

# Private HomeCare News

May 2020



## Dear Valued Clients and Carers,

I hope you are all keeping well and safe. We live in unprecedented times which has caused many of our clients and their families anxiety and some people great sorrow as they have lost a loved one. To those of you who have lost a loved one our thoughts and prayers are with you.

It's been a challenging time also for Private HomeCare carers and staff, as we reassure and continue to care for our clients in their own homes, whilst also supporting our carers and staff who are experiencing similar anxiety and concerns.

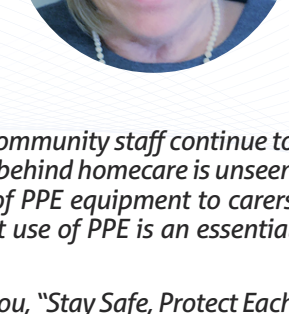
I would like to thank each and every one of the many carers and staff who have worked long hours. Their dedication and commitment to clients and colleagues wellbeing and welfare has been exceptional.

The health and safety of everyone in our community is our first priority. Our core office and community staff continue to work to ensure every element of providing care continues to run smoothly. Much of the work behind homecare is unseen yet is also critical in the delivery of homecare. Each week, we provide over 12000 pieces of PPE equipment to carers to protect themselves and our clients. Continuous training, including training in the correct use of PPE is an essential element of infection prevention and control.

We fully support our partner, the HSE, who have asked us to share their latest message with you, "Stay Safe, Protect Each Other, Hold Firm."

Yours sincerely,

**Elizabeth Nicholson**  
Founder and Managing Director



## A Thank You To Our Carers From Anne Marks

As Client Manager for Private HomeCare, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our carers who go out every day to provide care and support to our clients.

I know these times can be very frightening and challenging for some, but rest assured our carers are protecting themselves and our clients in a professional manner whilst wearing their PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) to keep all safe.

If we can look on the bright side of this pandemic and are lucky enough to sit in our garden or look out our window at nature – the birds are certainly giving us great entertainment with their birdsong, skies are blue, the sun is shining and the air is pure.

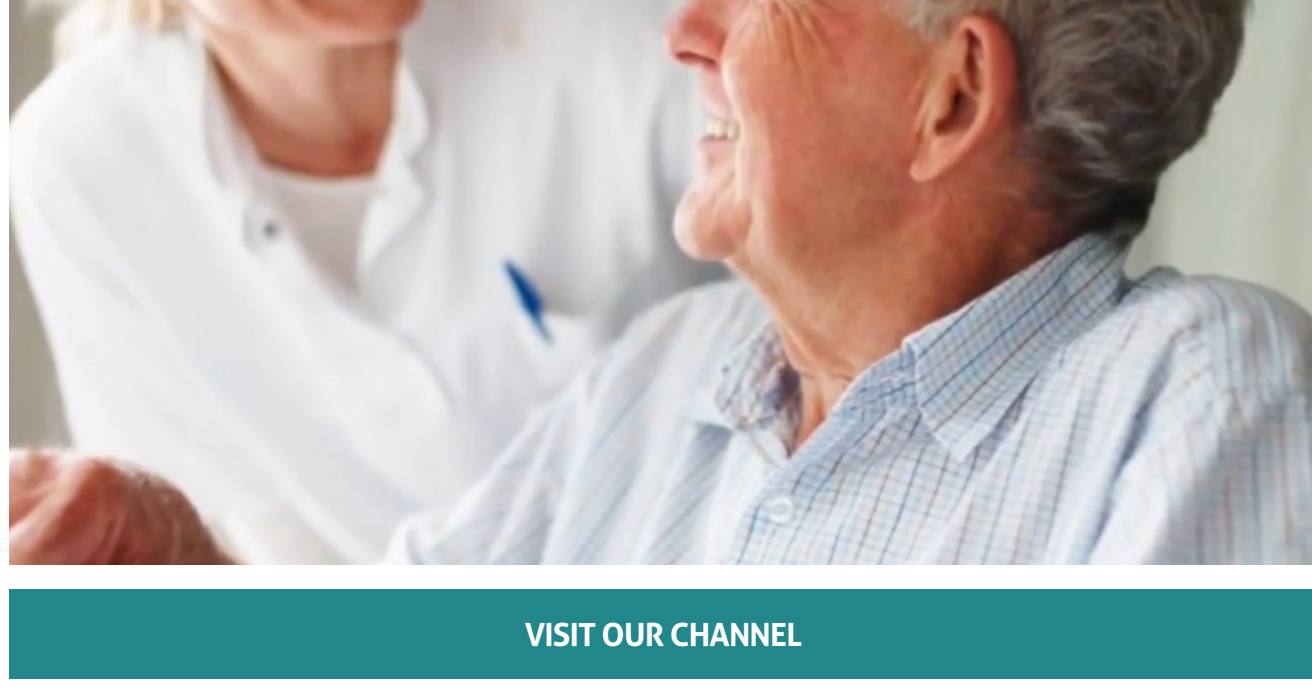
As a nation we are strong, resilient and have compassion for each other. Stay safe and take good care of yourselves. We will keep in touch.

