



Cornerstone SDS
Aberdeenshire

Newsletter

Autumn 2016

Betty Noden – Cornerstone SDS Service User

“Arthur and I were married in early 1947 and have been married for 69 years. He is now 101 and I am 92 and we have lived in our current house for more than 30 years.

I have always been an active lady and was always doing something and took great pride in my beautiful garden; however when Arthur first became ill I was his carer for some time until I fell out of bed and hurt my back.

Although we have always had the support of our son Nick, I knew we had to do something as we could not ask him to do everything for us - he had his own life to lead. It took some time to get some care organised but we eventually had care from an agency and, although most of the staff were really nice, they always came at different times and we never knew who was coming.

Nick then met with Cornerstone SDS in September 2015 and arranged to change from an agency so we could get our own staff and by October 2015 my Personal Assistant Michelle started to work for us.

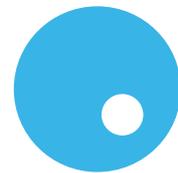
Michelle is a marvellous girl and is great with Arthur - I have a new life and it has made a huge difference to Arthur.

I had come to a point in my life where I didn't care and had lost interest, but now I see beauty in my life, things have changed altogether. Michelle now arranges a rota, as we have three staff in place as our support package is now almost 24 hours.

I still have my own personal space from 1.00pm–4.30pm - this is my time as although I have staff in the house most of the time I also still like my independence, but I know I have choice and nothing is rushed.

We are now in a routine and I feel relaxed knowing that Arthur is being cared for - he is my main concern and is very settled. I now have a sense of knowing everything is okay.”

“It is wonderful to know that this family is still together and happy”



Option 1:
Direct Payment



Option 2:
Individual Service Fund



Option 3:
Arranged Services



Option 4:
Mixed Budget



Self-Directed Support

Helping you to choose the best possible care.

Cornerstone SDS is an impartial advisory service, created to provide you with all the information you need to choose the best possible care for you through Self-Directed Support (SDS).

The introduction of the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) (Scotland) Act means you have four options to choose from about how you would like your care and support to be

Option 1

Direct Payment

FIND OUT MORE

Option 2

Individual Service Fund

FIND OUT MORE

Option 3

Option 4

New Cornerstone SDS website

We recently launched our new Cornerstone SDS website (www.cornerstonesds.org.uk) which provides information and resources on all of the SDS options and gives a platform for users to advertise for carers.

One particularly useful feature on the site is the Employer Zone which can be found in the Resources section. Everyone who employs Personal Assistants (PAs)/carers will be issued with a username and password to access the information and employment related forms in this section.* We will continue to build on the existing information, so if there is anything you think might be useful to you as an employer, we would welcome your suggestions.

We have also uploaded all of the current adverts for PAs on the 'jobs' section, so if you are currently advertising you will be able to see your advert there.

We hope to capture more stories on how Self-Directed Support is being used to meet outcomes for people. Reading about people's experiences can help others to put the SDS process into context, and it allows people to see how things can be done differently. If you would like to share

your story in our Newsletter or on the website, we would love to hear from you. Your story can be anonymised if you would prefer.

**You need to have an email address to access the Employer Zone. If you have an email address, and have not received a username and password, please get in touch with our admin team and they will set this up for you.*

Aberdeenshire Council SDS Team

The SDS team have relocated and are now based at **Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie, AB51 4QY. Tel : 01467 628054.**

Update on approved payroll provider

Due to new mandatory requirements, Aberdeenshire Council recently tendered for an approved payroll and pension provider. These requirements dictate that all employers must have a pension scheme available to their employees who are eligible for auto-enrolment and those wishing to opt into a pension scheme.

The contract was awarded to Fife Business Services (FBS) - an existing provider for some of our clients so there may be no change for some people.

FBS Contact details:

Fife Business Services

7-11 Tolbooth Street

Kirkcaldy

Fife

KY1 1RW

Tel: 0845 86 20 846 (TBC)

Email: payroll@fifebusinessservices.co.uk

Although the impact this change may have has been acknowledged, the council has a duty to ensure it gets the best value for public money and, as the payroll service has a cost to every individual budget, this cost had to be minimised where possible.

