



NURSING AND HOME CARE AGENCY LIMITED

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Support Worker

Newsletter

March 2009



With the long sunny days of summer now behind us the falling leaves and cooler mornings of autumn now upon us we find it is time again to share with you some of the new developments and opportunities we have been working on.

Over the past few months we continue to listen to the feedback, concerns and compliments we have been getting from you and our services users and have been looking at ways to address and improve the quality of services we offer. As a result we have some exciting new training, new employment opportunities some pay-rate increases and our ongoing Ezitracker project.

We look forward to seeing you all at the staff meeting (*see below for details of where and when*) and we really hope you take the opportunity of this forum to express any queries or issues that may arise from this newsletter or more generally from your experiences.

Remember

*“Let no man imagine that he has no influence.
Whoever he may be, and wherever he may be placed,
the man who thinks becomes a light and a power.”
Henry George (1839 - 1897)*

Goals for January - June 09

1 Rostered Time Matching Actual Time

As we have mentioned in previous newsletters our most common complaints from support workers are as follows:

- When you have been given too many visits and you have had to rush between services users homes (over scheduling from service coordinators)
- The service users have been upset as they do not know what time someone is coming
- Service users complaining because a support worker has not turned up

We are implementing Ezitracker in direct response to staff complaints at staff meetings and discussions with me (Melissa). Ezitracker can and **will** eliminate these problems as it will give me direct reports when there has been over scheduling from service coordinators or no one turns up and most importantly it will give me that report daily so that I can stop it happening again.

We have had a delay with our planning and have now had to extend some of the dates that we were planning. The new dates are as follows:

Area	Staff Meeting	Time	Start Date
Feilding/Outlying areas	Thursday 9 th April (location to be advised)	1 – 2:30	Monday 20 th April
No-fixed hours Palmerston North	Wednesday 8 th April (Palmerston North office)	1 – 2:30	Monday 27 th April
Levin	Thursday 2 nd April (Levin Office)	1 – 2:30	Monday 20 th April
Dannevirke	Tuesday 7 th April (Dannevirke office)	1 – 2:30	Monday 27 th April

2 Implementation of the falls prevention and dementia / delirium assessment tool

We have now developed a risk assessment tool when our service users have had a change in there condition such as

- UTI has developed
- Fall/unsteady on feet/decline in function
- Increase in dementia such as not eating or drinking/dehydration
- Delirium/sudden confusion
- Skin deterioration

We have enclosed training and assessment material for you to complete as a way of further developing your knowledge about these areas. If you have already completed the dementia worksheet we would still like you to complete it as a form of revision. Please remember to name the assessment forms and drop these into Marcia when completed.

Here is what a staff member who is currently using Ezitracker has to say about it:

"I found Ezitracker very easy to use once I remembered the phone number and my personal pin number. Ezitracker saves time filling out time sheets both at the beginning of the week and during visits. It also saves time picking up time sheets and dropping them off at the office. Ezitracker is especially good when it is pouring with rain as there are no time sheets to try and keep dry. From a Level 3 administration point of view Ezitracker makes it easier to keep rosters accurate"

Jacqui Day - Level 3 Support Worker

Timesheets

We will no longer pay for a time sheet where the service user has not signed for each visit. If the service user is unable to sign, then special authority must be given by service coordinators in order for us to pay on time sheets which have not been signed.

Weekend Work

All fixed 4 hour and 3 hour positions will now be paid at \$16.50 per hour as of the 6th April 09. If you wish to apply for a fixed hour position over the weekends please contact Marcia.

Bureau work

As most of you know we employ staff to provide temporary shifts to rest homes and hospital. We will now utilize these staff to cover our fixed hour support workers in the community when possible. Bureau staff will work either 4 hour shifts (in the community) or 8 hour shifts (in the rest homes/hospital) on a temporary basis. If anyone is interested in enquiring about these positions please contact Marcia (06) 350-2186.

Travel reimbursements

For the past few months we have noted more queries from support workers regarding their travel reimbursements. Some new staff may not be aware of the travel reimbursement policy. Prior to 2005 home care providers were not paid by the Ministry of Health, DHB or ACC any additional money for travel. Lavender Blue paid support workers 30 cents per kilometer after the first 10 km's one way and support workers did not get paid \$1 for each hour worked. In 2005 the Minister of Health had received so many complaints from support workers and providers around the lack of payment that a subsidy of \$1.24 was paid to providers for travel. Each provider had to submit a policy to the ministry as to how they would pay support workers the travel payments.

Our policy states that for each hour worked by a support worker they are paid \$1 per hour. They are not paid \$1 per hour if they are in the same place for 3 hours or more or are using a Lavender Blue Nursing and

Home Care Agency Company Car. The remaining 25 cents is kept in a pool to pay support workers 70 cents per kilometer after the first 10 km traveled between a major center to one service users home to the next or from one service users home to the next. The \$1.24 we receive per hour each hour worked is a maximum amount. Last year we over spent our travel budget by \$25, 000 which we are not funded for. The Minister of Health did not intend for the travel funding to cover all costs associated with travel. We can only pay travel out in accordance with this policy. At the end of the day it is up to the support worker if they accept clients in outlying areas or not.

Unattended Reception / After Hours Phone

As many of you may have noted our reception area is now unattended. Any forms you need will be left at reception for you to collect independently. If you require assistance please ring the bell and someone will attend to you. If you have any need to contact someone in the office please try to do this during the week, as we are currently finding Friday and Monday afternoons extremely busy and some of the issues could wait until later in the week.

We have now restructured how the after hours phone is operated. Can all sick calls now (where possible) to come through to the office instead of the after hours phone. Ali is in the office now at 7am and will take all sick calls from that time on wards. Donna is in the office until 5:30pm and will take calls up till then. If you can not make calls within this time then ring the after hours phone.

Pay queries

If you have any pay queries we are resolved to fix them quickly and remedy the error in less than 12 hours. Most pay errors are in fact caused by differences between your rostered times on our computer, and times you write down on your timesheets – not payroll (which is what we hope to eliminate with Ezi-tracker). For example – our system may show that a client may have 2 hours per week but the support worker records on their time sheet for 3 hours per week – pay roll staff can not pay more than the allocated time without permission been given. When you are ringing payroll staff please remember to be professional and trust that if there is an error we will fix it that day and pay any money owing that night.

Who	When to contact
Jenny	Enquires regarding Resthome/Hospital ph 0274708309 out side of office hours
Ali	Contact Ali at 7am in the office if you are unavailable to work that day.(week days) contact the after hours phone if you are cannot work at short notice weekends and public holidays.
Donna	Contact Donna in the office up until 5:30pm if you are unable to work that night.

Abuse Prevention

There has been much discussion in the media of late regarding abuse of older people in residential facilities. This has occurred in response to the incident in Bell Haven rest home where a support worker put tape over a resident's mouth so they could not hear her. All of Lavender Blue Nursing and Home Care Agency Ltd support workers have received training in rights and responsibilities and as you all know, people receiving a health and disability service have rights. These rights are not there just for polite people, people we like, or for people that are easy to deal with – they are there for all people. I would like all of our staff to revise this unit standard to ensure that your practice is maintaining our service user rights at all time.

Levin/Dannevirke Office

We now request that support workers in Levin and Dannevirke ring to make a time to speak to their service coordinators. It is not appropriate for support workers to have access to service users files as the information they require is on the service users service delivery plan which is located in their home. If you are unable to locate the plan please contact your service coordinator.

We look forward to seeing you at the staff meeting.