



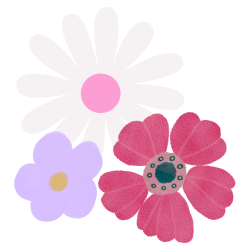
NEWSLETTER

Spring 2023



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

Hello



Welcome to our Spring newsletter.

We are glad to see some warmer weather and brighter days coming our way!

We have had a busy few months across our areas. We have been delighted to welcome new customers and new members to our care teams. We have also had a re-shuffle of our Office Support Team.

We are delighted to announce that Joanne Bowman and Cathy Tofts have both had promotions to new roles and Katie Manson has been moved into an adjacent role, allowing her to further develop her skills and knowledge.

We are also delighted to welcome Eloise Baker to the Office Support Team in her new role as Training Customer Care Manager and Michele Quarry to our Bedford Office Support Team as our new Care and Training Supervisor. See our website for all of our team's latest achievements.

In our last newsletter, we launched our annual 'Name the Easter Bunny' competition where we asked all our customers to submit a name for one of our Easter Bunnies into a prize draw to win one of them! We had some wonderful entries, so thank you to everyone who took part. Take a look at our winners with their bunnies on page 6.

Coming up in this newsletter we have our top tips for getting into the garden this spring, updates and information regarding some changes to our recent policies and procedures, the results from our latest Customer Quality Survey and information about local fire safe and well checks.



USE OF EMOLLIENTS

Emollients are important and effective moisturising treatments that are widely used to help manage dry, itchy, or scaly skin conditions such as eczema, psoriasis and ichthyosis. Emollients are also used to manage venous leg ulcers. They are applied directly to the skin to soothe and hydrate it and cover the skin with a protective film to trap in moisture.

They are vital to help manage many different skin conditions and it is important that people continue to use them as directed by their doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

There is a risk of severe and fatal burns with all emollients, including paraffin-free products.

Our Top tips for understanding the fire risks of using emollients and minimising the risk:

- Do not smoke, cook or go near any naked flames or heat sources (gas, halogen, electric bar or open fire) whilst wearing clothing or dressings that have been in contact with emollients or emollient treated skin. If this is not practical we would advise to put in place some safety measures such as using safety lighters or e-cigarettes; remove long-sleeved or loose clothing before cooking; put on a thick uncontaminated shirt/overalls or apron; move chairs further away from the open or other heat source.
- Please be aware that washing bedding and clothing at high temperatures does help to reduce emollient build up, but does not completely remove it. It is important to minimise the risks in additional ways, as suggested above.
- Your local fire and rescue service can offer a free fire safety check of your property as well as offer advise and support.

Local Fire Safe & Well visits

Safe and Well visits are a FREE service run by your local Fire and Rescue service. These visits provide them with information to support you, and with your permission, refer you to partner agencies who will be able to support you further.



The visit will last no longer than 60 minutes and will assess five key elements:

1. Fire safety in the home
2. Smoking
3. Keeping warm in your home
4. Falls prevention
5. Crime prevention and scams

They can provide advice in relation to promoting the health and safety of individuals with hoarding concerns, as well as providing valuable information to care providers.

Cambridge/ Newmarket & Fenland

You can find out if you or a family member or friend are likely to be eligible for a free home fire safety check by calling the automated message line on **0800 917 9994** and leave a message including the person's name, address and daytime phone number to receive a call back.

<https://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/home-safety/home-fire-safety/>

Bedford

Email: Safeandwell@bedsfire.gov.uk

Phone: 0800 043 5042

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/community-safety/safe-and-well-visit>



Getting out into the Garden this Spring

Gardening is a great way to get exercise, enjoy the outdoors, and grow your own food. It can also be a relaxing hobby that can help to reduce stress and anxiety. Gardening is a great activity for people of all ages, but it can be especially beneficial for older people.

Gardening Tips for Over 65's

There are a few things that older people should keep in mind when gardening. First, it is important to choose plants that are easy to care for. Some plants that are good choices for older adults include:

- Annuals: Annuals are plants that die after one season. They are easy to grow and can be planted in a variety of locations.
- Perennials: Perennials are plants that live for multiple seasons. They can be a good choice for older adults who want to add some colour to their gardens without having to replant every year.
- Vegetables: Vegetables are a great way to get fresh produce and save money on your grocery bills. Some vegetables that are easy to grow include:

- Tomatoes
- Lettuce
- Peppers
- Cabbage
- Beans

Second, it is important to make sure that your garden is accessible. If you have difficulty bending or kneeling, you may want to consider raised beds or trellises. You may also want to invest in some gardening tools that can help you to make gardening easier, such as a raised bed garden cart or a kneeling pad.

