

Welcome to the first newsletter of the new decade, as you can see above, we've rebranded it 'Optimo News' and we're so excited to bring you the first edition. Inside you'll find all our latest news around our new Rotherham contract, the launch of our 'Optimo Connect' app, as well as an update from the festive season, our latest health and wellbeing news and lots more. There's our regular 'word from the CEO' too.

If you have any ideas you'd like to see included in future editions, or you'd like a special message for someone during the next few months, please get in touch and let us know.

Please continue reading, we hope you enjoy this edition....

## Our Rotherham Service is Expanding – We're going from 'One to Two'!!!

Choices Specialist Community Care and Support is the latest service in our group to expand into South Yorkshire. This will be through a brand new Rotherham contract, which, through existing experience, we anticipate will provide a huge opportunity for the expansion of our Choices service. Opportunities for lots of new job roles are being created, including vacancies for both office and community based staff. This new Rotherham service will be run from the 'Mexborough Business Centre', where our current TLC Rotherham and Doncaster services are also based.

Choices Rotherham will run alongside TLC Homecare Rotherham, which will celebrate its eighth birthday in the spring and which will continue to support the people of South Yorkshire, providing the best possible care we can (please email: [recruitment@tlc-homecare.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@tlc-homecare.co.uk) or [recruitment@choiceshomecare.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@choiceshomecare.co.uk) for recruitment enquiries).

We are committed to seeing a year of strong opportunities and development for all of our teams throughout the Optimo Group during 2020, a year where we will continue to build upon all of the hard work we've been doing over recent years. We'll be evolving from one service, to two major services covering the Rotherham area, under the watchful eyes of Gill and Judith who will be managing each individual service respectively and continuing to instil all of the elements of our Vision & Values, supporting us to continue, 'to deliver a service to be proud of' for many years to come.



Gill Strayer (pictured left) is the Registered Manager of TLC Rotherham and TLC Doncaster and has been with the Optimo Care Group over a year now. Judith Beaumont, Care Service Manager (right), came to us when we acquired our Choices service in West Yorkshire, approximately 18 months ago. They are both very experienced in their field and look forward to welcoming and supporting all of our new service users and staff to the organisation. We'd also like to send a BIG 'THANKYOU' to all existing TLC Rotherham staff, for their hard work and commitment to the service as we look forward to building even further on our new venture throughout the year, I'm sure they'll be lots more exciting opportunities to come!!!



Good luck goes to Rotherham teams and we send our very best wishes to all of our teams throughout the organisation, thanks to them ALL, for their ongoing support and commitment – thank you!



## A word from the Chief Exec...

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2020.

Lots to cover this month and thanks as ever to Elaine for compiling Optimo News. As a busy service it's easy to overlook all the great activity going on in the Group and this newsletter helps us to keep track.

With new office and service openings, new colleagues to welcome to the Group, plus a number of other developments, 2020 looks like it will be another year of development and progress for us all. This is Optimo's 10<sup>th</sup> year and with 20 years in WarrenCare, TLC and Choices we are officially over 70 years experienced! Quite an achievement when you consider this equates to several million care hours delivered and literally tens of thousands of people supported.

Our new "OptimoConnect" app is now in first phase of launch and we will be focussing on its benefits and opportunities this year, please take a look as it is rolled out. It promises to be a useful resource for all of us – all feedback welcome!

I am currently reflecting on our PRIDE values, when we created these we did so with all our wonderful service users at the heart of them. We also need to remember that these values relate to all of us as colleagues and teams. At all times we should consider them in how we work together, how we develop what we do as a service collectively and how we make decisions. For example, person centred also means considering each other and how we work positively together with what is important to us. If we do this, our service will flourish and our care and support to those who use our services will too. This year we will look closely at how we can demonstrate our PRIDE values across all our operations, we are all involved in this.

Enjoy this newsletter!

Best Wishes, Richard Walker

## Homecare.co.uk:

**Thanks to all service users** who've completed a 'Homecare.co.uk' review card for us already. We really appreciate all feedback received to assist us in continuing to improve our services further as we move into the future. We currently have an overall rating with Homecare.co.uk of 9.3 out of 10, (ranging between 9.1 - 9.4 across all services), this is a fantastic achievement and reflects all of the hard work our staff do...



More review cards have been distributed at random (with these newsletters), please do feel welcome to complete one if you receive a card this time. However, please note that a card will not be accepted by 'Homecare.co.uk' if a member of staff has assisted you in completing it, if you need help, please ask a family member or friend (cards completed by these are fine). Before posting please check all sections have been completed and that the card has been signed, in order for it to be accepted by Homecare.co.uk.

**A MASSIVE 'THANKYOU' to all of our staff**, for their ongoing hard work and commitment. We look forward to receiving more important feedback from our service users soon...

