise. Try to heat your home to a steady and comfortable temperature throughout the day in the rooms you use most, such as the living room and bedroom. Older and more vulnerable people should try to keep their homes heated to above 18°C. If there are rooms you don't use, like a spare bedroom, turn off the radiators here and close the doors. This will help you save on energy costs.

Draw your curtains when it starts getting dark to preserve any heat in your home being lost through the window glass. As the temperature outside dips the heat in your room is sucked out through the window - glass is not a good insulator - even double glazing!

Also keep doors closed to block out draughts. If you use an electric blanket, have it serviced at least every 3 years.

Layering up clothing is a good way to keep yourself warm. Wear several light layers of clothing rather than one chunky layer. If you're heading out, make sure you take some extra layers - even if you don't need them immediately, it's a good idea to be prepared because the temperature can drop significantly when the sun goes in.

Keep plenty of food in your cupboards and stock up on supplies such as heating oil if you use it. Check with your doctor or pharmacist to make sure you or someone you look after has an adequate supply of any prescription medicines in the event of bad weather.

Be aware of the symptoms of hypothermia which include shivering, lips going blue, slurred speech and lack of coordination.

Wet socks can be uncomfortable and lead to health issues, so make sure to dry off your feet immediately after being outside in cold weather.

Remember - Keep active

Try not to sit still for too long no more than an hour at a time. You can help maintain strength and mobility with a little bit of activity every so often. Keep as active as possible during the day. But sometimes this can be easier said than done. If you found that you're not feeling as fit as you have done previously even some gentle movement while sitting down can help. Only do what you're comfortable with don't exert yourself too much. Start gently and build up slowly.

If you're not sure where to start, or you have a long-term condition that makes moving more difficult, our page on chair exercises further in this newsletter has advice and tips, as well as some simple chair-based exercises you can add to your daily routine.

Remember - Eat well

It can sometimes be difficult to keep up the motivation to prepare meals. But it's good to try and keep to a routine where you can. If you've recently lost weight without meaning to, or if you have a smaller appetite than usual, find out why this might be and what might help.

The main thing to remember is that it's better to eat a bit of what you fancy than to eat nothing - even if it's just a slice of cake.

Finally It's a good idea to keep your cupboards stocked with some basics just in case you can't get out to the shops - whether due to illness or bad weather.



Warming Winter Meal Ideas

If you are looking for inspiration for some quick nutritious meals this winter, we have put together some of our favourite recipes to help you provide the perfect warming meals for yourself or, if you're a Bluebird Care team member, for your customers during the colder months.

The winter brings with it many additional risks to older people. One major risk is malnutrition which affects over 1 million people over the age of 65 in the UK.

Older people are also at risk of issues with the cold and are particularly at risk of hypothermia. To combat both issues, there are many delicious, warming and nutritious winter meals you could prepare for yourself or for your loved ones. Our supportive care team can also assist with meal preparation and cooking if you would like some extra support.

If you are looking for a little inspiration as to what to make for meals this winter, these warming winter meals will help inspire your winter menus:

Egg On Toast

Anything on toast is comforting, but in winter it is extra-convenient and easy if your appetite is poor. Eggs that are boiled, poached or scrambled on wholegrain toast makes a delicious breakfast or light lunch that is high in protein and fibre.

Oats & Berries

Porridge is a quick and easy meal to prepare and can be enjoyed any time of the year. Oats are rich in fibre and are also a slow-release carbohydrate, giving you plenty of energy in the morning, while berries add colour and flavour.

You can use any milk you like to make your porridge, from dairy to oat milk. For an alternative option, why not try making some overnight oats and leave them in the fridge for an easy breakfast in the morning.

Sweet Potato & Butternut Squash Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes | Cooking Time: 1 hour
Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

1 onion, diced
1 butternut squash, peeled and cut into 2cm cubes (roughly 500g)
1 sweet potato, peeled and cut into 2cm cubes (roughly 300g)
1 small carrot, peeled and cut into 1cm cubes (roughly 100g)
2 cloves garlic, peeled and halved
1 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 l vegetable stock
Double cream and fresh coriander, chopped, to garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Heat the oil in a large pan and cook onions on a low heat until soft, about 10 mins. Add the rest of the vegetables and cook for a further 5 mins. Add the stock and bring to the boil, then lower heat and simmer, uncovered, for around 20-30 mins, until vegetables are tender. Allow to cool for 5 mins then whiz in a blender, in batches, until smooth. Season with salt and pepper then serve with a swirl of cream and a sprinkle of coriander.