Third, it is important to listen to your body and take breaks when you need them. Gardening can be a strenuous activity, so it is important to pace yourself and not overdo it. If you start to feel tired or sore, take a break and come back to the garden later.

Gardening can be a great way to stay active and healthy as you age. By following these tips, you can make gardening a safe and enjoyable activity for yourself.



Our Top Tips:

Here are some additional tips people who are interested in gardening:

- Start with a small garden. A small garden is easier to manage and can be a good place to start if you are new to gardening.
- Ask for help. If you need help with gardening, there are many people who can help you, such as your grandchildren, neighbours, or local gardening clubs. Your care assistants can help to support you to access your garden and even help to water your plants!
- Be patient. Gardening takes time and patience. Don't get discouraged if you don't see results immediately. Just keep at it and you will eventually see the fruits of your labour.
- Enjoy the process. Gardening is a rewarding hobby that can provide you with years of enjoyment.



Gardening Benefits for those living with Dementia:

Sensory gardens are great for older people living with dementia or sensory impairments.

Scents from Sweet Peas, Pelargoniums and Roses can stimulate memories.

Touch can be stimulated from Stachys and Bergenia leaves, tree barks and grasses.

Verbena, Strawberries and edible flowers are a taste sensation.

And the garden will come alive with audio stimulation by planting grasses or popping seedheads like Love-In-A-Mist. All will encourage birdsong, butterflies and bees for an idyllic English country garden.

You don't have to be a gardener to enjoy your garden.

Birdwatching: Birdwatching is a lovely pastime. Bird tables and feeders make it easy to enjoy the different birds that visit a garden, particularly during the winter months. It's also good exercise to have to replenish the bird food every now and again.

Garden Share: If space allows, you could ask someone to take some of your garden for their own gardening needs in exchange for sharing its management. They get a garden and you or loved one get theirs maintained!



Team Achievements

We have had so many team achievements so far this year. Please visit our website to see everyone's amazing achievements over the last 3 months.

We are delighted to announce some promotions within our team:



Well done Cathy Tofts - our new Team Manager.



Well done to Joanne Bowman - our new Customer Experience & Coordinating Manager.



Well done to Katie Manson - our new Recruitment & Development Manager



Well done to Eloise Baker - our new Training Customer Care Manager



Well done to Michele Quarry - our new Care & Training Supervisor in our Bedford Team.



Name the Easter Bunny Competition winners!

We held our annual 'Name the Easter Bunny' competition, which we launched in our last newsletter. Well done to all our winners!



Mrs G



Mrs A



Mrs W



Mrs S



Sam S





We also gave Easter eggs to our customers and care teams.
Everyone was surprised and delighted with their Easter eggs!



PRN Medication

All you need to know



What are they?

A PRN medication is most often prescribed for acute or intermittent conditions and is not intended to be given as a regular dose. PRN medications are not restricted to the times of medication administration and can be administered 'as and when required'.

These medications are only used when needed for a specific situation, such as intermittent pain, allergies, or constipation. Some of these medications will be prescribed by your GP while others can be purchased at a local pharmacy or shop, i.e., moisturiser, anti-sickness.

It is important to know the difference between daily medications and 'as needed' medications. When we look at your list of medications, we need to know which ones of those are supposed to be taken every day and which ones can be taken occasionally, in order to treat certain symptoms.

What do we need to know?

If we identify a PRN medication it is important that we have all the following information in order for us to support you with it. That information includes:

- How much medicine you can take in a set period of time.
- When to take the medication
- What it is for

These PRN medications are an important part of your therapies that you take to manage different health conditions.

How will we be supporting you?

Your care team can support you with your PRN medications alongside your daily medications. They will have everything they need to do this on their care system.

How do we ensure we are administering PRN medications to you safely?

Once we have identified an 'as and when needed' medication, we will check to see if we have all the above information that your care team require to safely administer it to you.

If this is not the case, which unfortunately can cause a delay, we will contact your GP Surgery to confirm this information. Once we have completed this fully, we will add the medication details to your care team and notify your care team to commence with the support.

How will my care team know if I require a PRN medication?

Your care team are highly trained to support you with your medications and we continually support them to provide this support in the safest way. If you have daily medications, that you need to take, your care team will ask you if you are ready to take these, they will cross check the details of the prescription information and then administer the medication to you, logging it in their notes so that we have detailed confirmation of when you took the medication.

If you have a PRN medication, that you need to take if you are experiencing intermittent symptoms, your care team will ask you to confirm what symptoms you have. For example, if you have a PRN medication for nausea, your care team will ask you if you have been feeling sick. If you confirm that you have not been experiencing these symptoms, your care team will not offer the medication to you and record that this is the case.

If you confirm that you have been experiencing these symptoms, your care team will let you know what you are able to take and ask if you would like to take them, then record this.



What things can change?

