

How our technology helps us deliver the best quality care

We believe that clear, transparent communication channels between our clients, their loved ones and our care management team are extremely important. That is why we were one of the first agencies to work closely with EveryLife Technologies and adopt their OpenPass system.

We hope that you agree that this system has proved to be beneficial to the service that we provide for both our Carers and Clients.

In May this year we were delighted to be asked by EveryLife to be their client representative in their latest PR launch. One of our oldest clients, Mrs Macro, her daughter-in-law Susan and her son Ray all participated along with our Aldershot Carer, Victoria Inskipp.



You can see the film they made on our website at www.melodycare.co.uk/about-us/transparency/

Thank you very much to all those who made this possible.

Hello and welcome to the first edition of the Melody Care Newsletter. There are so many lovely stories that we come across during our day to day work from both the wonderful jobs that our Carers are doing through to our clients interesting lives, that we decided to share these with everyone at Melody Care on a regular basis.

We hope that you find this an interesting read and if you have any comments or feedback, please do not hesitate to let us know by emailing marketing@melodycare.co.uk



Simon Carter
Owner



Cupcake Success

As part of our ongoing endeavours to support relevant charities, Melody Care joined many other budding bakers for the National Alzheimer's Cupcake Day on June 16th. We had many amazing cup cakes, tray bakes and cookies – we never knew that there were so many talented bakers amongst us.



Thank you to everyone who participated. We raised over £500 for this worthwhile charity.

Halloween Treats

We are also delighted to be supporting Macmillan Cancer Support and will be hosting a Halloween themed cake sale on Monday 30th October.



Please pop into one of our branches where we will have many cakes and treats on sale.

Living Wage Foundation



In 2015 we were the first agency in Surrey and Hampshire to be awarded membership of the Living Wage Foundation in recognition that Melody Care guarantee to pay at least the living wage and not just the minimum wage. Only the real Living Wage is independently calculated each year based on what the employees and their families need to live on, not just the government minimum.

Living Wage Week – 5th to 11th November – is the annual celebration of the Living Wage movement in the UK. On the Monday of Living Wage Week (6th November) the new Living Wage Rates will be announced. This will mean that our hourly pay rates will be increased from January 2018 onwards.

£100 for you and £100 for a friend

We know the importance of word of mouth and, at Melody Care, many of our lovely team have been recommended by fellow colleagues.

As a 'Thank You' in recognition of any referrals, we offer a **Refer a Friend scheme** whereby both you and your friend receive £100 after successful completion of the probation period.

Please contact your Branch Manager for details.

Offer only applicable for Home Care.



You Said. We Did.

Over the last few months our HR & Wellbeing manager, Kelly, has been gathering your thoughts and feedback on how we can make working life even better at Melody Care.

Some of this feedback has been:

- To improve communication;
- Improve how we identify risks and ownership;
- Improve the 'who does what';
- Reduce duplication of work;
- Consider contracts and benefits.

So we have been busy looking through a 'magnifying glass' on ourselves and trying to think and consider how we can improve the way we work. So what has been happening?

- We created a **Learning & Development advisor role** to strengthen support for all carers and the offices to ensure our carers feel supported in their ongoing journey with Melody Care and fulfil their roles to the highest standards;
- Newly created **Lead Carer roles** to support carers and improve communication between carers and the office staff as well as many other responsibilities. These roles will come into effect from the end of October;
- Weekly and biweekly office and **operational meetings** to discuss what went well, what didn't go so well and how do we need to improve for the following week;
- **Process mapping** to look at how we improve our systems; who does what work between the offices and support functions; and how the lead carer roles fit into this new way of working;

- A current and ongoing **review of benefits** that will make a difference to carers. This includes taking part in a childcare voucher scheme... we will announce these shortly.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

There is still much work to do to ensure that we are getting it right for all our staff and this includes some time to embed our new processes. Kelly will be undertaking further consultation and feedback from carers to focus on:

- A **review of contracts** – we are very mindful of the negative press that zero hours contracts have on the outside world and Melody Care is committed to being a progressive and flexible employer. Please look out for emails from Kelly (some have been going into people's junk mail!) for how you can respond and have an input into this process;
- Strengthening our **processes and systems** to ensure that we are operating safely and effectively;
- **Scheduling** – to ensure that we have an available and reliable workforce that can safely and effectively undertake care calls;
- Future **Specialist and Lead roles** (i.e. dementia awareness lead).

A staff survey will be coming to you very soon, so please look out for details of how you can respond.