You should have all received notification about this by post or email and should have returned your form to authorise the transfer of information and funds to FBS. If you have not returned this form yet it is presumed that you wish to stay with your existing payroll provider and are happy to contribute the extra funds that will be needed to pay for this. You will have received welcome information from FBS once you have transferred. Until you receive this information, please continue to operate with your existing payroll provider. If you have not received any information or are unsure about anything, please contact your SDS Advisor who will be able to help.

Team Update

Congratulations to our Resource Mapping Project Officer, Laura Seaton, who got married in July and is now Laura Hendry!

Laura's updated contact details are, e-mail:

laura.hendry@cornerstonesds.org.uk and

telephone: **01467 530525/07584 473651**

Laura is available to anyone looking for resources in their local area so please do not hesitate to get in touch if you are looking for assistance with this.

Here are some examples of resources that Laura has found so far:

- Archery groups and a space in Banff for a teenager to do archery.
- One-to-one golf and tennis lessons for a child with autism who would find it difficult to manage this in a group.
- Activity and employment opportunities for two teenagers who are transitioning from children services to adult services.
- Dates-n-mates for an 18-year-old who is just about to leave school, to help her socialise.
- Suitable after school activities for a boy with autism in Huntly.
- Agencies which were available to provide 24-hour care for a week in Aviemore so the family could take a holiday.

Helen Summers, who was previously in our admin team, is now an Advisor and covers the Ellon and Portlethen areas.

A warm welcome to our newest team member Victoria Taylor who has joined the admin team.



Helen Summers



Victoria Taylor



Empire update

Severe Weather - How to react professionally and mitigate against disruption.

Severe weather can greatly affect the ability of employees to get to work on time or occasionally at all. For those living in rural areas, the disruption can be greater as roads can be poorly treated and the access to public transport can be limited.

For those in the care sector who work with those who are the most vulnerable, particularly during the winter months, it is important to have an understanding of how these situations should be dealt with.

Anyone unsure of what steps to take in the event of severe weather can adhere to the following points which will hopefully assist in dealing with the situation. The ACAS guidelines are a good place to start in setting out the key things to consider in relation to this area.

First and foremost, it is important to state that employees do not have an automatic right to be paid if they are unable to get to work because of travel disruption. It is at the discretion of the employer to decide whether the employee can undertake the work at a different time or take annual leave. If neither option is viable, the employee will not be entitled to pay for the time they are unavailable.

Unfortunately, in the care sector the opportunity to allow an employee to work from home if there is severe weather is not possible but there may be a chance to be flexible and alter working patterns and if you have multiple employees (eg. it may be possible for another member of staff to cover for those who cannot get into work).

If there is severe weather it is important that employees know how to contact you at the earliest opportunity to allow you to find a solution. It might not always be the case that the employee is unable to get to work due to the weather directly, but maybe due to a school closure where an employee is unable to make child care arrangements at such short notice. This could be classed as emergency unpaid time off for dependents, details of which are contained in your employee handbook.

If, however, issues do arise with absenteeism or you feel that the sufficient effort to come into work is not being made, it is important to deal with these issues fairly and consistently.

Details of the correct absence reporting procedure is contained within the Employee Handbook which should ensure all employees are aware of the process to follow should they be unable to attend work. Empire is at the end of the phone to assist you with all employment related queries, and will be able to provide advice and guidance in this area (01224 701383).

Finally, if you can plan ahead, you will find it easier to handle severe weather if it arrives. Ensure that all employees are aware of what to do if they cannot get into work, and the procedure to follow. If you are aware that adverse weather may be coming, you could consider contingency plans in case there are any difficulties.



Living wage awarded to Personal Assistants

As part of measures to tackle low pay and inequality, the Scottish Government has given a commitment that from 1st October 2016 social care workers will be paid a minimum of the Living Wage of £8.25 p/hr for all active (wakened) hours of daytime support worked. ILF Scotland have now been given approval by Scottish Ministers to enable Independent Living Fund (ILF) recipients who directly employ Personal Assistants to become Living Wage employers.