Slow Cooker Toad in the Hole

Grease the bottom of the slow cooker with a thin layer of butter to stop sticking.

INGREDIENTS

240ml milk
120g plain flour (sieved)
2 eggs (beaten)
6 - 8 pork sausages or chipolatas

DIRECTIONS

Mix all the ingredients together
Pour into the slow cooker, add sausages (uncooked)
Cook on high for 2.5 hours

Recipe by Michele Quarry, Care Assistant - BEDFORD

Do you have any recipes you would like to have featured in our next newsletter? Please send them over via email to customercare@bluebirdcare.co.uk cambridge@bluebirdcare.co.uk bedford@bluebirdcare.co.uk

Beef Stew

Preparation: 5-10 minutes | Cooking time: 95 minutes | Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

340g/12oz cubed stewing beef
1 tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, sliced
85g/3oz pearl barley (You will need to boil the pearl barley in a saucepan of water, according to the package's cooking instructions. It usually takes about 1 hour).
1 heaped tbsp plain flour
900ml/1½ pints stock
225g/8oz carrots, peeled and sliced
225g/8oz potatoes, sliced in medium-sized chunks
1 finely shredded small cabbage
Ground pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Using a large pan, fry the meat in the oil to seal in most of the juices, and then add the onion for a few minutes until soft. Sprinkle the flour over the meat and then add the stock and stir well until boiling. Add the carrots and potatoes and leave to simmer on a low heat for 1½ hours, adding more stock if necessary so that there is always a gravy in the stew. Cook the pearl barley according to the instructions, so that it will be ready to add at the end. Add the cabbage in the last 20 minutes. The meat will become more tender the longer it is cooked. Just before serving, gently mix in the pearl barley.

Veggie Packed Pasta

Pasta is extremely comforting but, if your portions are too big it can be a real issue in regards to weight gain. One way to make a filling pasta without going too heavy on calories is to do a veggie packed pasta with small pasta shapes such as orzo. Limit brown pasta to the recommended portion size per person, but then fill out the meal with nutritious roasted veggies like tomatoes, peppers, courgette and aubergine. For added low-fat and low-calorie protein, why not add some soya mince to make a Bolognese sauce? It makes the meal extra filling without adding on too many calories.

Safe chair exercises for older people or those with limited mobility

Along with improving strength, flexibility, and blood circulation, exercise also boosts mood, helping to keep you as healthy and well as possible.

Chair exercises, done while seated on a chair with back support, are an excellent option for those who are frail, at risk of falling, or have limited mobility. Chair exercises can be just as challenging as regular standing workouts, especially for upper body or abdominal muscles. The goal is to provide a steady base so you or your loved one stays safe while moving their arms and legs during their workout.

Safe Chair Exercises

Seated pillow squeezes

1. Sit in a chair with your back straight and your arms at your sides.
2. Place a pillow between your thighs or knees.
3. Squeeze the pillow by contracting your inner thigh muscles. Hold the squeeze for 3 seconds, then relax.
4. Perform 12 repetitions.

Seated clamshells

1. Sit in a chair with your back straight and your arms at your sides.
2. Bend your knees and place your hands on the outside of your knees. Your hands are going to provide the resistance for your legs.
3. Contract the muscles on the outside of your hips by trying to move your knees away from each other. While doing this, use your hands and arms to provide resistance, pushing your knees inward.
4. Hold the contraction for 3 seconds, then relax.
5. Perform 12 repetitions.



Ankle pumps with straight knees

1. Sit in a chair with your back straight and your arms at your sides.
2. Straighten your legs in front of you and pump your ankles downward, as if you were pushing down on an accelerator pedal.
3. Hold for 3 seconds.
4. Keep your knees straight and move your ankles in the opposite direction, bringing the top of your feet toward your shins.
5. Hold each position for 3 seconds.
6. Perform 10 repetitions in total.

Marching (chair aerobics)

1. Sit in a chair with your back straight and your arms at your sides.
2. Begin by marching with alternate legs. Bring one thigh up as high as possible and return to the starting position, then do the same with your other leg.
3. Pump your arms, if possible.
4. Continue for 30 seconds or do 20 total marches.

Congratulations to our team members and their recent achievements!



Victoria Baniene
Well done Victoria!

Congratulations to Bluebird Care Cambridge team member, Victoria Baniene, who is celebrating her 1st-year appraisal. Victoria says "It feels great to be part of the Bluebird Care team and I'm looking forward to what is next!"



Elaine Stephen
Well done Elaine!

Congratulations to Elaine Stephen, Bluebird Care Cambridge team member, who is celebrating passing her probationary period and becoming a fully-fledged care assistant!

