



NEWS

specialist residential care and rehabilitation

including:



Alkare
Providing opportunities to progress



POSITIVE
LIFESTYLES

Spotlight



This month's Newstracs takes an in-depth look at Wings in Suffolk
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Welcome

A Message from Eric Millard

Once again the newsletter gives me pause for thought as I consider how much is achieved within the **tracscare** family over just a few months.

Since our last issue we have opened two new homes, Ty Gobaith and Alkare's Park Avenue. Further properties are due to open in the next few months.

Many of our team have been nominated for awards for their excellent work in the care sector; I wish them all the best of luck. There have also been a number of promotions across the group.

New initiatives include a new booklet on outcome based assessments which we plan to make available to anyone in the care industry as a means of sharing best practice.

This issue also features our Suffolk home, Wings. Wings have recently undergone a major redecoration and it's great to see them in the newsletter.

Finally, this summer we look forward to our biggest ever **tracscare** family party, *Under a Summer Sky*. The party promises to be the biggest gathering of staff and clients we have ever staged and I am looking forward to it.

We always welcome your thoughts and comments so please feel free to email chris.burton@tracscare.co.uk at any time.

Thank you,

Eric



tracscare kicks off new 'It's Your Home' campaign



Mike Tucker with Ben Rab Johns

A recent report in England pointed to the over institutionalisation of care in residential homes, and while **tracscare** prides itself on the homely environments it provides, constant monitoring is needed to ensure that institutionalisation does not slip into daily practice. Sue Hullin outlines the new **tracscare** 'Its Your Home' Campaign.

Over the past few months all the managers have been asked to adopt an 'eyes open' attitude to their homes, to self-audit and to report any instances where they feel they can improve.

Already we've had a number of suggestions back from our homes. One manager had concerns that the way we distributed medicines was possibly institutionalised, and that we did not fully maximise client autonomy within the administration process.

While it goes without saying that it is imperative that correct procedures are followed at all times when co-ordinating medication, I believe that small actions can really make a difference. For example we have introduced self-medication assessments and training, individual lockable medication storage within the client's own rooms, and medication administration in the privacy of the client's own room where self-medication is not an option.

Other areas that have been discussed include increased flexibility, with regards to meal times, ensuring that risk management strategies for one client do not impose unnecessary restrictions on other clients, and the removal of any unnecessary signage.

New Home opening

Alkare has recently opened its latest home as part of its ongoing investment into residential care.

Park Avenue in Skewen has been completely refurbished, and will provide a home for up to four service users who require one to one care and have Mental Health needs.

Home Manager Claire Norman said, "With one service user already moved in, and another three due to join him in the coming weeks, we're looking forward to the home being full".

"Our service users will all have en-suite bedrooms and are encouraged to personalise the room to suit themselves. It's difficult to say how daily life at the home will evolve, because at the moment it's like a blank canvas. As the service users move in, they will make the house a home and we will develop routines and activities from there".

Park Avenue is the twelfth home in the Alkare group.

"Our service users will all have en-suite bedrooms and are encouraged to personalise the room to suit themselves."



Positive Recognition for INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Staff at Positive Lifestyles are celebrating achieving the coveted Investors In People status.



The company has been working hard over the last 18 months, after embarking on the Investors In People programme, and were successfully awarded the accreditation in a recent assessment.

Steve Jones, Service and Development Manager, who looks after quality and training at the company said, "The criteria for the Investors in People is very rigorous and we've had a number of targets to meet, involving the training, assessment and ongoing development of all our staff".

"The IIP assessor visited a number of times, meeting more than 22 employees including staff from head office, management, support and relief workers. Clients at three of our homes welcomed the assessor".

"We all feel a great sense of pride having achieved this as it's a very positive boost. It's always nice to know that the practices we've put in place are working, and helping us continuously improve".

Caring as a career choice is now a norm, and those working in the sector require extensive training and qualifications. Positive Lifestyle's IIP accreditation proves that the systems in place support this and that employees at the company are given every opportunity to develop and progress within the profession.

