

# Inform

Keeping you in the picture

January 2015 Issue 6

avante<sup>e</sup>  
care & support  
*'Everyone Matters'*

stepahead  
support



# Inform

Keeping you in the picture January 2015

## AVANTE MOVING FORWARD IN TO 2015..



**W**e are all working in increasingly difficult and challenging times within the health and social care sector. Daily news stories on hospital discharge pressures, diminishing local authority funding for care, and the new focus by CQC on poor performance and

threat of enforcement, all contribute to the environment Avante Care & Support now operates in.

Within this framework Avante Care & Support has done well in 2014 to navigate and position our business in a sector under a level of stress probably never seen before. Post general election we will face the policies of a new Government and the implementation of the 2016 Care Bill which will impact on the funding of care for anyone needing care services. I am particularly pleased to be able to say as an organisation we delivered safe services with good outcomes to all who used our services in 2014.

During 2014 we saw the closure of Honeyfield and Homeleigh as homes which were no longer fit for purpose. Our plans in 2015 will include investment into a number of homes to ensure current thinking on dementia design and presentation are appropriate as we move forward. This will include an approach to reviewing how each home presents itself and ensuring colour schemes, contrast and prompts such as memory boxes are in place.

At the time of writing this piece we have been successful in appointing new Managers Simon Doherty and Alison Purkiss for Northbourne Court and Puddingstone Grange respectively. Both bring a wealth of experience from Barchester and Care UK respectfully. For the next few months Geoff Ward will manage Bridge Haven as we look to

invest in the home and enter into a new contract for 'step down beds' with the local NHS Trust.

We have rebranded as Avante Care & Support which you will see in our new signage, letterheads and website. We have a new brochure which you can see on the website with hard copies also available. A new philosophy of care and mission forms part of our drive to deliver good outcomes for people we care and support. Our values will be summarised by the word SPARKLE which will begin to appear on posters and new uniforms.

Part of remaining a respected provider is our standing with CQC. Any employee should take the opportunity to speak with their home or branch manager to read and see the requirements of CQC in their guidance 'Residential Social Care – Provider Handbook.'

Fundamental to CQC and quite rightly is their wish to observe and review the life of selected service users and their experience. This runs from the content and quality of individual care plans selected through the daily living experiences. CQC will therefore look to observe practice linked to selected service users and look to assess the support and care given by our care and support teams.

It remains evident of the dedication and commitment of our staff teams in all that we do 24/7, in supporting and providing care. Across our Stepahead Support service, Home Care and Registered Care services there are daily examples of staff members going the extra mile in their daily work. This is so encouraging and positive to see, helping Avante Care & Support remain a recognised and valued provider of choice to commissioners and service users.

**Mark Lloyd**  
Managing Director



# PROJECT JOY

**The essence of this project has been to encourage staff to deliver everyday tasks in a more person centred relationship based fashion.**

The project is based on the work of Tom Kitwood, David Sheard and Tom Nolan and encourages the use of life stories, positive relationships, reminiscence and environments for interaction and wellbeing of resident's staff and families.

This is in harmony with our core Eden values which have helped shaped the new Avante Philosophy of Care and recognises that 'Everyone Matters'. In order to provide a strong, kind, enriched and well lead model of care we must work closely with residents, their families, staff and the wider audience of stakeholders. This will ensure that residents are not only well cared for but offered choice and the support to live as full and an enriched life as possible.

The project encourages staff to consider that activity should be viewed as something providing positive interactions for the individual resident's needs and wishes, by all staff throughout the day.

The project is just entering its evaluation stage which will be looking at several areas to include residents, relatives and staff's opinions on activities. Staff will also monitor any changes in the number of recorded incidents and or psychotropic medication.

The full evaluation results will be available from February.



**Anne Child, Director of Pharmacy and Dementia Care**



# Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



## AMHERST COURT

Christmas Day at Amherst Court, Chatham. Staff at the home had been preparing for Christmas day at the home for weeks.

All presents were personally picked for the resident and suitable for their needs. Staff wanted to make the day a special one so all gifts were in gift bags and delivered on a sweet trolley festively decorated!

Trish and the team dressed as Elves to deliver the presents to all the residents on Christmas morning.

Marie Taylor, Amherst Court Activities Coordinator said - *"Resident Rose loved joking around with us on Christmas day as did Frank, who was so happy with his present of a neck tie, saying it was just what he needed. Everyone on the middle floor really enjoyed posing for the group photo, we really needed a larger camera to fit everyone in!"*



## THE KENT COMMUNITY SUPPORT TEAM

Office staff and carers met up to enjoy the Christmas festivities together and look forward to a successful 2015.





# HO HO HO FROM HEAD OFFICE

A big well done to the Head Office staff that took part in the Christmas Jumper Lunch Party that was held on Monday 22nd December at Head Office.

I think you can see why Amanda Andrews, PA to the Director of Community Services, and Adam Bradley, Finance Assistant, scooped joint prize for the best festive outfit! In between eating lots of party food.

There were lots of fundraising opportunities with an excellent £104 raised for the charitable fund and £61 raised and donated to the charity Meningitis Now. A great festive lunch had by all!



## BARTON COURT

Barton Court have welcomed their first Dementia Cafe of 2015!

The Dementia Cafe support group is a great opportunity for people with or supporting loves ones with dementia to meet with staff and others in the community. The meetings give people a chance to speak with carers and to understand all aspects of dementia, where memories, experiences help and support can be shared and offered.