Elaine said, "I'm so happy to pass my probation! When I came into this role I was unsure if it was for me and 3 months later on I wish I'd done the role years ago".



Elena Yordanova
Well done Elena!

Well done Elena Yordanova, Cambridge Team Member celebrating her 1st year with us. Elena has had a good first year with Bluebird Care and loves making a difference in her customers' lives each day!



Kirstie Debenham
Well done Kirstie!

Congratulations to Kirstie Debenham, celebrating her 1st year on the Bluebird Care Cambridge Team!

Kirstie is over the moon to complete her first year with Bluebird Care and is keen to see what next year brings.



Louise Baker
Well done Louise!

Well done Louise Baker, one of our Cambridge Team Members, who is celebrating becoming a Care Assistant after passing her probation!!



Larua Watson
Well done Laura!

Congratulations to our Ely and Fenland team member Laura, who's celebrating her 3rd year with us! Laura says "The last three years have gone really quick and I'm pleased to be part of the team. I would recommend Bluebird Care to others as we are a good company".



Alex D'Arcy
Well done Alex!

Alex D'Arcy, Bluebird Care Cambridge team member, is celebrating passing her probationary period and becoming a fully-fledged care assistant. Alex is pleased to pass her probation and is excited to see what is next for her with Bluebird Care.



Cara Whitby
Well done Cara!

Congratulations to Cara Whitby, one of our Fenland team members, celebrating her 1st year with us! Cara says: "I feel proud of myself and it's a pleasure to support people and make a difference to people's lives every day".

Christmas Festive Fun!

Christmas Hamper Giveaway!

Every year we ask our care team to nominate their customers for our Christmas Hamper giveaway. The lucky winners this year were Mr. K, Mr. B, and Mr & Mrs T. We hope you enjoyed your Christmas hamper!



Mr K



Mr & Mrs T



Mr B

Winter Blanket Giveaway!

As part of our Winter Warm campaign, we also asked our care team to nominate their customers to win a Bluebird Care Fleece blanket. Congratulations! We hope you enjoy your blankets!



Mr F



Mrs H



Mrs G

OneTouch Health Family Portal

Did you know that you can access your care visit schedule and care notes through our Family Portal?

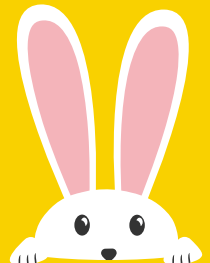
If you have already requested access you can use the link below to login.
If you would like access please email: customercareNFKW@bluebirdcare.co.uk to request your activation link.

<https://care2.onetouchhealth.net/cm/family>



Name the Easter Bunny!

We are running our annual 'Name the Bunny' competition for Easter. We are looking for nominations to name our Easter Bunny and the person who comes up with the winning name will get to keep the bunny! Send your entries to the office and we will announce the winner in the next customer newsletter.



The Silver Line helpline for older people

What is The Silver Line Helpline?

The Silver Line Helpline is a free, 24-hour telephone service for older people across the UK.

They offer friendship, conversation, and support for people aged 55 or over, especially those who may be experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Call free on

0800 4 70 80 90

Did you know we have a Facebook page?

It's well worth following us to keep up to date with any Bluebird Care events going on in your area. It's also a great place for really useful information.



www.facebook.com/BluebirdCams
www.facebook.com/BluebirdCareNewmarket
www.facebook.com/BluebirdCareBedford

Meet your

Office Support Team



Carolyn Dailey
Principal Director



Keith Dailey
Principal Director



Denise Allen
Operations Director



Heather Porter
Care Director



Danni Durrant
Coordinating Director



Jo Bowman
Customer Experience &
Coordinating Manager



Harriet Sibson
Lead Customer Care
Manager



Terri Evans
Training Manager



Katie Manson
Recruitment & Team
Manager



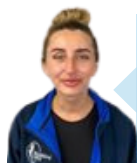
Virginia Zahr
Office Coordinator



Mikayla Angelo
Customer Care Manager



Zita Kratki
Training Live-in Care
Manager



Summer Thurston
Customer Care Manager



Cathy Crofts
Team Manager



Melanie West
Care Supervisor



Victoria Baniene
Care Supervisor



Hannah Mayes
Care Supervisor



Cathleen Anderson
Care Supervisor



Georgia Blatter
Care Supervisor

Introducing Team Bedford:



Emily Orbell
Operations Manager
PR & Marketing



Amreet Sanghera
Care Manager



Heather Kenny
Care Coordinator/
Supervisor

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