Steve adds, "One of the assessors visits coincided with a routine visit from a social worker, and we were delighted when she gave us her vote of support. She said that she thought all those working at Positive Lifestyles were fantastic".

FAST FACTS Positive Lifestyles

Positive Lifestyles was acquired by the Alkare Group in September 2007 and became the latest company in the tracscare family.

Jo Dougal and Claire Norman



Stephen Davies

Fired up by Training

Positive Lifestyles client Stephen Davies has taken advantage of the in-house training available to staff and clients, and as a result has become the office fire monitor.

After a one day course Stephen now visits the Positive Lifestyle offices each week to check and test the alarms along with link worker Christian Hart.

Pauline Coakley who regularly joins Stephen on his weekly round said, "It has been a really positive learning experience for Stephen, he's pleased to have the responsibility and really proud of the title he's been given within the office of Fire Chief".

Linda Newton, Positive Lifestyle Director said, "We often run courses such as the fire safety and first aid and like to encourage both staff and clients to take advantage of them. We feel that clients confidence and development grow with learning new skills."

Stephen, a keen Elvis fan has been so inspired by his new skills that he's even added Ty Canna and Thompson Court to his fire alarm check rota.

A Sporty lot at James Street



The clients and support workers at James Street and Homeleigh took part in a one mile walk in aid of Sports Relief.

Dean Powell and Steve Parsons led the way at a run, closely followed by support workers Shaun, Paula and Nicola.

In total they raised over £100 and had a great day out, they even had their picture taken by the Swansea Evening Post.

stop press...stop press...stop press...

tracscare has just acquired Froud and Mond therapeutic services. The company will offer 24hour nursing care and therapy. Linda Newton of Positive Lifestyles will take on the role of Clinical Director. A full feature will follow in the next issue.

Training proves to be a Winning Formula

Woodlands Manager, Simon Ogden has recently received an award from Birmingham Carers Development Association for Outstanding Learner of the year.

Simon, who has been with tracscare for the past three years, received an award for being the most outstanding learner in the region.

He said, "It was quite a surprise to be nominated but I am delighted. Awards schemes like this are important for raising awareness of the care profession. I hope more and more people begin to see what a stimulating and rewarding profession it can be."

Simon's achievement is all the more interesting as this is his second career. He spent 25 years as a print manager, a job he cheerfully admits he hated.

He said, "I originally wanted to become a psychiatric nurse, but was talked out of it by a careers advisor. After 25 years I am now pursuing the goals I've always wanted, and that's to be a carer and it's the best decision I ever made."

Simon who has achieved NVQ level 4 in care is now on tracscare's very own accelerated training system- the Fasttrack system.

Simon Ogden



Out on a Wing - at Home with trascare

Wings may be the only **trascare** home in Suffolk but it's got a lot to shout about. The five bed home, which currently has four clients, has an activities calendar which would leave many other care homes breathless.

For a start the care team and clients have recently gone in for a Changing Room's project, completely refurbishing and redecorating the property.

Set in the beautiful Suffolk countryside, close to RAF Mildenhall, Wings has undergone a complete transformation, with clients deciding the interior design look.

The results are amazing and the clients and staff are now reinvigorated with many plans for the future.

Aimee Gerrish, Home Manager at Wings said, "It's been a pretty hectic time getting all the work in the house done but it's worth it. We've always been proud of Wings and now we are keen to show it off".



Jayne Mansfield in her room

All the clients like to get out and about and plans are already afoot for the annual summer holiday. Currently the debate is on whether it will be a weekend at the seaside in Yarmouth, or a visit to Sherwood Forest."

There is also the key date of the **trascare** party, 'Under a Summer Sky' which will be held in Honeybrook House.

Three of the clients attend the local Wood n' Stuff community craft workshop and pieces of their artwork can be seen around the home.



Maureen Edridge with Aimee

"As the only **trascare** home in Suffolk we tend to have a very busy schedule, and we make our own fun, which is why we've all become amateur interior designers over the past few months."

