



# Open Door

## Welcome to our Autumn newsletter

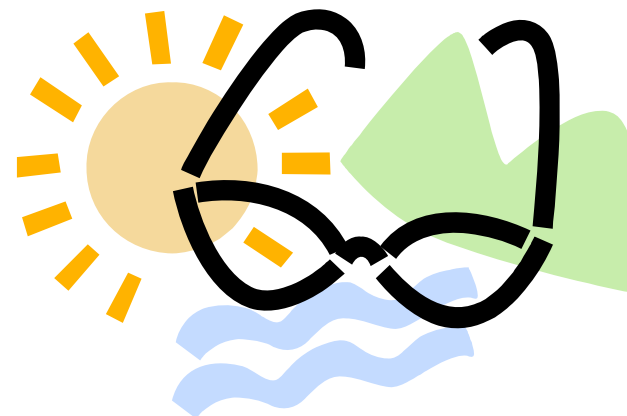
Things have come on in leaps and bounds over the last few months. The office staff have been working hard on the new computer system to permanently template (or schedule) the 2500 care calls that we service every week. I can now proudly announce that we have 'templated' over 80% of our calls.

The templating is crucial to operations running smoothly and means that care staff have a regular round of Service users.

Hope you enjoy this newsletter.

*Emma Pearson  
Care Director*

Welcome to Stephanie Charter who joins us as Office Care Administrator.



### HAPPY HOLIDAYS !

Great news for all our Care workers.

From Oct this year HCC will be allocating extra holidays to care workers in recognition of your hard work. The level of holiday is rising from **20** days to **24** days for a full holiday year.

This means if your holiday year ends in April you may take another **2** days paid leave this holiday year. If you are unsure when your holiday year starts/ends please contact your local branch.

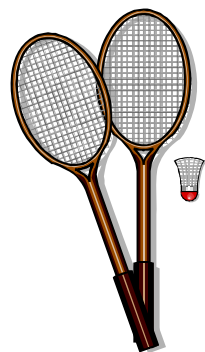
Home Choice Care helps people live independently in their own homes by providing care workers to help with their daily needs

# CARE WORKER MESSAGE BOARD

## 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.



Pat Simms would like to know if anybody is interested in playing badminton at 8pm on Friday evenings at St Ives Recreation Centre, if you are interested please contact the office on 01480 356219.



### Home Choice Care Branches



- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Essex</b>      | 01277 354111<br>John Giffney, Care Director<br>email: jgiffney@Homechoicecare.co.uk |
| <b>Cambridge</b>  | 01223 264944<br>Jonathan Ludd, Care Director<br>email: jludd@homechoicecare.co.uk   |
| <b>Oxford</b>     | 01865 770412<br>Shelley Nelms, Care Director<br>email: snelms@homechoicecare.co.uk  |
| <b>Gravesend</b>  | 01474 365594<br>Lyn Wilson, Care Director<br>email: lwilson@Homechoicecare.co.uk    |
| <b>Huntingdon</b> | 01480 356219<br>Emma Pearson, Care Director<br>email: epearson@Homechoicecare.co.uk |

# NVQ'S

## What is an NVQ?

**NVQ Level 2** in care is a vocational qualification, which enables you to identify what skills you can do already in your role and also to analyse and agree on what you need to learn (depending on your experience) to meet the NVQ standard

**NVQ level 3** in care is a vocational qualification for senior care workers in a supervisory role.

## How does it work?

You will be allocated an 'assessor' or 'mentor', who will guide you through the NVQ, assessing you on your work based performance.

You will be required to attend several group work shops.

The assessor may also carry out Work Place Assessments where you are observed working and you may also have to provide some written accounts to evidence your knowledge.

## How long will it take?

NVQ's generally take between 4 and 6 months to complete.

## What does it cost?

Full funding is available for those employees who meet the eligibility criteria and who have not already completed an NVQ or equivalent qualification. Every applicant will have to complete an eligibility questionnaire to determine if they are eligible.

Congratulations to the following employees who have worked very hard and have recently completed their NVQ Level 2's

**Isobel Baker, Dawn Brown, Jody Carr, Patricia Peck, Julie Pope, Lynette Thornton**



## Personal Safety

As the clocks have now gone back and the days are getting shorter, please make sure you take adequate precautions regarding your own personal safety.

Always tell someone where you are going, what time you are leaving and when you expect to return home. If driving try to park as close as possible to the premises you are visiting. Keep to well lit areas and do not take short cuts. Ensure you have means to contact somebody in an emergency, such as your mobile phone. Use a torch in poorly lit places (contact the office for information on borrowing company torches).

Take a whistle or personal alarm (contact the office for information on borrowing company alarms) and do not leave valuables or confidential information on show in your car.

Ensure you lock doors when travelling. Seek advice from your manager/supervisor where you have any concerns for your personal safety.



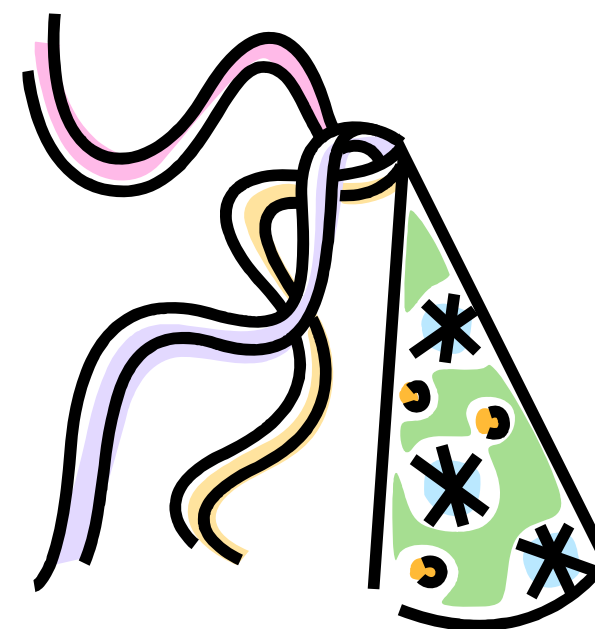
# FESTIVE ARRANGEMENTS



The festive season is fast approaching, a time of family, presents and fun. However we must all remember that the service users we visit still have the same needs whatever the date. This year the bank holidays fall on normal weekdays and we will therefore be expecting all staff to work as normal. BUT we are identifying now the calls that service users will not require so that we may offer staff at least part of the festivities off. It is our aim to ensure that every member of staff who wants it can have some time off either over Christmas or New Year. In order to do this and be fair to everyone we cannot allow paid holidays to be booked for the full period unless there are extenuating reasons and the leave has already been approved.

I would also like to remind you that the bank holiday rates will apply and if you are willing and able to do a little extra work at this time it may mean that one of your colleagues can have some extra time off. Please let your branch know as soon as possible.

There will be no shopping or housework calls on Christmas day, Boxing Day or New Years day. These may be rescheduled for another day or cancelled for the relevant weeks depending upon the needs of the Service User



Its time to put your party outfits on..... our Christmas party has been booked at the Golden Lion Hotel this year and will be held on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> and Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December.**

In the next couple of weeks you will receive a copy of the Christmas menu and an rsvp form. Please make sure you take time to fill these in and return them to the office promptly.