## Update re: YES – 'Your Engagement Survey':

**Thank you** to all staff who completed the recent employee survey, feedback received has now been passed on to the senior management team and any further updates will be cascaded as required, over coming weeks and months. **In the meantime we can confirm that we will be making fact sheets, (relating to specific health conditions), available from training/reception areas soon, we will be publishing details of any available training courses as and when they are available and we are also in the process of reviewing our company benefits scheme. Training fact sheets will be published within the 'Hub of Knowledge' on our fantastic new app too.**

Please see details of the ten draw winners who each received a £25 shopping voucher below:

Lyndsay Taylor – TLC Barnsley, Gill Strayer TLC - Doncaster & Rotherham, Susan Galley – WarrenCare, Lynne Walsh – TLC Rotherham, Anne Marie Dukuzimana – WarrenCare, Sian Hancock – TLC Rotherham, Sarah Harrison – Central Services, Lauren Cooper – Town & Local Care, Amber Davison – TLC Sheffield, Chloe Cullen – Choices.



## Optimo Connect – A Fantastic New Way of Communicating with Staff:

We've now launched our exciting new method of communication, and invited all of our employees to join our new app. I'm sure many of you will have seen our Facebook posts over recent months, introducing the 'Connecteam App', which has now been re-branded as '**Optimo Connect**'. This really is a fantastic way for us to communicate with our staff and in the longer term, for all staff to communicate with each other, we are still in the process of rolling out a phased introduction.

Initially 'Optimo Connect' will be used as a reference facility, which staff can log into, in order to read documents such as policies, procedures, our 'Vision & Values', training fact sheets, newsletters and more, (this '**Hub of Knowledge**' will be added to over time, we have started off with a few topics we thought would be most helpful). Moving forwards we'll be introducing more interactive features, such as chat and the facility to complete on-line forms... If you're a staff member watch out for more info coming soon!



## TLC Sheffield News:



**Lyndsay White (Care Service Manager)** of Town & Local Care in West Yorkshire, now joins the TLC Sheffield service and will be managing both services alongside each other, congratulations Lyndsay! Lyndsay has many years' experience working in care and we'd like to welcome her to our Sheffield office, she enjoys working with her team in order to build and run a very smooth and efficient service and she's really proud of all of her staff. I'm sure Lyndsay looks forward to meeting everyone and catching up with service users in Sheffield too... She would like to send a special 'thankyou' message to all Sheffield staff for their continued help, support and understanding over the last couple of months and would also like to mention Cynthia Dube & Jamie Ward, who are now coordinating the Sheffield service, we wish them both good luck and welcome them on board. Good luck to everyone and welcome to all new Sheffield staff.

## WarrenCare News:

Congratulations also go to Kerry Hardy (Care Service Manager) of WarrenCare in Merseyside, her certificate of registration has now come through and she is fully managing the WarrenCare service. Good Luck goes to Cath Johnson, who has also applied for registered status, Cath is responsible for running our Merseyside 'Specialist Support' services...Well done both of you!

## TLC Doncaster – CQC Assessment:

Thank you to everyone from our Doncaster service, for all the hard work and commitment they have put in over recent months. This has paid off with the service (which runs from our Mexborough office) being rated as 'GOOD' in our recent CQC Assessment. We are so proud of all of our staff and the fantastic service they deliver. Congratulations go to everyone involved!

## Update from the Festive Season:



For many years now we've asked our care and support workers to nominate service users, who they think, would benefit from a little extra festive cheer around the Christmas period. We call this our 'Christmas Wish List Campaign' and it replaces the sending of company Christmas cards, instead, the money is spent on buying gifts for our service users who've been nominated to receive them. Once staff let us have their nominations and tell us what they think these service users would like to receive, our little elves go out buying and then wrapping gifts, to be delivered throughout the holiday season. Please see pics from across our services over the page, together with some from Christmas Jumper Day, through which we raised a total of £72 in aid of 'Save the Children' this year. **Our thanks go to all who have supported us with these campaigns – thank you!**







*A Selection of Pics from the festive season...*



### Health & Wellbeing News:



### Runner Up in the South Yorkshire Council Partnership Be Well@Work Awards 2019...

Our employee engagement officer, Elaine Bradley-Smith was nominated in the 'Workplace Health Champion' category for all of the work she does around health and wellbeing in the workplace. This was following the success of the South Yorkshire Council Partnership 'BeWell@Work' award scheme pilot, in which she was asked to take part (similar to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter but more tailored to local business needs), this was gained across all four of our South Yorkshire services earlier last year. Elaine came second against a multi-national company with thousands of employees!!



Please see Elaine opposite upon receiving her award...