Decorating is not the only thing on the agenda at Wings, the home which cares for clients with dual diagnosis has an extremely busy social calendar too.

Maureen with support worker Trudi walking Denzel



"As the only **trascare** home in Suffolk we tend to have a very busy schedule, and we make our own fun"



Evenings at wings are filled with Music, as Senior Support Worker Roy often brings his disco in for music and karaoke nights.

Aimee added, "There is a great atmosphere at Wings. We like to keep busy and try new things – sometimes we even manage to get some sleep!"

Michael takes great pride in his garden, both ornamental and growing vegetables

Jayne has been at Wings since it opened six years ago and enjoys anything girly and playing bingo.

Sandra makes her own jewellery and enjoys singing on the Karaoke

Maureen is a film buff and regularly goes to the cinema to see the latest releases. She is also a keen cook and an invaluable help in the kitchen. She also likes going for walks with care worker Trudi's dog Denzel.

Changing Tracs

Linda Newton, Service Director at Positive Lifestyles is set to take up a new role as Clinical Director of Alkare and Positive Lifestyles.

The cross company role will involve clinical direction and strategy at all the homes.

Beginning her career as a nurse, Linda always knew she wanted to be in care and actually started as a volunteer when she was twelve.

Steve Jones, Training Manager, also from Positive Lifestyles will take up the role as training director across the family of companies.

He will be integral in terms of expanding the fasttrack system across the group and ensuring that all training is co-ordinated and targeted to ensure the skills and development are continuously improved.



Linda Newton (top), Steve Jones (above)

Building the best

Architects Concept 4 and Building team Just in Time are up for an award for their work in redeveloping **trascare** home Ty Gobaith and The Post Office in Skewen which will become an Alkare home.

The companies have worked with **trascare** for many years and are being recognised in the national building awards for Best Design of a Care Home.

Eric Millard of **trascare** said, "I am delighted that Concept 4 and Just in Time are being recognised for their excellent work. They know the need to complete refurbishment of our new homes quickly and to a high standard so that clients can move in as quickly as possible."



Day in the life of Julie Jones - Senior Support Worker at Ty Gobaith

7am – This is a fairly un-typical day. The new home Ty Gobaith is opening and we have decided to take five of our six clients in, on one day. This will be a first for **trascare**, and a first for me, so I face the day with some nerves. I am excited but know it's going to be very busy. After some breakfast and a cup of tea I leave my husband and grown up son asleep and head to the home.

7.45am – I arrive and it's already a hive of activity. All the staff have elected to be here today. We are pretty organised but there is time to put the finishing touches to the house, a final clean around, checking the rooms and going over the clients assessments.

10am – Fellow support worker, Gethin has persuaded his wife to do a buffet lunch for everyone today. Usually we would cook and eat with clients, but we thought that today it would be best to be relieved of cooking duties, so we could concentrate on settling the clients in.

11am – We set off to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital to pick up the first four clients. At the hospital we see the clients, although we already know them pretty well and have visited the hospital a number of times before, as well as organised transition visits to the home, where clients come to see their new home for a few weeks before moving in. After a handover with the hospital team we set off back to Llyniwipia.

11.30am – We arrive and our client's families are already waiting for us, an essential part of the settling in process, both for our clients and their loved ones.

We settle into a blur of activity, unpacking, taking a full list of clients possessions so they aren't mislaid or lost. I take responsibility for helping Veronica to settle into her room. She's a lovely lady with a keen sense of humour; when I met her at the hospital I instantly felt that I would love to be her key worker. (I am now working in that role.)

4pm – By now the family members are beginning to leave. We're lucky as the clients who have arrived today have all come from the same hospital, so they know each other. This makes it less strange for them.

6pm – The fifth client arrives and gets settled in by his care team. I start to get on with organising some tea. The whole day was very busy but there was an excellent team spirit with the staff. It's nice to know that there is always someone on hand to help you and who will look out for you.

