

# At Home



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Your Dream Days Out  
2010 Scottish Care Awards**

**Irene Gray: Developing our Care strategy  
Full steam ahead for Active Care**

**Southern Cross  
Healthcare**



Front page: Mr Stanley Cussons enjoys playing Ayresome Court's piano

If you have an exciting or uplifting story you think would make great reading for future editions, please send it to [communications@shealthcare.co.uk](mailto:communications@shealthcare.co.uk).

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## Note from Jamie



Dear Colleague,

Welcome to *At Home* magazine: our new bi-monthly publication. The name *At Home* was created by Frank McKee, Laundry Manager at Bellhaven Care Home in South Ayrshire: we all felt that his suggestion summed up our aims for the magazine perfectly.

January can be a cold, dark month – but don't forget that each New Year comes with new opportunities. With the whole year ahead of us, now is the perfect time to think about the things that we can all do that will make a *big* difference.

One of those things is **being positive**. Continuing our passion for Care, encouraging and supporting our colleagues and focusing on the future will help us all to feel empowered and stay motivated throughout 2011: confident that we can achieve our goals, as individuals and as a team.

For me, being positive will mean taking a pro-active approach with all our stakeholders. As Care professionals, we have the strength and the capability to influence the industry and the political landscape for the better. The effect this will have will be tremendous, and I am looking forward to leading that change for all of us.

This first issue of *At Home* contains some inspiring stories that reflect the positive attitude already thriving in our Company. From the incredible activities in our Homes to the excellent work that our Care team and our HR department are doing, I hope that you will share my pride in our Company, and my optimism that this will be a very good year indeed for Southern Cross.

Best wishes for a successful 2011,

**Jamie**

# Active Care

## IT'S FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR ACTIVE CARE

It may be hard to believe, but it's less than 1 year since Terry Peel joined the Active Care Team as Managing Director. Since then, the plans and activities that have taken place have not only transformed the way in which Care is delivered within Active Care Partnerships, but they have also set the scene for 2011 – and it promises to be an exciting and fulfilling year for everyone.

"I have really enjoyed getting to know as many of you as possible over the last few months, and I am delighted to have managed to visit each Home on at least one occasion", says Terry. "Meeting the people who deliver our ethos at the 'front end' of service provision has been enlightening and inspiring: I know that it can be very demanding at times, but our people are doing some incredible work,

and I am proud to be leading that." Terry's experience as a Home Manager, Regulation Inspector and business leader at Southern Cross has given him an excellent insight into what makes great quality Care.

"I want to be at the forefront of developments that improve the overall quality of life for people living in Care Homes and other social settings", continues Terry. "Active Care Partnerships has a reputation as a 'good caring organisation' within our industry. Moving forward, it is vital that we build on that reputation and continue to seek new, innovative ways of improving Care. The only way to do that is to work with the people who provide that Care – and that means using the skills and experience of our own people."

With a new management structure in place, Terry is confident that he and his team can start to develop new strategies, measures and standards that will provide solid evidence of their 'Best Practice' and 'Best Value' service. Terry is keen to maintain that a key part of this is listening:

"I am committed to listening to suggestions that will help us move forward as a team. With your continued support, and your efforts to deliver, I firmly believe that we can achieve our goal of being the best in field at specialist Care and support provision."

I don't think anyone is in any doubt that Terry's commitment – and that of his team – will ensure his goals are realised.

## Regions in Focus

**Each issue, we will be featuring a detailed update from one of our four regions. In this, our first ever issue, Mark Cash tells us what made 2010 a milestone year for the South and Wales.**

"Care is the cornerstone of our business – so at the start of 2010, we pledged to put our Care Homes and our Home Managers at the very centre of our activities. This meant introducing a number of significant changes: embedding a new Operations Management structure, creating a commercially-focused Area Manager role, and setting up the Service

Quality Team to support Home Managers in improving Care Quality. Our people are also benefiting from the extra support provided by our two new Regional HR Managers, and from the reorganised Regional Training Team and the new Regional Finance Team.

We have also placed a good deal of focus on developing our people – and in particular, on developing the capabilities of our Home Managers. This has resulted in a full set of Core Competencies, a Performance Development Process, *and* a range of new learning and development courses – including a Finance and Selling

Skills course, which has now been used to train over 50 Home Managers in techniques to promote their Homes and increase self-funding Residents.

2010 was not without its challenges, but we are now in a strong position for 2011. I am confident that we will meet our key objectives and our targets around Care Quality, Sales Delivery and Labour Effectiveness, and that 2011 will be a successful and rewarding year for the South & Wales."

