

Bluebird Care Gloucestershire

January 2017 Newsletter



Making the most of your Bluebird Care Service

As well as helping with the daily tasks which make living at home a little easier, your home care provider can act as the hub for your support network.

Co-ordinating family, friends, medical professionals and social workers can be a complex and time-consuming task. Include hospital transport, home adaptations and accessing funding and the workload can seem overwhelming. Our care management teams have a wealth of knowledge and experience of negotiating with relevant parties to help you achieve the outcomes you want.

We often find ourselves speaking to people who have hit a brick wall and don't know where to turn. We would never be happy to leave people struggling unnecessarily, and will always offer the best advice and support possible. After a frank and honest discussion about any issues, we are often able to point our customers in the right direction or, with permission, act on their behalf. If you feel that you could do with some support with any of the issues mentioned above, please feel free to call your office team, during normal office hours,

Funding Crisis in Health and Social Care

An unintended consequence of the government's implementation of the National Living Wage, taken together with compulsory contributions by employers into pension schemes for most employees, is that the majority of care companies providing socially funded care can no longer do this work for the price councils are able to pay. Recognising this, the government has allowed local authorities to add up to an extra 3% to Council Tax bills, specifically to fund social care. The problem with the percentage method is that the poorest areas will raise the least money by this method, and are likely to have more residents eligible for social funding.

The difficulty in finding care companies to take on socially funded customers is one reason that so many vulnerable, mainly elderly, people, are being stranded in hospital, unable to return home without a care package in place. Another reason, which nobody seems to be talking about, is that the number of hospital beds in existence has **decreased** considerably, as small hospitals, and wards in larger hospitals, have been closed in order to save money.

The Chairs of three House of Commons Select Committees have written to the Prime Minister to urge her to take action on the future of health and social care*.

The letter, from Dr Sarah Wollaston (Chair of the Health Committee), Meg Hillier (Chair of the Public Accounts Committee), and Clive Betts (Chair of the Communities and Local Government Committee), follows the Prime Minister's appearance before the

House of Commons Liaison Committee on 20 December 2016, when she answered questions on health and social care funding, and calls for her to reach a cross-party agreement on the issue. The letter says:

We are calling for a new political consensus to take this forward. This needs to be done swiftly so that agreement can be reflected in the next spending round. We also feel that the ongoing separation of health and social care is creating difficulties for individuals and avoidable barriers and inefficiencies. Any review should cover the two systems.

Watch this space for any further developments. In the meantime, the only answer, for those families who can afford it, to leaving a loved-one, who is medically fit for discharge, in the hospital may be to ask for Direct Payments for the social funding contribution to their care, and “top up” the payment to engage a care company privately. We have heard of people being told by Social Workers that they cannot do this. **It is a legal right.** You can insist on it.

*Source rightsnet.org.uk

Carer of the Month

The Carer of the Month for January for the Gloucestershire North area is **Juliet Weatherley**. Office staff said about Juliet:

Whenever I have contacted a customer about a change to their roster when someone has gone off sick, they are always pleased to hear that it will be Juliet who will be coming.

Juliet is very good at feeding back any concerns about a customer, so we can let the family and the doctor or district nurse know, before it develops into anything serious.

When I am carrying out reviews, customers always say that Juliet is very good at her job.

She will always help out if she can, even working on her weekends off when we have been short of staff through sickness.

Juliet is very good at her job. She remembers the customers' routines, and how they like things done.

Juliet is 100% reliable.

Customers have said about Juliet:

I am always very pleased to see Juliet's name on my roster.

Juliet knows my routines and how I like things done.

She just quietly gets on with her job.

Juliet is always calm and reassuring.

I look forward to Juliet's visits. She sets me up for the day.



Here is Juliet receiving her certificate from Debbie.

Juliet has chosen a One-4-All voucher.

The January Carer of the Month for Stroud and Cirencester is **Renee Goodfield**.

Compliments from customers include:

Renee is so understanding.

It was so reassuring, knowing that Mum was being well looked after.

Mum really appreciated Renee's help and kindness.

Renee always does the little things, and makes sure you have everything you need.

Renee notices what needs to be done, and does it without being asked.

Office staff have said about Renee:

Renee provides a high standard of care at all times.

She takes the time to listen, and genuinely cares about her customers and colleagues.

Renee has the ability to stay calm in all situations, and to adapt to meet the needs of those she cares for in a person-centred way.

It is always a pleasure to observe Renee in her interactions with customers. She has a down to earth, can-do attitude, and her kindness shines through.



Renee is dependable, reliable and flexible, recently working outside her agreed availability to help a couple who needed care put in place urgently.

Here is Renee receiving her certificate from Vicky.

Renee has chosen a One-4-all gift voucher

Dementia Training

We reported in an earlier newsletter that Donna Jones and Tracy Morgan had passed their assessments as Dementia Awareness trainers with flying colours.



We thought you might like to see a photo of the very smart badge they have been awarded to demonstrate their qualification.

As you can see, the most important message is that we see the person first, and not the dementia.

They will wear their badges with pride.

Staying Warm and Safe in Winter

We published advice on this topic in the November newsletter, with details of the Independent Age organisation and their booklets – which we still have in the office if anyone would like one. We also gave the link to their website, which we hope many of you have found useful.

As we have had such very cold weather recently, we thought we should mention that Age UK also offer leaflets with free advice on staying healthy and warm in winter. If you have access to the internet, you can find the information at

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/health-wellbeing/keeping-your-body-healthy/winter-wrapped-up/preparing-for-winter/>

If you do not have access to the internet, you can obtain the guide from Age UK Advice helpline on 0800 678 1174.

They also have a wide range of guides on other topics. In fact, if you have a problem, there is a good chance that Age UK will have a guide to help you solve it.

Newsletter Items

If there is anything you would like to have put in the customer newsletter next month please call or e-mail us.

Please let us know if you would like this newsletter in large print, in Braille, on CD or on tape.