The Cafe is held every month, with local community groups getting involved or helping on the day.

The home would like to say thank you to Hazel from Tesco Community, who provided residents with new summer hats, and also to Lindsey from Carers Support for helping out as she usually does!



# YOUR CARE RATING

Your Care Rating is an independent survey being conducted by Ipsos MORI, an independent research agency, on behalf of care home providers. It is an opportunity for residents to express their views about a range of subjects, in confidence, in the largest survey of care home residents in the country.

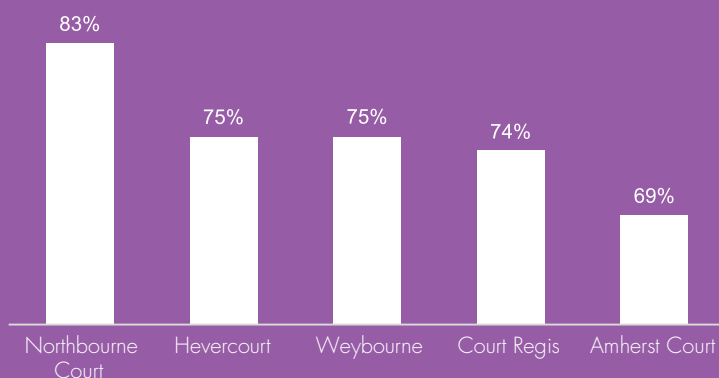
Avante has just completed participation for the 3rd year in succession and can boast the highest rate of survey return since we began using Your Care Rating. There was a slight increase to 379 of surveys returned by Avante Care homes which equates to 47% of the service.

After such a strong response we now look forward to the 9th February 2015 where the results of this national survey will be made available to the public via national reporting and the Your Care Rating website.

For more information about these surveys you can visit [www.yourcarerating.com](http://www.yourcarerating.com)



Response rate (% of Service)



## SAM GIBBS, AVANTE STAFF BANK (ASB) MANAGER

Sam joined Avante Care and Support in January 2012 as a Recruitment Consultant and in her short time in post applied to become Manager for Avante Staff Bank (ASB).

ASB is Avante Care and Supports internal staff bank that recruits a wide range of skilled employees to cover shifts across Avante Care and Supports care homes. Sam's daily duties include day to day management of ASB and ensuring all shifts are covered as well as liaising with external agencies.

ASB has been operating for over three years and when the service launched it was covering 95 hours a week. Due to expansion of ASB over the last three years the service now employs a team of coordinators, an administrator and recruitment officer and now covers over 3000 hours each week.

Sam and the team feel a real sense of achievement when they find cover for staff shortages across the homes. This supports existing staff in ensuring that residents are always supported and cared for.







## RURAL YOUTH

This year it is all systems go for Rural Youth! We have a dedicated team with eight separate Youth Clubs running in the rural areas of Kent.

Maidstone area: Wormshill and Hollingbourne  
Shepway: Brenzett, Sellindge and Saltwood  
Thanet: Minster, Westgate and Minster pavilion.

The team are a talented group of professionals, having qualifications and experience in Table Tennis Coaching, Music, Recording, Theatre, Arts and Crafts, Nutrition and Health, Cooking and Drug Awareness to name but a few. All of these activities are delivered with a person centred approach, acknowledging and praising good behaviour and teamwork. The Rural Youth team are developing a summer plan of outings and activities which will include, climbing, football, beach days, visiting the zoo and parks.

## MEDIATION

Although we are not allowed to disclose any details of cases the mediators have worked with, I would like to share with you the number of families to date that we have worked with and some of the successful outcomes achieved - almost 800 families have had mediation intervention since the service began.

Some of the feedback we have received directly from service users has been amazing. I would like to share three with you.

A family in the West Kent area said - *"The mediator would not give up on us. He said we needed to keep our appointments. This is just what we needed to hear. I will never forget the help the Stepahead mediator has done for us"*

Family in Canterbury Area said - *"We wouldn't be where we are today without the mediators help. She was honest with us which in our situation is what we needed. Absolutely brilliant."*

Family in Thanet Area said - *"The service is fantastic, there are clear improvements within our family communication and I have nothing but praise for this mediator."*

## STEPAHEAD ARE BRINGING A BRAND NEW YOUTH CLUB TO HOLLINGBORNE

We are opening up opportunities for all 11-25 year olds from local areas around Hollingborne. The club will be open on Wednesday 4th February 2015 from 5.30pm - 8.00pm and every following Wednesday at Hollingborne Village Hall.

The club is run by two rural Youth Workers, Holly and Dean. We will be running a number of activities each week to cater to a variety of interests. These activities will range from multi-sports, arts and crafts, cooking, music and basic IT.

We are very proud to also announce that during the club all attendees can be provided with the opportunity to gain AQA qualifications within specific areas that they may not be able to gain through schooling.

At Stepahead we promote healthy living and are planning to teach cooking lessons to those interested. This is continued within the club as there are healthy snacks and drinks available each week at no cost. We are aware that the village hall is hired out during panto session and therefore alternative local venues will be provided. This information will be updated on our Stepahead website and facebook page.

Throughout the year the rural youth team will be arranging fun and active day trips e.g. theme parks and theatre trips. It is our aim at Stepahead to encourage youths to work alongside other members of society to build a strong community. The club is free of charge so why not come along and give it a go and meet new people as well as our friendly staff!

For more information visit our website at [www.stepaheadsupport.org.uk](http://www.stepaheadsupport.org.uk) or find us on Facebook.

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