**Mark Cash**

# Your stories: North

## INNOVATION, INCLUSIVITY AND IMAGINATION HAVE BEEN THE BIG STORIES FOR WINTER FROM OUR HOMES IN THE NORTH



**Louise and her team**  
Park Lodge

### **An Innovation in Practice award for Park Lodge**

The Foundation of Nursing Studies (FoNS) has recently awarded £3000 to Park Lodge Home Manager Louise Taylor for Innovation in Practice.

The FoNS, an independent charity that supports and enables nurses to lead innovation in the workplace, and improve the care of older people, granted the funds with the purpose of improving patient care and reducing hospital admissions in Care Homes.

Home Manager Louise, who is currently completing a MSc in Advanced Practice, submitted a proposal to the foundation outlining a plan to use the £3000 award money as an Early Warning Tool for Care Home staff across seven Homes in the Leeds area.

Louise explains "Early Warning Tools are already widely used in America. We intend to develop them further to provide senior staff with an early-warning system that should help to reduce inappropriate hospital admissions."

Louise intends to use the project as a base for her MSc dissertation, and hopes to publish the results in a nursing journal.

### **An environmental award for Langley Park Care Home**

Langley Park Care Home in County Durham has received a gold standard certificate in Durham County Council's *Tidy Business Awards*. The Home received

the award for the help and support they provide to the 'We are Langley Park' Community Group, for activities which include tidying up public areas and providing meals to local people during the recent bad weather.

Home Manager Sharon Smith explains "There is a great community spirit in the village and I believe our Home has an important part to play in this. I would like to thank all the staff at Langley Park because without their support these achievements would not have been possible."

### **Multi-faith sanctuary at Cleveland Park Care Home a huge success**

The new Multi-Faith Sanctuary at Cleveland Park Care Home in North Tyneside has proved so popular that plans are being made to expand it.

The Home, which specialises in Dementia Care, has turned an unused lounge into a calm, relaxing Sanctuary at the request of the Residents. The room has been furnished with artefacts and furnishings that represent all of the major faiths, and offers several services each week from different denominations and religions. The staff and relatives of the Residents are also able to enjoy these and the relaxing atmosphere the Sanctuary offers.

Home Manager Maggie Scott explained: "We talked with the Residents about what they wanted to see in the Home, and a shared place of worship was

the most popular choice. A lot of our Residents used to go to a place of worship, but many of them are unable to get out any more – so we decided to create one for them in the Home, and it has been a *huge* success.”

### Ashington Grange and Moorhouse Farm

Staff and residents at Ashington Grange and Moorhouse Farm Care Home have been extremely busy over the last 12 months winning awards, raising money and fulfilling Residents’ lifelong dreams.



**Rita Clark**  
Head Chef

Three members of the Ashington Grange team were nominated in the 2010 North East Care Awards. Head Chef Rita Clark was nominated and won the category for ‘Care Home Nutrition and Hydration’ and was presented with her award at a prestigious gala evening in Gosforth. Rita

went through to the National Care Awards which were held in London in December.

Ashington Town Council recently presented an award to the Residents and Staff at Moorhouse Farm for the ‘Best Garden for the Disabled’ for 2010. Staff members Joy Wall and Ryan Ladigus also held a sponsored walk in conjunction with Co-op Funeral Services to raise money for a large television for the Residents. They exceeded all expectations by raising £710.00, plus another £400 from Co-op Funeral Services. They exceeded all expectations by raising £710, and this, along with a £400 donation from Co-Op Funeral Services and a further £500 from Southern Cross itself, has enabled the Home to buy a new television set for each of their units.

But it’s not just our Care teams that have been making headline news. 84-year-old Resident Joe Freeman, nicknamed Mr Charity, was nominated for the Fundraiser of the Year award at the Pride of Northumberland Awards. To celebrate his nomination, Joe attended a gala dinner with his wife and Activities Coordinator Nicola Davidson.

Staff have also been working with Residents to fulfil some of their lifelong ambitions, much to the delight of everyone involved. For many years, 78-year-old Betty McLean has dreamt of swimming again. Along with Activities Coordinator, Nicky, Betty now regularly visits her local pool in Alwick. The excellent equipment and specialist instructors make her visits even more enjoyable.

“  
It’s the best holiday  
I’ve ever been on  
”

Meanwhile, 92-year old George Spowart, who has had a lifelong passion for horses since he joined the Cavalry in 1937, achieved his dream of getting back on a horse when the Home arranged for George to show off his riding skills once again.