### A MASSIVE 'THANKYOU'!!!

**Goes to Linda Eagleton** (care worker, WarrenCare), who kindly donated seven of the 'Annie Dolls' used for emergency first aid training, for use in training departments throughout the organisation.

Thank you Linda, your generosity is really appreciated and I'm sure our training department, as well as all of our staff will benefit greatly from your kind donation.

*Thank you*



## Compliments & Draw Winners:

We always encourage our service users, their families and other stakeholders to give us feedback about our services, this helps support continual improvement of the services we deliver and also allows us to say thank you to our staff for a job well done! Staff who receive a compliment are entered into a draw, for a chance of receiving a £25 shopping voucher. There's a voucher up for grabs within Merseyside & West Yorkshire areas and another for South Yorkshire services, this helps keep distribution of vouchers as fair as possible throughout the organisation. Service users who provide compliments in respect of those drawn out also receive a £25 voucher, as a thank you for taking the time to let us have their comments and feedback. Please continue reading for details of those who've been drawn this time below:

*Well Done  
Everyone!!*

### From South Yorkshire services:

- **Marek Kwiecien (Town & Local Care)** - Upon receiving some lovely compliments from his service users.

### From Merseyside & West Yorkshire services:

- **Martin Fawcett (WarrenCare - Specialist Support)** - Upon some fantastic feedback received from a service user.

In addition, we hold a draw for office based staff, these run in line with community staff draws and give both staff and service users the opportunity to pass on their thanks to office based employees. Everyone receiving a compliment goes into a draw for a chance to receive a £25 shopping voucher (As per other draws, there's a draw for Merseyside & West Yorkshire services and another for South Yorkshire areas too).

### This time's winners are:

- **Kayleigh Woodhouse, WarrenCare**, in relation to a lovely compliment received from one of her team.
- **Tracy Hargreaves, TLC Barnsley**, who received a fantastic compliment through the employee survey.

We want to recognise everyone who has received a well-earned compliment for all of their commitment and hard work, in view of which we used to include the names of everyone who had both given and received these in past newsletters. However, due to GDPR data protection requirements, we are now unable to include everyone's name (as we need individual permissions for all compliments received, to enable us to publish them). We still want to send a massive **'THANKYOU'** and say **'WELL DONE'**, to **ALL** who has received some fantastic feedback throughout recent months and we do apologise for not being able to publish details of all the fabulous compliments received. Thanks again to everyone concerned (and to our service users too), for all the lovely comments, feedback and compliments received over the last few months.

**Thank you to all our staff for the fantastic job they do and their continuing hard work!**

## Well Done Emma!!!



Emma Strickson, our Senior Assessment & Review Officer was awarded Rochdale Training's 'Higher Level Apprentice of the Year Award', in November, after studying for and achieving her health and social care qualifications... Well Done Emma, this was fantastic news!!



Pictured are Michelle Steele of TLC Barnsley with service user Maureen Dyson, who both received shopping vouchers in previous draws.



## For Attention of Staff:

- **Information around the UK's Settlement Status for EU Citizens (for anyone who does not have British Citizen status):**

In light of the UK leaving the European Union, if you do not have British Citizen status, we would like to provide you with some information regarding the UK's Settlement Status for EU citizens, which will allow you to remain in the UK post Brexit.

If you are an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen, you and your family can apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue living and working in the UK after 30 June 2021. You will be able to apply for either settlement or pre-settlement status.

Please find some links below from the Gov.uk website that will provide you with more information:

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/applying-for-settled-status>

If you require any further information, please contact your HR department (dial your usual office number and press the option for HR).

- **Compliance:**

Just a little reminder around the reasons we have to check compliance in relation to call times. Compliance with planned call times is a contractual requirement by local authorities in general, although there are given time allowances which vary from service to service (these usually range between 10 and 30 minutes either side of a required call time but please check with your line manager if you're in doubt as they can vary from area to area), we must attend our service users calls within the timescales required. This is why, within ECM services, for example, staff often receive messages asking when they got to or left a specific service users home, this information is really important and staff must get back to us to confirm within a maximum of two hours. As part of this process we do have to look into it further with any staff who repeatedly miss attending within the required times. Please do ensure you let us know if you are late for a service users call and keep us informed of any reasons why, if this is the case – Thank you.

- **PRIDE Meetings:**

Remember, PRIDE meetings support our Vision & Values and are an important part of keeping in touch, they give all of our staff an opportunity to speak with their colleagues and managers and to get together and discuss any changes, issues or concerns they may have. It's also important for as many staff as possible to attend when invited, this ensures we can cascade information and distribute any documents as required, to ensure everyone is kept up to date on a regular basis. They're another important way of staying in touch!

If you are a staff member, please do try to attend if you're invited (or let us know if for any reason you can't attend). Likewise if you've not received an invite for any reason, please do get in touch and let us know. Thank you.