Staff News

CONGRATULATIONS

Big congratulations to **Kerry Metcalfe** and **Amanda King** who have recently gained their Registered Manager qualifications. They have both worked extremely hard to gain these positions and we are so proud of them both – well done girls!



Amanda King

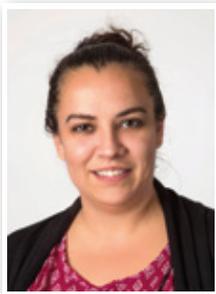


Kerry Metcalfe

DEMENTIA CHAMPION

Supporting people to live well with dementia can be challenging but also hugely rewarding and varied. We are very proud that **Anne-Marie Stewart**, our Deputy Care Manager in Alton is currently undertaking a Dementia Studies Degree. This will enable her to enhance her skills, knowledge and value base, as well as her professional development in this area.

Given that she is studying in her own spare time, we wish her all the best of luck for her final year of studies.



Anne-Marie Stewart

LEAD CARERS

As you may be aware, we have recently been interviewing for Lead Carers for each branch.

The Lead Carer will be responsible for supporting new and existing Carers which includes work shadowing, mentoring, peer supervision and general support. They will form an important link between the Carers, Learning & Development and the Office Team.

We are delighted to announce that we have made the following appointments:

Aldershot	Sandra Headley
Alton	Jeanie Dalloway Diane Kellie
Farnham	Kate Hedgeman Jemma Ruff Mandy Ward

We're on the buses!

As part of our recruitment drive, we have been advertising on the back of the local StageCoach buses. The routes that these buses take cover all three Branch areas from Alton right up to Farnham and The Bourne.

Have you seen us yet?

We would love to know! Please email marketing@melodycare.co.uk



Melody Care's

GOT TALENT

Over the last few months we have discovered that many of our staff have some great hidden talents which we want to share with you all.

**SANDRA
HEADLEY**



Move over Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood, have you seen the cakes that our carer Sandra makes?



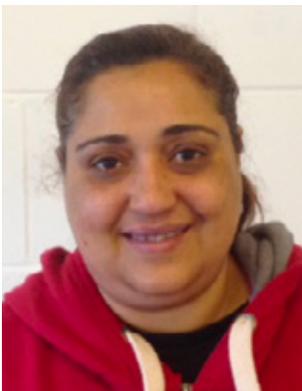
Not only has she baked some wonderful cakes for our cupcake fund raiser but she has made some fantastic creations for our office staff too. We look forward to seeing the Halloween themed cakes!



**HAZEL
FOURIE**



Hazel, one of our long serving Live-in Carers from Zimbabwe, is currently working on a 'Live-In Carer' recipe book featuring simple, traditional English recipes that both appeal to our Live-in clients but are easy to follow for Carers who come from outside the UK.



We look forward to the final edition and hope to share some recipes with you in the next newsletter.

**SARAH
THEOBALD**



Women's Institute member Sarah often participates in the monthly fundraiser competition.

Against fierce competition, she recently won the 'novelty apron' contest, taking old men's ties (collected from charity shops) to make this unique item.



We hope that you'll agree that this was a well deserved winning entry and we look forward to seeing future competition entries.

All the money raised from these events helps support a school in Africa.

Top Tips for Winter

With winter just around the corner, we wanted to share a few tips on how to ward off the winter chills and stay safe during the next few months.

- Get your heating system serviced every year by a qualified engineer to make sure it's running safely and efficiently.
- Never block air vents and if you have wood-burning, coal or gas heaters ensure there's adequate ventilation.
- If water pipes freeze they can burst. Make sure you know where the main stopcock is and check that it's easy to turn so you can turn off the water if you need to.
- Have your electric blanket serviced at least every three years.
- Make sure your smoke alarm is working. You can ask your local fire service to check your home for fire safety. It's free and you may be eligible to get free smoke alarms fitted.
- Install an audible carbon monoxide alarm in each room that has a gas appliance.
- Make sure you claim all the financial support you can to help with heating bills.
- Dress in plenty of layers and make sure you have warm shoes or boots with non-slip soles.
- Keep a mixture of salt and sand handy to put on steps or paths in icy weather.
- Consider fitting a grab rail if you have steps at your front or back door.
- Keep simple cold, flu and sore throat remedies in the house.
- Follow up your GP's invitation to have a flu jab.
- Order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time, particularly if bad weather is forecast.
- Ask your local pharmacy if they offer a prescription pick-up and delivery service.
- Keep basic food items in the cupboard or freezer in case it's too cold to go shopping. You could also do your food shopping online and get it delivered to your door.
- Eat healthily and keep as active as possible.

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