ILF recipients not currently paying the Living Wage of £8.25 per hour will soon be offered an increase in their awards. This will enable employers

of Personal Assistants to pay the Living Wage for every active (wakened) hour of daytime support. This increase in the ILF award will be offered within the terms of current ILF Scotland policies.

Following acceptance of the offer by ILF Scotland recipients, this increase will be backdated to 1st October 2016.

The implementation will take place over the coming months. Further communication will be sent directly to those affected by this offer and to key partners in due course.

Employment Law Information Sessions

Over the past two years we have run a series of workshops and information sessions for employers of Personal Assistants. The purpose of the sessions is to give useful information on topics such as absence and recruitment, which will help ensure you are a good employer.

Unfortunately, due to low attendance in previous sessions, we have taken the decision to cancel the sessions scheduled for November. We will look at other ways that we can ensure you are receiving this information.

We will keep you informed of what is planned.

Slides from the previous Information Sessions are available to view on the Employer Zone on our website www.cornerstonesds.org.uk

Health and Wellbeing

As winter approaches the number of illnesses also increases. Flu is an unpredictable virus that can cause mild or unpleasant symptoms in most people. Most people will recover from flu within a week or two, however, certain people are more likely to develop potentially serious complications of flu, such as bronchitis and pneumonia. Vulnerable groups include older people, pregnant women and people with an underlying health condition. These people are advised to have a flu jab each year.

The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk. This is to ensure they are protected against catching flu and developing serious complications.

You are eligible to receive a free flu jab if you:

- are 65 years of age or over
- are pregnant
- have certain medical conditions
- are very overweight
- are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
- receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill
- are a front-line health and social care worker.

If you are an employer of Personal Assistants it is your responsibility to arrange vaccination for your staff. You should advise them to get the vaccination from their own GP Practice or local pharmacy. Some pharmacies require a letter from their employer which shows they are entitled to receive this. If you require a copy of this letter to give to your PAs please get in touch with the Cornerstone SDS Office (01467 530520) and we will send you a copy.

Personal Assistants Network Scotland

The Personal Assistants Network Scotland has been created to provide a support network to PAs directly employed by the person they support via Self Directed Support. As a member of the PA Network you will be invited to join PA Network events which are run regularly across Scotland to meet local demand.

We are currently planning a series of events in South, Central and North Aberdeenshire to raise the profile of this network, explain the benefits and encourage PAs to join. These will take place in March 2017 and the dates will be confirmed and communicated to the personal assistants in their January and February payslips. Please encourage your PAs to join up and attend these events.

Feedback from members following training and network events included:

- **"My voice was heard and valued"**
- **"I found the discussions really useful in understanding what matters to PAs"**
- **"As a lone worker, it was good to receive support, training and meet other PAs"**
- **"They were good events to meet other PAs and discover mutual concerns and interests"**

Your PAs can become a member by signing up via the website www.panetworkscotland.org.uk. It's free and only takes a few minutes - all that is needed is their name and email address. The PA Network Scotland can also be found on Facebook by visiting www.facebook.com/panetworkscotland

Support planning and our role

Any individual who has met the eligibility criteria for SDS is required to have a care and support plan in place with identified outcomes and an individual budget.

A care and support plan is a summary of your assessed needs, your outcomes and how you want to use your personal budget to achieve these outcomes.

If required, your Cornerstone SDS Advisor can help you to enhance the care and support plan. This can help you identify all the resources available, so you can meet your outcomes in the most efficient way.

The Cornerstone SDS Advisors have completed Person-Centred Support Planning training and have

a range of planning tools available. These can be used to give structure to conversations, leading to practical ways to capture information that feeds into care and support planning.

The tools ensure that you get to the heart of what really matters to you, and that we use this information creatively to inform the best possible solutions. They help our Advisors to think through the different options available, so that we can be confident that we are using available resource in the best possible way.