**Anne Marks and all the team**



## We Have A New YouTube Channel

We have a brand new YouTube channel that we wanted to share with you. Click below and check out all of our videos.



[VISIT OUR CHANNEL](#)

## When I Interview Carers, I Think "Would I Want This Person Looking After My Dad?"

Patsy Philpott, our Recruitment and Compliance Manager, tells us about her dad Ronnie, who will be 90 in July.

"Daddy, as I still call him, was a very intelligent man with a great technical mind. He led the team that installed the first computer in Ireland. He built me a radio when I was a child. He installed a central heating system in our house before there was central heating. He had a very sharp mind."

Today, Ronnie resides happily in a nursing home in Co. Meath, or in his holiday apartment as he considers it, due to early stage dementia.

For a long time, Patsy says, family members and carers looked after Ronnie.

"Daddy stayed with my brother and his wife during the week. My brother worked full time and was often overseas for work so the bulk of the care fell to my sister-in-law, who did a great job. My sister and I - who also works full time - cared for Daddy during alternate weekends. We booked professional carers too. They had tremendous experience in caring for older people with dementia and they also looked after Daddy's personal care - this was of great importance to us as we did not want to shower or dress him ourselves in order to preserve his dignity."

"We were all doing our best for our beloved Dad, but there came a time when the Public Health Nurse said that Daddy needed a stable routine. Moving around between our 3 houses was not ideal. We could not keep it going. So a family decision was made, with Daddy, to move him to a nursing home."

"Daddy is very happy in the nursing home, but obviously it is a worrying time for the family. Although there is no Covid in the nursing home and even though he is nearly 90, he is still very precious. He likes sweet things so I dropped some biscuits down to the nursing home at the weekend. It was very hard to walk away without seeing him. I know lots of other families are going through the same thing."

Other staff members in Private HomeCare have similar stories. "To us, we always see our clients as people. It is very important to me that Daddy is still a person who had a full and responsible life. That can never be forgotten. He is always at the back of my mind."

## How Does Your Personal Experience Affect Your Role As Recruitment Manager in Private HomeCare?

When I interview prospective carers, I always think 'is this the person I would want dealing with my father?' Would they give him the respect he deserves? Are they kind? Or would they just see him as an old person?

## How Has the Virus Affected Interviewing Carers?

Like many businesses, we have had to move some of our services online. Due to the sensitivity of having a carer in your own home it is a HSE requirement to hold face to face interviews with applicants. Since the virus hit, I now interview via video rather than in person. Telephone interviews only are not sufficient. As Recruitment and Compliance Manager, I have to confirm that the person I interviewed matches official photo ID presented for Garda vetting. This means producing photo identity such as a passport or driving licence.

Personally, I find it easier to make a connection with people via video than the phone.