Ronnie Dunn, 76, enjoyed a week of train journeys exploring the North and stopping at a number of Southern Cross homes in between. Mr Dunn finished his journey in York at the National Railway Museum and said “It’s the best holiday I’ve ever been on.”

Haydon Simpson worked in the Royal Navy for many years, and was delighted to hear that the HMS Ark Royal was coming to dock at the Port of Tyne. 75-year-old Mr Simpson enjoyed a personal tour of the ship, and Activities Coordinator Ian Brenard even organised a surprise introduction to the captain, making Mr Simpson’s day.

Travel-lover Sally Jennings’ dream was to visit Hawaii... so the staff brought Hawaii to Ashington Grange. They organised a huge Hawaiian-themed, surprise party for everyone to enjoy, complete with cocktails, Hawaiian food and even hula dancing!

Home Manager Ann Mielnik said “I am extremely proud of all my staff and what they do for our Residents. 2010 was a fantastic year at Ashington Grange and Moorhouse Farm. I only hope we can top it again this year and we look forward to many more planned activities, fundraising events and awards in 2011.”

# Your stories: Scotland & Northern Ireland

## IT'S BEEN AN AWARD-WINNING WINTER FOR OUR HOMES IN SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

### Homes in the Community

As we all know, maintaining strong links within the communities we serve is at the heart of all Southern Cross Homes. Here are just a few examples of the great work our Homes in Scotland and Northern Ireland have been doing over recent weeks.

You may have read an article in the weekly briefing early this year, regarding Arbroath High School in association with The Prince's Trust, working together to makeover Cairnie Lodge's garden. In return Activities Coordinator, Morag Nicol, agreed the Home would make a donation to the school.

Last month Cairnie Lodge honoured this agreement donating £200, which they raised during their Christmas Fête.



**Cairnie Lodge presenting the cheque to Arbroath High School**

The Christmas Fête is always a great community event, bringing everyone together and inspiring Christmas spirit throughout the village. Stalls manned by Residents, staff and management helped to raise the funds, along with generous donations from all who attended.

Arbroath High School and Cairnie Lodge would like to thank everyone who helped make this another success; the funds will be used to develop the school's music therapy class, members of which are pictured opposite accepting the cheque from Cairnie Lodge.

At the beginning of December the BBC visited Home Farm, in Portree, to interview Residents, relatives and staff for a television programme that many of you may have seen on Christmas Eve. Volunteers were asked to reminisce about Christmases gone by and how they differ from those today. After some initial nerves, the stories soon started to flow and the Residents thoroughly enjoyed sharing their fond memories.

Later in the afternoon, a group of children from the Gaelic Medium Primary School in Portree arrived to sing carols to the Residents. The children also acted out the classic nativity scene. Residents were captivated, saying it brought the true essence of Christmas to Home Farm.



**Gaelic Medium Primary School in Portree singing carols to the Residents**

Staff from Eycline Media, the company responsible for filming this story, were so impressed by the level of care on offer at Home Farm they held a collection raising over £150 for the Residents. In addition to this, Eycline Media then donated a further £150.

Home Farm staff and Residents would like to thank everyone who contributed to make the day enjoyable and successful.

Clarence Court have been maintaining excellent links within their community; on Monday 6th December staff and Residents were honoured to welcome Scottish National Party MSP, Sandra White.

Sandra spent the morning being shown round the Home and chatting with many of the Residents.

**Margaret Calderwood from Douglas View was nominated by Annemarie McCulloch for A Dream Day Out**



Sandra, who is The Deputy Shadow Minister for Health and Social Justice in the Scottish Parliament, had plenty to discuss with the Residents and left with a very favourable impression of the excellent care and atmosphere in Clarence Court.

### **A Dream Come True**

For many of us, the dark winter months are an ideal opportunity to indulge in a spot of daydreaming: imagining how and where we might spend a free day once the warmer weather arrives. For many Southern Cross Residents in Scotland and Northern Ireland, that dream will shortly become reality, thanks to the efforts of the Scottish and Northern Irish Regional Support Team.

Their Christmas 2010 initiative – *A Dream Day Out* – encouraged staff in the Homes to nominate Residents with lifelong dreams, which they would then help to fulfil, with funding generated from a series of fundraising events. Service Quality Advisors, **Paula Murphy, Alison McPherson** and **Jenny Wishart**, are now meeting with Residents and Home Managers to co-ordinate the delivery and the coverage of the winning Dream Days. Our congratulations go to:

**Margaret Calderwood from Douglas View**, nominated by **Annemarie McCulloch** (above) will be enjoying a visit to her nephew's house next month for a home-cooked meal.