9pm – Finished – it's been a long day but very rewarding. My husband, who also works in Mental Health, greets me with a glass of wine, eager to hear all about my day.

10pm – I go to bed exhausted, but look forward to getting on shift tomorrow, and getting down to the business of caring for the clients and making Ty Gobaith a home.

Julie has been a carer for the past 6 years. Joining **trascare** six months ago, she has trained in a number of homes across Wales. Prior to that she worked in a hospital with Mental Health patients and was a foster carer for young people on remand.



Flats UNDERWAY

The old Post Office Building in Skewen is being completely converted to provide six totally self contained one bedroom apartments, in Alkare's latest home, Ffordd Newydd.

Jo Dougal said, "This is a completely new and exciting opportunity for us. The residential home is different because it's been set out as apartments, which give our service users the opportunity to live independently. There will however, be full staff support within the building.

"The basement area has been converted into a living room and a kitchen area, which will be for communal use."

For many of the clients who come to live here, this will be a major stride forward in terms of living in the community with the level of support they need.

Alkare's latest venture, a group of residential apartments are well on their way to being completed.



Our Very Own Care Awards

Clients and staff enjoyed a fantastic evening at the Positive Lifestyles Awards.

The awards are one of the highlights in the calendar, and have been run by the company to celebrate staff achievements for a number of years.

Linda Newton, of Positive Lifestyles said, "It was a great evening, all the clients and staff enjoyed themselves".

"By hosting our own accolades, we can reward people for great attendance, commitment to care and outstanding performance. It's a great confidence boost for everyone as it's more of a celebration of all of our successes over the year".

Winners received a voucher for £50 and a certificate on their achievement. The winners were:

- Beyond the call of duty: Beata Kwiatosz
- Support worker of the year: Charlotte Smith
- Role Model: (joint place): Linda Broad & Krzysztof Filip
- Best Newcomer: Bethan Hill
- 100% attendance: Rachel Wells, Simon Woodham Owen, Linda Broad, Maria Bishop, Paula Corbin, Kevin Singleton.

trascare under a Summer Sky



The big **trascare** family event is nearly upon us. Due to be held on 25th June at Honeybrook House in Kidderminster Under a Summer Sky promises to be the biggest cross home event ever held.

Organised by Kevan Kent and Wendy Lewis, the event will take place in the large paddock at the home.

The event will feature old favourites such as the buggy parade, carnival games and music.

Kevan has a word of warning though, he said, "It might be best to pack a change of clothes. Not to spoil any surprises, we have a new game and let's just say you could get very wet. Our chief executive Eric Millard has promised to be the first to try it out!"

Look out for a full round up in the next newsletter.

Tangible Benefits of OUTCOME BASED FOCUS

A year on since the introduction of the 'Outcome Based Assessment Tool' and the results are in- across the board it has had a significant impact on client's lives.



By turning all the attention firmly onto outcomes, support workers and home managers have looked at and implemented individual solutions and goals for clients.

The tool has been such a success that **trascare** is now devising a toolkit which will be made available to the care sector, as part of the company's ongoing commitment to share best practice.

The results across the **trascare** homes in England and Wales show that 61 clients have improved since their last assessment.

Sue Hullin, Operations Director said, "These results are exceptionally encouraging. Our motivation is to provide a comfortable home in a community setting. We want to meet the clients' therapeutic, rehabilitative and clinical needs and the implementation of this tool gives us the opportunity to gain a full understanding of our client's clinical needs, and then take appropriate action".

"The assessment tool brings a clinical edge to the residential care environment, which is fairly unusual in the sector. We believe that these results prove that by turning the focus onto outcomes, clients lives can be improved and enhanced."

One example of success involves a client with Mental Health needs who showed significant improvement. Management of anxiety, and improving life skills and participation were identified as targets.

The outcome based care plan was developed to include an increase in priority time with the CSN team, and acupuncture was arranged to relieve tension. One year on and the client now has a strategy in place to help motivation and participation within the community, and is more willing to use public transport.

