

HOME CARE NEWSLETTER

Winter 2021

Welcome to the winter edition of the Glasgow HSCP Home care newsletter. I would want to highlight some important information as well as bring you some good news stories from across the city and service. 2020 was an especially difficult year for everyone. However, as we begin 2021 our homecare service embraces the roll out of the vaccination programme for frontline home carers and assessment staff and sees the introduction of routine weekly PCR testing for all Home care staff delivering care and support across the service. These measures along with our infection prevention and control and safety protocols will give a vital contribution to limiting the transmission of Coronavirus.



I understand that many of you have experienced changes to your home care packages over the last year which may have been a cause of frustration but I want to reassure you that your safety and wellbeing as well as that of our home carers is our main priority. Glasgow HSCP Homecare service have had to make some very difficult decisions in changing or reducing some support in order for us to continue to deliver safe services to our most vulnerable in the city of Glasgow.

The Homecare service would like to extend sincere thanks to you and your families for your patience and understanding during these unprecedented times. We are very proud of the homecare teams who have continued to provide care and support in the most challenging of circumstances.

Thanks,
Gordon Bryan,
Head of Care Services.

APSE Award finalists



Our successful home carers recruitment campaign received the accolade of being a finalist at the Association for Public Service-Excellence (APSE) awards in December.

We were finalists in the category 'Best Efficiency and Transformation Initiative, for the mass home care recruitment campaign which ran in April 2019.

Gordon Bryan, Head of Care Services said "The awards celebrate the best in local government so although we didn't win, we were delighted to be finalists in the category and are very proud of the campaign which was hugely successful for us.

"In total we received over 2000 applications which resulted in 351 new home carers being recruited into the service.

"Following the success of the campaign we repeated it in September last year to recruit an additional 150 home carers to support the service during the pandemic."

If you are struggling to keep in touch with loved ones at the moment and would benefit from technology to help you do so, please call 0141 353 9292 and register your interest.

Tablet helps Service User keep in touch with family

Area manager Yvonne Kelly and social care worker Sharon Kinnon stepped into help an elderly service user who was feeling particularly isolated after the closure of day centres due to the pandemic.

The 98-year-old war veteran's daughter lives in England and was worried about her father's mental well-being after he was unable to attend his regular day centre. She contacted the service and asked if there was any way they could help.

Yvonne Bailie, team leader said "With all the restrictions Yvonne and Sharon tried to think outside the box. They contacted several organisations to see if they could help and finally 'Glasgow's Golden Generation' agreed to provide a tablet for the service user.

"His daughter was delighted, and it arrived just before Christmas Day. A family friend helped set it up and show him how to use it, so he was able to use it to video chat with his family down south on Christmas.

"In addition, they have also sourced a Polish speaking befriender to call him once a week and chat to him in his native tongue.

"I am really proud of how Yvonne and Sharon went the extra mile to help prevent this vulnerable service user from feeling isolated during such an uncertain time."

Glasgow's Golden Generation is a charity aiming to improve the quality of life of older adults in Glasgow through a variety of support services. In response to the pandemic they have released the GGG app which is free to download on any smartphone or tablet from the Google Play or Apple App store. It includes weekly zoom calls, ongoing activities and crosswords.

Reablement helps Hetty reach her goals

When service user Hetty had a fall last August she broke her femur and had to undergo trauma surgery to replace her hip. Much to her dismay it was advised that she should be transferred to a rehab hospital for intense rehabilitation.

Hetty though, believed she would recover better in her own home and so transferred to the home care reablement service instead. Upon discharge from hospital, she received four visits a day with the assistance of two carers. This was a significant increase in her care package, however Hetty, her family and her carers were determined to get her back to where she was before the fall.



Service user Hetty

physiotherapist. She made fast progress and quickly relied less on the equipment supplied by hospital and focussed on her walking using the carers for support. “She now only needs one carer and is successfully getting up and about in her home when the carers aren’t there.”

Hetty said “I really feel like I’ve ‘bounced back’ and have reached all my goals in terms of now being back to where I was before the fall.

“I am so grateful to the home care team for helping me to get to where I am and I have enjoyed working with the carers and appreciate the help they have given me. They have worked hard during this pandemic and are like a purple army of angels,” Hetty’s granddaughter Hayley said “Our family is spread all over the world, so with the current restrictions it has been difficult to see Gran. However, knowing that the carers are visiting and rehabilitating Gran has been so reassuring.

“We are so grateful to the home care service for giving Gran a new lease of life.”

Service User feedback

We asked some service users and their families how they were coping during the pandemic and how the home care service has been supporting them. If you would like to get in touch with any service feedback we would love to hear from you on **0141 353 9292** or at **careservices@glasgow.gov.uk**

“I haven’t left the house since March, the pandemic has really impacted my ability to see people and socialise. My carer Karen comes twice a week and it lifts my mood knowing she can help me bathe and feel a bit better about myself” (Mary, service user)

“My mum has Alzheimer’s and prior to receiving a supported living service my brother and I did the bulk of the care. But now as her care needs are being met, we can spend more quality time with her which is really important and reassuring at the moment.” (John, son of service user)

“I’ve been really impressed with the care John has received, especially with the professionalism of carers during the pandemic. John is particularly vulnerable because of his health conditions but the carers have been vigilant and always wear full PPE.” (Jane, sister of service user)

“Despite using a wheelchair I had an active social life pre pandemic and managed to get out most days. Because of health issues I’ve had to self-isolate which is hard. The carers are a good bunch though and have been doing a sterling job working on the frontline during this pandemic.” (Derek, service user)

Take care and be aware!

There have been reports of various scams circulating, so it is important to be vigilant and not fall foul of them. Some of the reports have been related to Covid-19 and are fake test and protect kits and vaccine scams. Remember if you are asked to give your bank details, it is most likely to be a scam.

Other reports relate to home owners receiving leaflets regarding the requirement to install interlinked smoke alarms in their home to comply with the new Scottish Government legislation. This legislation has now been delayed until February 2022, take the time to research traders and get quotes.

Visit www.gov.scot/publications/fire-and-smoke-alarms-in-scottish-homes for more information.

Winter fuel allowance

If you were born on or before 5 October 1954, you could get between £100 and £300 to help pay your heating bills. This is known as 'Winter Fuel Payment'.

If you are eligible and get a state pension or another social security benefit you will usually get the payment automatically.

If you're eligible but do not get paid automatically, you will need to make a claim. To do this visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/how-to-claim for more information.

Any money you get will not affect your other benefits

Christmas Day Carer

Home carer Gillian Malley was one of more than 1000 home carers who worked on Christmas Day looking after some of the city's most vulnerable residents.

Her story was featured in the 'Glasgow Times' on Christmas Eve and told how the mum of three also worked last Christmas Day and while she finds it hard to be apart from her children they know it's her job and are supportive.



Home carer Gillian

Instead the family worked celebrations around Gillian's shifts. She said "I do miss having Christmas Day with my family but for the service users we can be the only family they have and for some the only person they will see is me so I need to make it special.

"It was harder this year because we have to be so careful about everything and we weren't allowed to take Christmas cards in.

"But we made sure they have something special to eat and all their comforts as well as the Christmas programmes on the TV.

"It was a challenge for carers to make things festive. Usually people have the run up to Christmas with all those celebrations.

"Usually, even if you are alone on Christmas Day, you have had a good December but that's not the case this year so all the home carers took it upon themselves to make sure our service users had as normal and special a Christmas as possible."