



Support Worker Newsletter



Edition 20 –Spring 2012

Welcome to our Spring 2012 edition of the Support Worker Newsletter. Once again there seem to be a lot of new support worker names and faces at ACM and a big welcome to you all – we look forward to working with you for many years to come. If you have not already visited the office at Bury St Edmunds we hope to see you here soon. This Support Worker Newsletter is published 4 times a year; please take some time out to read it as it is a useful way for us to keep in touch with you and to update you on what is going on. We welcome feedback on the contents and/or any ideas or contributions for future issues; to do this either speak with your Case Manager or contact Linda Marsden here at the office.

Training – We are committed to you all receiving good quality support and training to help you successfully undertake the work you are doing. We have had some great training sessions over the last couple of months and they have been really well attended and been given excellent feedback. We always say that any training day is only as good as the participants so Thank You to all of you who have made these days go so well. If you have any ideas for training events please speak to your line manager or Linda Marsden.

The following courses are coming up in the next few months so if you are interested in attending please speak to your line manager so that a place can be reserved for you.

22nd Feb –all day – Traumatic Brain Injury Part 2 this is suitable for anyone who has attended Part 1 and wants to gain a deeper understanding of this complex topic

26th April – all day TBI Part 1- an introduction for those working with adult clients.

17th May – all day – Working with Families – we have not run this course for a couple of years and it is a good course for staff to gain an understanding of the issues that family members can face and how we can support them as well as the client.

30th May – am – Working as Part of a Team – a session where we will explore how we can get the most out of the teams we work in and how we can ensure we play an appropriate role.

HSC Diplomas / apprenticeships – we have our first group of 6 staff nearing completion of their awards and we have recently started another group of 12 staff. Feedback from those doing the new awards is that they are a challenge but they are finding the work interesting and they are able to make it very applicable to their individual workplace as long as they think and plan carefully!!! I hope we will soon be able to share news of their successful completion soon.

We hope to start a new group in late summer so if you want to find out more please speak to Linda Marsden who can be contacted at the office.

Reviewing 2011

There is a degree of irony when we note that the heading for this edition is Spring 2012; for it is below zero outside, all around is white with snow but a hopeful daffodil is peeping up in the garden so Spring must be on its way! At the start of a New Year it is always good to do some reflecting on the previous year.

One of the highlights of 2011 was of course Ann and Kayleigh's success in the Regional Care Awards. Ann has decided not to go through to the National finals but Kayleigh will be attending and we wish her well when she goes to the national judging day in May.

But do remember ACM is proud of all of its staff and below are some figures that show why!

- 145 directly employed support staff were in post at the end of 2011.
- ACM provided approx 171,500 directly employed support hours in 2011.
- Turnover rate for our directly employed support workers was 13% in 2011. A national norm for the sector is hard to come by but recent CQC statistics suggested it could be as high as 35% annually for domiciliary care agencies such as ours.

ACM Retention rates are as follows:-

Staff in post under 12 months on 31 st Dec 2011	41	28%
Staff in post over 12 months but under 3 years on 31 st Dec 2011	48	33%
Staff in post over 3 years but under 6 years on 31 st Dec 2011	25	17%
Staff in post over 6 years on 31 st Dec 2011	31	22%

These are excellent figures and reflect some of the advantages of direct recruitment that we promote throughout our work here at ACM. Long serving staff and you know who you are in this category; provide continuity of support, are able to promote continued rehabilitation for the client and provide excellent long term support within the community.

Review of Incident / Accident Reports submitted during 2011

- **77 accident / incident reports** submitted. These reports involved staff working with **22 different clients**.
- **35% involved accidents/ incidents during the moving and handling** of clients – whilst we would always expect these to be high they are far above the 22% national average for our sector found in recent HSE reports. It is also concerning that this has increased since 2010 when the figure was considered high at 32%. Last year on 6 occasions the incidents recorded indicated that there was a degree of complacency by support workers – eg client hit by hoist bar or strap not fitted properly featured several times.
- This year we have had **5 serious incidents that have necessitated formal reporting to the Health and Safety Executive** . 3 because of serious/long term injury to workers and 2 because of serious failures in handling equipment. Whilst they would all appear to be genuine accidents it does raise concern and highlights the need for good Manual Handling training of Support Workers, appropriate risk assessments, good systems for incident reporting and the importance of regular equipment checks.
- **12% of incidents recorded were because of failures in medication administration / systems** in most cases these were omissions recognised by the next person on shift but this is an area of concern and needs to be carefully monitored.

Lessons to be learnt by all

- When involved in moving and handling clients, or managing staff who do, all should stress the need for constant vigilance and ongoing risk assessment whilst undertaking such tasks.
- All staff who administer medication must take extreme care and realise the importance of their role.
- It does appear that an increasing number of staff are realising the importance of recording incidents promptly and the content of most forms is becoming much more comprehensive. Training on this is given in Induction and other courses.

New Year Resolutions – as many of us will have already long forgotten what we set out to achieve in 2012 could you help us by making some new ones! If you have any queries re any of what is written below please speak to your Team Leader / Line Manager or Caroline Houston.

Annual Leave

Please ensure requests are sent in, in advance, on the forms provided to you all. Please take care about the dates and ensure hours requested are what you would have been normally expected to work ie if you have 15 contracted weekly hours and you require a week off, you would put this down as 15 hrs Annual Leave . Some teams have internal rules for how leave is requested, and allocated, these must be adhered to.

Please make sure that you plan to use your annual leave up as you go through the year. All annual leave for the year 2012 must be taken in 2012. There is no payment in lieu or carrying over of leave unless there are very exceptional circumstances, every year some employers will say no and staff loose what is unused.

Sickness Absence

All sickness absence must be reported using either a self certificate or Doctor's Certificate. Please send these in to the office as soon as possible. If no certificate is received before or with a timesheet it is likely that sick pay will be withheld.

Time Sheets

Please ensure timesheets are sent into the office in time and are legible, it can sometimes be a very difficult task to decipher people's figures and we have on occasions seen Caroline Houston turn a timesheet upside down to see if it makes more sense! Also should bank holidays be involved please make it clear whether these were worked or whether you were stood down. Please remember we want to do our utmost for the payroll systems to run smoothly so doing your bit really helps!

One final thing – please do not leave it until you have run out of timesheets, annual/sick leave forms or support worker record books to ask for further supplies.

Following all of the simple advice above will help make the face below far happier!!!!



Looking Forward - Ideas for Outings / activities when the weather gets better and the sun shines (ever hopeful)

We want to try and make our next edition of this newsletter slightly different and we need your help. Support Workers are good at finding great places for days out in the locality and I am keen to be able to share this information with others. So if you know the best place for a day out with a client (young or old) please send an e mail to linda.marsden@angliacasemanagement.co.uk telling us what it is, where it is, accessibility issues and why it is so great - we would be most grateful . (Maximum 100 words) If you have a photo and those in it are happy for us to use it, even better. You might get your name in print and we know others would appreciate your ideas.