



**HOME CARE PLUS**  
trusted care at home

## Care Times – Winter 2011

The cold weather has arrived and long range forecasts are predicting more heavy snow falls this year. Hopefully the authorities won't be caught on the hop this year and the country won't come to a standstill!

This quarters newsletter has information on our recent flu jabs that we organised for our carers, FETAC training for our carer's as well as articles on senior health and the usual article from our medical director Dr. Michael O'Brien.

Please contact us if you have any comments or suggestions on our newsletter,

Michael Harty  
Director



### Home Care Plus

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## Carer Training

In anticipation of FETAC qualifications becoming compulsory for all carers carrying out HSE funded care from next year, Home Care Plus have been encouraging and facilitating their carers to achieve this.

This recent group were attending a course for their FETAC qualifications that they are attaining through Recognition Of Previous Learning (RPL) with CTEC.

RPL is a good way for some of our more experienced carers to get the official qualifications they need through using the experience they have built up over the years.

While we have an extensive three day induction programme that all carers go through, independent of their own qualifications, we are also very aware of the need for further training on the job, to ensure that carers have adequate skill sets for any client that they might be placed with and feel fully confident going into different cases.

We can be extremely efficient in our office but at Home Care Plus we are very aware that we are judged mainly by the quality of our carers. Top quality and relevant training, helps us to ensure our carers are second to none.



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## Carers Get Flu Vaccinations



All Home Care Plus carers were given the opportunity to get their flu vaccination free of charge through our medical director Dr. Michael O'Brien. Dr. O'Brien held two clinics in our offices on Tuesday the 18/10/11 and Thursday 20/10/11 to administer the vaccine.

We had a great turnout from our carers. At Home Care Plus we are very aware of infection control with our clients especially coming into the colder months.

## New Partner - Physiodirect

Home Care Plus have teamed up with Physiodirect to offer our clients the possibility of getting physio in their own homes rather than having to go to a clinic or hospital.

PhysioDirect is an Irish company, established to provide qualified, professional Chartered Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists to meet the needs of people in the community. Their healthcare team can visit you in a variety of settings in order to make the service as convenient as possible for you e.g. your home, Day Care Centre, Nursing Home, Community Centre, Retirement Village, Residential Care Setting.

Individual Assessments and Treatments are carried out for a wide range of Post Operative (hip & knee replacement, post cardiac

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surgery, post abdominal surgery, foot surgery, post back surgery) and Neurological (Stroke, Parkinson's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Alzheimer's, Brain Injury, Dementia) conditions.

Contact us in our office if you are interested in availing of the service.

## Winter Wrapped Up

Cold weather means the beginning of the flu season and can cause particular difficulties if you have breathing and circulation problems. To help you stay well, it's important to keep warm at home and outdoors, follow as healthy a lifestyle as you can and have a flu jab. Some seasonal tips for doing this are;

### Stay moving

Keeping active generates heat and helps to keep you warm. It's good for general fitness and wellbeing too. So when you're indoors, try not to sit still for more than an hour. Get up and walk around, make yourself a warm drink, and spread any chores throughout the day. Chair-based exercises and simply moving your arms and legs and wiggling your toes are helpful if walking is difficult.

### Eat well

Hot meals and drinks help keep you warm, so eat at least one hot meal and have hot drinks during the day. Include a good range of foods in your diet and aim for five portions of fruit and vegetables each day so that you're getting plenty of nutrients and vitamins. Remember that frozen vegetables are as good as fresh. Having a hot drink before bed and keeping a hot drink in a flask by the bed are good ideas too.

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### Have a seasonal flu jab

If you're over 65 be sure to have a seasonal flu jab. Seasonal flu viruses are always changing, so you need to have a jab every year, using the latest vaccine. Flu is not only unpleasant but it can develop into pneumonia, which can be serious. A flu jab is also recommended if you're under 65 with a condition such as diabetes, a chronic heart, lung, kidney or liver problem, have Parkinson's or have had a stroke.

### Keep your home warm

Most of us spend a lot of time indoors in winter, so it's important that you are comfortable and safe. One tip is to close the curtains and fit thermal linings if you can. This will help to keep the heat in.

## Carer Of The Quarter



Dermot Blake joined Home Care Plus in June of 2010 and is one of our most in demand carers! Dermot is presently in his final year of Occupational Therapy in Trinity and so the work he does with us is a good fit and allows him to put into practice a lot of what he is learning. He was a student in Glenstal Abbey before going to Trinity.

Dermot has travelled and worked as a care assistant in Australia as well as doing summer work in Barrtestown Camp. He has keen interest in Rugby and referees at under age. He is also interested in travel and apart from Australia, has visited Asia, America and other parts of Europe.

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## Notes From A G.P.



If my recent experience within the hospital is anything to go by, we are lucky to have the nurses we have working in Irish Hospitals. I made contact with a surgical consultant friend and explained to him that I had a delicate issue going on which prevented me from sitting comfortably. Being a typical male and a typical doctor, I had put up with this pain for about a week and my wife was fed up with me complaining about the pain. She suggested either I get something done about it or stop talking about it. He asked me to give him a call when I arrived in the hospital reception. After about 15

minutes of a wait a nurse came into reception, looked at me and said "You must be the important visitor we are expecting." She introduced herself as Deirdre, making sure I knew her name and warmly shook my hand. She led me to the outpatient department and brought me into a treatment room to await the surgeon. Along the way she was passionate about the work she did and took great pride in telling me how the team runs an efficient clinic.

As with any surgeon, he was eager to get started and asked me to jump up on the couch and he'd have a look at the problem. I realised how vulnerable a patient may feel as I did in my situation. Deidre noticed my discomfort and even a simple gesture of offering me a blanket was very much appreciated. I learned so much from this nurse regarding human kindness. When I got the local anaesthetic, she

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asked me was I feeling okay as I had gone a bit pale. I challenge anyone not to go a bit pale when a large needle is coming in your direction! She then brought me a glass of water and continued to chat to me as a surgeon continued his work. After he finished the procedure, he wished me well and moved on to the next patient as he was already fitting me in to his busy clinic.

Nurse Deirdre then had what I would have considered the chore of cleaning up and applying a dressing. I found her to be compassionate, confident, respectful and at ease with what she was doing thereby alleviating my unease. Once she had finished the dressings, I felt a real appreciation of her professionalism and was so thankful to her for her efforts. She made a very difficult, painful experience easier by her real human kindness. Her simple gestures meant a lot and I learnt more about human dignity in 15 minutes with her than I could have learned in reading any textbook.

On reflection afterwards, I wondered" Do the doctors treat the illness, and maybe the nurses treat the person."

## Blackrock Hospice Coffee Morning

Our coffee morning held in September in aid of the Blackrock Hospice was a great success. We raised nearly €500 euro for a very worthy cause. Neighbours as well as some clients came along and made some very generous donations.

We would like to thank Winnie's Craft Cafe here in Woodbine where the morning was held for all their help.



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## Words Of Wisdom

I believe that every human has a finite number of heart-beats. I don't intend to waste any of mine running around doing exercises.

### **Buzz Aldrin (1930 - )**

Worrying about gray hair when your weight's soaring out of control is like mowing your lawn while your house is on fire.

### **Edward Ugel,**

Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him.

### **Aldous Huxley (1894 - 1963),**

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