**Marion Watson from Abbeycourt**, nominated by **Lesley Andrew** is looking forward to sharing a Valentine's Day shopping trip and a meal out with her sister on February 14th.

**Agnes Cooper from Pitkerro**, nominated by **Dawn Soutar** is being picked up by limousine and taken to the Glass Pavillion restaurant in Broughty Ferry, where she will enjoy a celebratory meal with her two daughters and their husbands .

Look out for the full story of these three special days in the next issue of *At Home*.

### **2010 Scottish Care Awards**

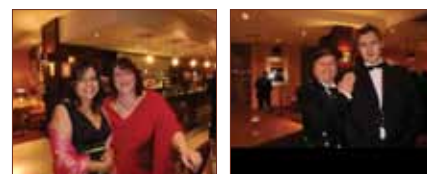
Southern Cross enjoyed real success at this year's Scottish Care Awards, with two finalists making it to the ceremony.

Chapel Level Administrator Sonia Kavanagh was a finalist in the Support Worker of the Year category. Sonia, who was accompanied to the Awards by husband, Jim and Home Manager, Gordon Candlish, was nominated for this award in recognition of her role at both The Beeches, Fife, and Chapel Level Care Homes. Sonia's excellent administrative skills enable fellow staff members to concentrate on the quality of Care delivered. In the words of her colleagues, "Sonia has gone the extra mile on many an occasion to help Residents, relatives and staff overcome administrative, legal and financial issues." Additionally, Sonia has devoted much of her own time to organising and participating in many fund raising initiatives.

Perhaps Sonia's greatest achievement has been to breakdown environmental barriers and old habits, encouraging Residents to visit her in the office as often as they wish. She is a friend to everyone at the Home and her inclusive, warm approach is very much appreciated by Residents and their families.

Our second Awards Attendee, Rob Gallagher, was nominated for the 'Activities Coordinator of the Year' award, by staff, Residents and relatives at Forth View Care Home. Rob's innovative and inspiring work with the Residents has led to a culture change in how Forth View conduct their activities. Rob attended the awards with his son, Michael, and was supported by his Home Manager, Karen Johnson, as well as the Regional Support and Quality teams.

The ceremony, which was held on 5th November at Glasgow's Hilton Hotel, was hosted by former Pop Idol winner and TV personality, Michelle McManus. Both Rob and Sonia thoroughly enjoyed the event... a well deserved celebration for their splendid efforts and their ongoing commitment to Care.



# Your stories: Central

## HARD WORK AND GOODWILL: HOW OUR CENTRAL REGION HOMES HAVE BEEN MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE



**Lisa Borley is pictured with the Mayor and Irene Gray**

### An opportunity to make a difference

Lisa Borley, Home Manager at The Willows Hinckley, has been working with the Prince's Trust in her local area, giving a helping hand to 14 – 30 year olds who have struggled at school, been in care, are long term unemployed or have been in trouble.

By working closely with the Trust, Lisa, staff and Residents at The Willows have enabled these individuals to gain valuable work experience in joinery, landscaping, painting and decorating and teamwork.

In return, the Home benefited from a team of young people working within the Home to refurbish a family and activities room complete with library and a new entrance way to the gardens, as well as a complete revamp of the grounds and garden furniture.

To celebrate their achievements, the Home held an open day on 8th December, inviting local professionals along with the general public to see the value of working together within the community. The local Mayor was also in attendance, as was Southern Cross's Director of Care, Irene Gray.

The day was a great success; Residents and visitors were entertained by games, activities and live performers on offer, whilst the kitchen team cooked up a fabulous buffet for everyone to enjoy.

### King of the dancefloor

Head Chef at Pendleton Court, Mr Liuber Gonzales, has been getting back to his roots over the past three years and flaunting his talent for salsa dancing. Liuber was raised in Cuba and learnt salsa dancing at a young age, but his interest was inspired in 2007 when he watched the popular TV show 'Strictly Come Dancing'.

Shortly after, Liuber joined a local dance school where he was partnered with a talented 9 year old girl. The pair began competing together, and were awarded 6th place in a National dance competition held in Blackpool early last year. More recently, they proudly took 1st place in the North West Ballroom Latin competition.

The future is looking bright for Liuber and his young partner, who are now hoping to qualify for the February 2011 North West competition.

