

Huntingdon News

New Computer System in Huntingdon

I am delighted to be able to tell you all about the new system and how it affects our Service User and YOU, Our Care Worker. All of Home Choice Care's rostering, Client and Care Worker records, and day to day operating details are contained on this system.



Key attributes of **our new system (called Coldharbour)** are the flexibility with rostering, excellent management and operational reports, it's ability to interface with all known payroll and invoice applications, user-friendly presentation of screens, and ease of implementation. The system is more user-friendly (once you know how to use it!) and will enable us to allocate the 2384 visits that we complete each week more effectively.

We will also be able to generate payroll reports so that all Care Workers can have a breakdown of their hours.

As I am sure you can appreciate transferring information from one system to another and then learning how to use it is a HUGE task. I would like to take this opportunity to thank, Rachel, Elaine, Lesley, Shanice, Danny, Patsy and Trish for their time and energy.

If you have any feedback regarding the new system (good or bad) please write in.

Also remember this newsletter is for you all to use - share your good news stories, articles for sale, anything you like.....just write in and let us know - the next edition is due in November.

Emma Pearson, Care Director

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Open Door



Welcome to the second issue of Open Door, the newsletter especially for Home Choice Care Workers.

Home Choice Care now provide over **20,000** visits per week to clients and patients. We deliver over **30,000** hours of care per month. **Thank You** for helping us achieve this. By working together and covering all those extra shifts and sickness/absences you have helped maintain our hours. Well Done!

Welcome back from the holidays for the many of you who have been off over the summer. Thank you to everyone who has covered the calls to enable holidays to be taken - we are a 24 hour, 7 day a week care company responsible for the lives of a lot of vulnerable people, so we must make sure that our Service Users are well looked after throughout the holidays as well as on normal weeks.

Jane Scott, National Care Director, and I, are planning to hold a meeting with every Care Worker over the next 3 months. We want to give everyone a chance to make suggestions, comments or discuss improvements to your branch's working and activities. To hold this meeting we plan to agree a date then hold 3 separate meetings, **1 at 10 am**, the next at **2 pm** and finally at **6 pm** to try and give everyone a chance to attend without disrupting your calls for the day. Watch out for your branches date. We will give at least 2 weeks notice and send out the date with your schedules, as well as a message on your pay slips.

Justin Jewitt, Chairman

Home Choice Care Website. Please take time to have a browse at www.homechoicecare.co.uk If you have any ideas on ways to improve the site or anything you'd like to see please feel free to contact Patsy Daeche anytime on 01277 354111. The site is there for you to source information and will be continually developed/updated as the company grows.



CARE WORKERS - £200 Reward

Don't forget if you have a friend with NVQ 2 qualifications, recommend them to us and they are successful, you could receive £200 once they complete their probationary period.



Also in this issue:

Hand Washing
Very important message about hand washing - see inside cover

Home Choice Care helps people live independently in their own homes by providing care workers to help with their daily needs

STOP!



Have You Washed Your Hands?

Look after Yourself (your Service Users and your Family)

“Coughs and sneezes spread diseases”

Hand decontamination for home care workers Preparation

- Keep nails short but not bitten – most microbes on the hands come from under the nails (Larson 1989).
- Do not wear rings especially with engraved surfaces or stones, total bacterial count when rings are worn is higher than average (Larson 1985, Jacobson 1985).
- Do not wear nail polish or artificial nails as people wearing these items do not wash their hands vigorously enough to remove contaminants (Larson 1989).
- Remove wrist watches, bracelets and roll up long sleeves prior to hand washing (Gould 1994).

The old saying remains true, even more so with concerns about illnesses like flu. When we cough or sneeze we have been taught from an early age to cover our nose and mouth however this contaminates our hands with the very organisms that cause illnesses.

There is plenty of advice about washing your hands more often – but how should you do it?

The following technique has been adapted from advice given to healthcare professionals to be more relevant to the home care setting. All of the information provided here is backed by research which clearly demonstrates the need to follow ALL the guidelines if you are going to protect yourself and others.

WEARING GLOVES IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR HANDWASHING

When to wash your hands

- Wash your hands when you arrive at every home.
- Wash your hands before you leave every home.
- Wash your hands before preparing food.
- Wash your hands after dealing with any bodily fluid (even if wearing gloves).

How to wash your hands

- Wet hands under running water.
- Apply soap covering all parts of your hands.
- Run vigorously as shown in the pictures for about 15 seconds, each step should consist of 5 strokes forward and 5 strokes backwards (Hand decontamination guidelines INCA 2002).
- Rinse hands under running water, keeping fingers pointing upwards if possible.
- Dry hand thoroughly on a clean hand towel.

Research shows that touching any part of a Service User can transfer organisms from you to them and from them to you.

Washing your hands in the home of a Service User can pose problems when drying.

- Try to ensure that there is a clean towel for you to use.
- Do not be tempted to use tea towels intended for drying dishes.
- Ensure your hands are fully dry before continuing with your tasks or putting on gloves. Wet hands transfer more organisms than dry hands (Elliott 1989).

Use of hand rubs

- Alcohol hand rubs are a useful additional tool to combat the spread of organisms from hands.
- Hand rubs are not a substitute for good regular hand washing but provide additional protection when used correctly.
- Hands must be washed with soap and water after every 2-3 applications of a hand rub.
- Hand rubs must be at least 70% alcohol to be effective.
- You must allow hands to dry thoroughly when using hand rubs.

1. After applying soap and water to the entire hands, rub your hands palm to palm.
2. Place your right palm over back of your left hand and then your left palm over back of right hand rubbing all the time.
3. Place your hands palm to palm with fingers interlaced, rub together.
4. Lock your fingers together in the palm of your hands and rub the backs of knuckles on your palm.
5. Lock your thumbs together and rub in a rotating movement.
6. Rub the palm of your hand with locked fingers of the other hand.
7. Rinse thoroughly under running water.