On balance talking to Jo Dougal, Area Director - Alkare



WORK

Job description: Area Director

Average day? Visiting homes doing Reg 27 visits or managers supervisions, attending various meetings, assessing potential service users, catching up on paperwork whilst answering hundreds of calls

Most memorable experience? There are loads although one that stands out is; a service user expressing when they had moved into one of our homes 'I have come home'

High point of the last twelve months? Achieving this post

Most satisfying part of your job? Too many to mention, I feel honoured helping service users achieve their goals I also love helping staff develop within their roles and progress within the company.

Best part of the day? Every day is different and that makes this job so enjoyable, when I arrive at each home the welcome that I get from service users is fantastic they always seem genuinely pleased to see me... it is also nice when the phone stops ringing each day.

Favourite place? It's hard to have a favourite I think all of our homes are great and the staff within all, work hard ensure each home is just that... a home. I did enjoy working next to Swansea Marina

HOME

Job description: Mum to two small children

Average day? Big rush in the mornings getting kids ready for school & nursery, rest of the day spent working, when home it's either a big rush to cook tea and then off to one of the many after school activities then homework bath story and bed. We enjoy our weekends together, still very busy as we go swimming every Saturday morning and usually spend the rest of the day out and about. We love the beaches and parks.

Most memorable experience? My children being born, even though they keep me so busy they are both the light of my life.

High point of the last twelve months? My partner asking me to marry him (I said yes)

Most satisfying part of your home life? My children, I am so lucky to have them, my daughter is five and my son is three I am so proud of them.

Best part of the day? I love walking through the door after work whatever the time both children run up to me to welcome me home and tell me they have missed me, (I also like to relax when they are both asleep which usually isn't until late)

Favourite place? At the moment it is my garden, it is lovely out there in this sunny weather.

Roll of honour - up for awards

Nominations for the Care Awards are now in and **tracscare**, Positive Lifestyles and Alkare are prominent. Here is the roll of honour. Good luck to all and congratulations for entering.

Alkare Ltd

Mike Bevan,
Brendan Bottomley,
James Carter,
Marlene Smith,
Claire Norman,
Samantha Morgan
Kevin Kent,
Ania Rompca,

Tracscare

Elma Hearty,
Neil Jeremiah,
Roxanne Howells,
Wendy Lewis,
Riccardo Lelli,
John Napier,
Paula Morris,
Darren Clement,
Chris Dickson
Louise George,
Carol Satyanand,
Shaun Vernon,
Malcolm Thomas,
Mike Spencer,
Claire Lewis,

Positive Lifestyles Ltd

Bethan Hill,
Dawn Cartwright,
Krzysztof Filip,
Stacey Green,
Rachel Wells,
Maria Bishop



Peter Kraminski

Smoking Cessation challenge in care homes

Smoking can be one of the thorny issues in care homes. The health of clients and employees in a care home setting is of paramount importance, yet so too, is allowing clients as much freedom of choice as possible.

Sue Hullin, Service Director of **tracscare** says, "Like many in the care sector, we have given this issue a lot of thought and at **tracscare** we have increased our efforts in terms of giving smoking cessation advice and promoting healthy lifestyles for its clients. We try to strike a balance between

supporting the client to make their own choices and encouraging them to take responsibility for their health."

This attitude seems to be paying off with a recent success story, with **tracscare** client, Peter Kraminski who has successfully stopped smoking after many years as a smoker.

Resident at The Willows, Peter was suffering ongoing dental problems which his dentist told him would not go away while he was smoking heavily.

As a result Peter made the decision to stop smoking, and with the help and support of his care team has now been a non smoker for two months.

Birthday celebrations at Alkare!



FAST FACTS ALKARE

Happy Birthday to Clifford Evans, the oldest client in the **tracscare** family. He has been with Alkare for 8 years and celebrated his 80th birthday with the team in July.

Alkare was set up 1997 and taken into the **tracscare** family in 2006 with 12 homes in the Swansea area Providing care for clients with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities.



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Your views

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