- **Road Safety Information:**

For information around safer driving, please feel welcome to check out the following websites for hints & tips:

South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership - <https://sysrp.co.uk/home/>

West Yorkshire Casualty Prevention Partnership - <http://www.safetycameraswestyorkshire.co.uk/what-we-do>

Merseyside Road Safety Partnership - <https://merseysideroadsafety.org/>

RAC (Driving in the Dark) - <https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/driving-advice/driving-in-the-dark-tips/>

AA (Driving in All Seasons) - <https://www.theaa.com/driving-advice/seasonal>





## Congratulations & Best Wishes!!!

Congratulations to Leanne Trickett (Care Co-ordinator, Town & Local Care) upon the birth of a beautiful baby girl. Renae Olivia was born on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019, weighing in at 5lb 13oz.

We wish you both much health and happiness.  
Well done Leanne!



*Best Wishes!*

Congratulations go to Lyndsay White (Care Service Manager, Town & Local Care & TLC Homecare, Sheffield) and her partner Jarred...

They celebrated their engagement recently and are due to get married in October this year.

Good luck for the future!! 'Lyndsay & Jarred', we send you both all our best wishes!

*Congratulations!*



Congratulations to Gill (Registered Manager, TLC Rotherham & Doncaster) and Jackie Hooper (Care Coordinator, TLC Rotherham) who both celebrated special birthdays in January... They celebrated 50<sup>th</sup> & 60<sup>th</sup> birthdays last month. Best wishes from TLC Rotherham, Doncaster and everyone throughout the Optimo Group.



Our very best wishes go to Jen (HR & Recruitment Administrator, WarrenCare) and her partner Paul, upon the birth of their beautiful baby daughter Hattie Dolly, born on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019. Congratulations Jen & Paul and lots of warm wishes to Hattie Dolly!

Karen Pennington (Care Coordinator, TLC Barnsley) celebrated her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday recently and we want to wish her all the best. Karen has worked with TLC Barnsley as a care worker for many years, recently joining our care coordination team in the office towards the end of last year. Congratulations Karen and all our best wishes for the future.



*Best Wishes!*

**Congratulations also go to all who have joined the Optimo Care Group recently. We send our very best wishes to everyone and wish you much luck!!!**

# BEST OF LUCK

## Did you know? Staff Can Recommend A Friend And Receive £250!

Do you know any fellow Care Workers, friends or family who may be interested in a career in care? If so and you are a current staff member, please complete a form (available from your local office or contact your EEO and we will post one out) and pass it in to the HR department. Alternatively the applicant can tell us when they apply and at their interview that you recommended them, all recommendations must be stated up front for you to qualify.

Once the person recommended has completed their probationary period you will receive £250 directly into your wages (see form for full details & T&C's).

There is no limit on how many friends you can recommend.

(If you are a service user and someone you know is interested in working in care, please call your local office number and let us know, we will be happy to get in touch with them for a chat.)

## If you would like to enquire about an extra helping hand...

If you or someone you know may benefit from an extra helping hand and you'd like to enquire to find out what's available, please call us on your local office number (see contact numbers below). Our team will be happy to have a friendly chat, we can also look at giving you a quote to enable you to make a fully informed decision. Then, if you wish to go ahead, we can look at tailoring a care package (or just a couple of extra calls), to suit your individual needs.



### We are able to offer help with:

Personal Care, Meal Preparation, Medication Assistance, Home Respite/Sitting Service whilst family go out, Assisting service users to go out, Shopping, Domestic help, and much more...

**Please note**, we can set up services for new clients or simply add a couple of extra calls to someone's existing care package, if they already receive care services from us. If you're interested, why not give us a call? We'll do our best to try and help.

### Please Note:

Our newsletters are now available in large print (text only) format or by email, please feel welcome to request if you would like to receive by either of these methods.

Please feel welcome to check out our websites: [optimocare.co.uk](http://optimocare.co.uk), [tlc-homecare.co.uk](http://tlc-homecare.co.uk) (incorporating Town & Local Care and Choices Specialist Care & Support) & [warrencare.co.uk](http://warrencare.co.uk) for more information about our services.

For enquiries relating to this newsletter, please email: [elaine.bradley-smith@optimocare.co.uk](mailto:elaine.bradley-smith@optimocare.co.uk)

### Local Office Contact Numbers:

TLC Barnsley (HO) – 01226  
785911

TLC Doncaster – 01302 319024

Choices – 01484 608 700

TLC Rotherham – 01709 524364

WarrenCare – 0151 924 1999

Town & Local Care – 01422 734 025

TLC Sheffield – 0114 4070 036

WarrenCare (Specialist Support)  
– 0151 438 2284

'... to deliver a service to be proud of'