I like to reassure applicants that video interviewing is new for me too. Yesterday a candidate was unsure about the video technology. It is my job to put interviewees at ease. I sent her the link to click and said, don't panic. I am not a technical guru. We will muddle through this together. And we did. And she will be a terrific carer if she passes Garda vetting and reference checks and completes the required training. I would be happy for her to care for Daddy".

From the editor : Huge thanks to Patsy for opening up on her family's personal experience.

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CARER?

## We've Moved Our Carer Training Online

Like many businesses throughout the world, we have had to change the way we do certain things, in order to protect our staff, clients and community. Due to the very sensitive nature of caring - taking care of vulnerable people in their homes - our staff must be trained to the highest standards. Our Training department is therefore a critical part of our business, and it works closely with our Recruitment function.

Traditionally, our courses have been held in a classroom. This allows for interaction and shared learnings amongst carers, during break times as well as in class.

Now the theory parts of our courses are held via Zoom on the internet. It was a big change for all involved and we are pleased to say it is going very well.

This is what some of our learners on our recent QQI Care Skills course had to say about online training:

"I was scared but it's fantastic. I am enjoying it more. You have to concentrate. Everyone is in your ear!"

**Jennifer**

"I did an SNA (Special Needs Assistant) course in a classroom last year. There are lots of courses online, but I thought I wouldn't be able to concentrate. It's very good. Now I feel I can go do more online courses."

**Nastasha**

"I miss meeting people and getting to know them in a classroom. I do like it, that is one thing though that does not work as well as in a classroom."

**Aishling**

On Friday 8th May, 3 x practical Skills Demonstrations were assessed and marked live by our Training Manager, Anna Lloyd, in the Lucan Centre, where we hold most of traditional classroom training.

As well as passing the theory part of training courses, it is also essential that carers pass the practical skills demonstration part.

The three subjects under assessment for the Practical Skills Demonstrations were:

**1 Eating and Drinking**

**2 Mobility**

**3 Dressing and Grooming**

Each skills test shows how the carers assist people, and incorporates health and safety and communications skills in each test as well.

This was planned with the utmost attention to safety for all, and according to HSE guidelines. Learners attended in person and brought someone from home in order to demonstrate their skills on, to avoid cross contamination.

## CHECK OUT OUR CARER TRAINING

## Career Opportunities Offered At Private HomeCare

Did you know that 5 of our office and community care staff thought working with us as carers? As well as using this invaluable experience to enhance their current roles, we started it was important to share this message with everyone.

Linda Chadwick, Training Co-ordinator, shares her career path within Private HomeCare with us.

"As a Training Co-ordinator it is my job to check people's training plans, see what training they need, if any HSE training is needed, creating time table and also I am in charge of the accounts side of it all."

"I originally began working at Private HomeCare as a carer before interviewing for a role in client administration. I began on a part-time basis before moving to full-time and have now been on the administration side for almost 4 years. My favourite part of my role is actually meeting the carers and putting a face to the name."

"I do miss working with the clients as they can become like family. I would look forward to visiting them and having a chat. I miss just knowing you are making a difference."

"My work as a carer has been really beneficial for my role as a training coordinator. I can see things from every point of view."

We also heard from Mary Tuffy, our Client Coordinator.

"I started working for PHC as a carer. In 1995, after years of caring, Elizabeth Nicholson and Anne Marks promoted me to a Client Coordinator, where I have more contact with clients' families, and assess their care needs."

"Working 23 years with PHC, I have learned lots of skills, enjoyed all my experiences."

Finally, Therese Enright, our Community Social Care Supervisor, had this to say about her own experience.

"I joined Private HomeCare as a carer. I left as I wanted to gain experience in a nursing home. Throughout all of this time, I chose Private HomeCare to do my professional training with, as I knew their standard of teaching was so high."

"Then I saw a job for Community Social Care Supervisor advertised with them and I applied. I was delighted to hear I got the job! I am so pleased to continue my career with Private HomeCare for many reasons. Mainly I know the team have been there for years and that says a lot about any company I think!"