On occasion, you may have been prescribed a daily medication that you decide you do not want every day. We can monitor this from the care notes that your care team provides us with.

As long as this is a medication that is not for a serious health condition we will decide to make contact with your GP surgery to advise them that you are choosing not to take it every day and request that a GP reviews the medication to see if it can be amended to a PRN. Some medications that we will do this with are usually for constipation, pain or some topical creams.

On occasion, you may have a PRN medication that you are confirming you require every time this is offered. Again we can monitor this from the care notes that your care team provides us with.

We will make contact with your GP surgery and advise that you are requiring this on a regular basis. We are then guided by them as to whether they amend this to be a daily medication or whether they want to look at an alternative.

If you have any questions regarding medications and how we can help to support you or a loved one please get in touch with our Customer Care Team.



Infection Prevention & Control Procedures

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic Bluebird Care adhered to the strict government guidelines on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to help reduce the spread of the virus. Now these guidelines have changed, which means that the way we use PPE has changed.



You will have seen recently that your care assistants may not be wearing face masks anymore, or may have asked what your preference is regarding them wearing masks during your care visits.

It is now no longer mandatory for our care teams to wear masks during the entirety of your care visits. Our team have been given guidance on when and where they are still expected to wear a mask eg. During personal care or if someone has suspected COVID-19 symptoms.

However, if you would prefer for our care assistants to continue to wear a face mask then please let us know so we can inform your care team.

If you have any questions regarding the use of PPE or our Infection, Prevention & Control measures please contact our Customer Care Team.

Customer Survey Results



Earlier this year we sent our annual Customer Survey. This survey is designed to help us, help you. It is important that we know your views and your feedback on our services so that we can continue to improve the care and support services we provide.

We have received some lovely feedback from the surveys, thank you to everyone who has returned their completed surveys. Below are the results from this year's survey.

We asked 'I am happy with the service that I receive from Bluebird Care.'

50% of respondents answered Strongly Agree, 40.6% of respondents answered Agree, 3.1% of respondents answered Neither Agree or Disagree and 6.25% of respondents did not answer the question.

We asked if 'Bluebird Care meets my care and support needs.'

50% of respondents answered Strongly Agree, 46.8% answered Agree, and 3.1% of respondents answered Neither Agree or Disagree.

We asked 'My care team are polite and treat me respectfully.'

81.25% of respondents answered Strongly Agree and 18.75% of respondents answered Agree.

We asked 'All my care and support tasks are carried out in a professional manner.'

62.5% of respondents answered Strongly Agree and 34.37% of respondents answered Agree and 3.1% of respondents answered Neither Agree or Disagree.

We asked 'When I need to contact the office team to discuss my care needs or make changes, they are always professional and reactive to my needs.'

62.5% of respondents answered Strongly Agree, 28.12% of respondents answered Agree, 6.25% answered Neither Agree or Disagree and 3.1% of respondents responded Disagree.

We asked 'Are you aware of these services that Bluebird Care provides?'

59.37% of respondents said they were aware of our Live-in Care services.

46.88% of respondents said they were aware of our shopping services.

43.75% of respondents said they were aware of our services where we can support you to appointments or with trips out of the house.

34.37% of respondents said they were aware of our Companionship services.

25% of respondents did not answer this question and 3.1% said they didn't know about any of these services.

We asked 'Would you like any further information on any of the above? Please state which?'

15.6% of respondents have requested information on some or all of our services listed in the previous question. 59.37% did not answer the question and 25% of respondents did not want any further information.

We asked 'What do you enjoy most about the service and the visits by your care assistants?'

We received some lovely comments in response to this question here are just a few:

'My family knows someone is checking in on me.'

'The extra effort they go to, they have gone above the basic care duties.'

'Always helpful and friendly. I enjoy my chats with all the assistants.'

We asked 'Do you have any other comments, questions or concerns?'

We received a lot of lovely comments and some constructive comments too. We have addressed any questions or concerns raised with each individual customer.

90%

of respondents said that 'I am likely to recommend Bluebird Care to friends or family.'

"Bluebird have been very helpful and have lovely care assistants."

"Excellent service, thank you"

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 contact our customer care team to request your activation link.

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



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

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

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



Virginia Zahr
Office Coordinator



Terri Evans
Training Manager



Katie Manson
Recruitment &
Development Manager



Summer Thurston
Customer Care Manager



Cathy Tofts
Team Manager



Eloise Baker
Training Customer Care
Manager



Melanie West
Care Supervisor



Hannah Mayes
Care Supervisor



Cathleen Anderson
Care Supervisor



Georgia Blatter
Care Supervisor

Team Bedford:



Emily Orbell
Operations Manager
PR & Marketing



Amreet Sanghera
Care Manager



Michele Quarry
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Supervisor

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