Most importantly, it gives you more of a say, leading to increased choice and control over how you live your life – which is a fundamental principle of Self-Directed Support and personalised services.

New Cornerstone SDS office opened

In July our new Cornerstone SDS office in the heart of Inverurie was officially opened by Provost of Aberdeenshire, Hamish Vernal.

Through the new facility, Cornerstone SDS, in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council, will support thousands of people to make choices about their care

through Self-Directed Support (SDS).

Cornerstone Chief Executive, Edel Harris, said that the opening of the new dedicated office will provide a great opportunity for people to drop in and discuss SDS options with the team.

She said: "The opening of our

central Cornerstone SDS office and launch of the website will enable us to continue providing the highest quality service to our existing SDS clients, as well as reach and support many more individuals throughout Aberdeenshire."



Puzzle Corner

Can you find all 23 words hidden in our SDS word search?

P	Z	P	P	P	C	N	G	L	S	F	T	H	Y	C	D	T	D	C	N
W	U	F	S	E	M	O	C	T	U	O	F	X	D	P	U	N	M	O	K
T	Q	M	U	S	Q	N	R	L	T	W	U	I	J	J	I	E	M	U	I
N	S	P	G	U	B	J	M	N	X	P	R	W	R	C	G	M	O	G	N
E	S	E	D	P	M	R	C	I	E	E	A	D	V	I	C	E	G	S	D
M	E	R	N	P	S	E	F	N	C	R	N	C	K	H	A	V	R	N	E
S	N	S	Z	O	W	S	M	T	R	S	S	J	O	I	C	L	E	O	P
S	R	O	B	R	I	H	P	E	E	O	N	T	D	Y	W	O	S	I	E
E	I	N	U	T	P	A	Q	G	V	N	K	J	O	T	F	V	P	T	N
S	A	A	F	A	Y	P	X	R	I	A	W	A	Z	N	L	N	E	A	D
S	F	L	R	M	A	I	O	A	E	L	U	E	H	D	E	I	C	R	E
A	Y	U	E	N	U	N	X	T	W	I	R	M	L	B	X	S	T	I	N
V	W	N	E	J	O	G	Q	I	Q	S	W	L	O	L	I	M	D	P	C
I	T	N	D	T	B	E	T	O	O	A	V	Y	Q	J	B	F	T	S	E
U	E	I	O	I	U	V	E	N	D	T	B	T	Q	E	I	E	V	A	G
D	M	T	M	U	H	J	U	V	O	I	O	J	F	I	L	U	I	Q	W
F	R	E	F	E	R	R	A	L	N	O	T	T	Q	W	I	X	Z	N	Y
E	P	L	A	N	N	I	N	G	B	N	Z	U	V	Z	T	Y	W	Y	G
F	F	N	O	I	T	A	P	I	C	I	T	R	A	P	Y	N	D	H	L
F	Y	N	O	I	T	A	R	O	B	A	L	L	O	C	H	K	G	U	G

ADVICE

COLLABORATION

FAIRNESS

INDEPENDENCE

OUTCOMES

PERSONALISATION

RESHAPING

SUPPORT

ASPIRATIONS

CORNERSTONES

FLEXIBILITY

INTEGRATION

PARTICIPATION

PLANNING

RESPECT

WELLBEING

ASSESSMENT

DIRECTPAYMENT

FREEDOM

INVOLVEMENT

PERSONAL

REFERRAL

REVIEW

Further information about SDS can be found on the Scottish Government's website - SDS Scotland:
www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk

If you would like to find out more about the Cornerstone SDS Aberdeenshire service please get in touch with us at:

25 High Street
Inverurie
Aberdeenshire
AB51 3QA

Tel: 01467 530520

Email: aberdeenshire@cornerstonesds.org.uk

Facebook: Cornerstone SDS

We are always seeking ways to improve our service so if you have any feedback on the service we provide we would welcome your comments. You can do this by speaking to your advisor or by contacting the Service Manager, Angi Wood on 07825050028 or email angi.wood@cornerstonesds.org.uk

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