### An award-winning business

Staff at The Oaks Care Home in Nottinghamshire are delighted to have been named as finalists in the Newark Business Awards, under the Training and Staff Development category.

The black tie event, sponsored by the local paper (The Newark Advertiser), is to be held at the Newark and Sherwood District Council Offices in the magnificent Victorian mansion, Kelham Hall, on Wednesday 15th January.



### Staff at The Oaks

The Home was chosen as a finalist by an independent panel of judges for the commitment to training and development shown by the staff, not only in Care, but all aspects of running the Home. If successful, The Oaks will be the first Care Home to win one of these prestigious awards.

We wish them the best of luck.

“

We're thrilled that the judging panel have acknowledged Bernard's unique contribution to life at Bramley Court...

”

### **Bernard wins Resident / Relative of the Year 2010**

Bramley Court Care Home were overjoyed to hear one of their frequent visitors, Bernard Jarvis, had won the award for 'Best Resident / Relative Contribution' at the recent 2010 Care Awards.

Bernard was nominated for this esteemed award by Kerry Lappin, the Activities Coordinator at Bramley Court Care Home. The staff wanted to ensure Bernard was formally recognised for his continued dedication and support: not only to his wife, Hilda, who is a Resident at Bramley Court, but also to the overall environment and atmosphere at the Home.

Area Manager Tim Mellors commented "We're thrilled that the judging panel have acknowledged Bernard's unique contribution to life at Bramley Court. Not only does he come to the Home to visit his wife, he has made a real difference to all the Residents at the Home, through organising activities and by taking the time to chat with each Resident and updating them with what's going in the world."

Typically, Bernard visits the Home six days a week to see Hilda, who has been as a Resident at Bramley Court for eight years. In that time, Bernard has donated many books, DVDs and games to the Home, as well as organising live entertainment for the Residents, their friends and family, much of which he has funded himself.



Bernard attended the Awards Ceremony at the Hilton Metropole in London on the 27th of November 2010, where he was presented with his award by comedian and entertainer Brian Conley.

**Bernard Jarvis is presented with his award by comedian and entertainer Brian Conley**

# Your stories: South & Wales

## INNOVATION AND FUN HAS SET THE SCENE FOR OUR HOMES IN THE SOUTH AND WALES



Mrs Bell and Lisa Curtis, Home Manager

### A very Memorable Garden

This spring, staff and Residents at The Old Rectory Care Home in Colchester, Essex, will be able to enjoy watching their new Memory and Sensory garden come into bloom for the very first time.

The George Bell Memory and Sensory Garden was designed with the help of late Resident and gardening enthusiast Mr George Bell. Officials at the Department of Health were so impressed with the plans for the garden that they awarded a £5000 grant to support its completion.



### The George Bell Memory and Sensory Garden

When Mr Bell died last year, staff at The Old Rectory decided to name the garden after him. To honour their much-missed friend, and to declare the garden open, the Home held an official opening ceremony. Mr Bell's widow, who joined the Residents and staff to cut the red ribbon, stayed on to enjoy the celebratory buffet, drinks and entertainment.

### Fun and games

Staff and residents at Haven Lodge in Portishead, Somerset, have been enjoying some new entertainment in the Home. They recently purchased a large screen television and a Wii machine, with various games for each of the three floors. The new entertainment has been a great success, and is being enjoyed by both Residents and staff. Favourite games include bowling and tennis.

The money to purchase these items was raised by relatives, friends and staff. Now, by popular request, a 'music hall' karaoke has been added to the Wii games, which will be shared between the floors... and, no doubt, will be thoroughly enjoyed by all.



Getting into the swing...

### What a breath of fresh air!

Wheelchair users at Mountwood Care Home in Andover will be thrilled to be getting right out into the countryside in 2011. The Mountwood Care Team have recently joined the "Wheelchair Ramblers": a local scheme run by Test Valley Borough Council in conjunction with Natural England, called Health Walks. A one-day course, attended by their Activities Coordinator, equipped the team with everything they need to know about safe rambling with the Residents, and enabled the Home to become fully-registered and risk-assessed members of the scheme.

'Team Mountwood' now ramble once a month, weather permitting. The December ramble even had a slight detour via the pub for a Christmas Tipple! We suspect that the Ramblers are looking forward to their Spring outings... especially when the first leaves and shoots start showing.

### Oxfordshire's Crowning Glory

The Crown Care Home is a relatively small Home, boasting just 16 beds, but that doesn't stop them making a big effort. Despite the weather, their Christmas Fair and Residents' Christmas Party both went ahead as planned, much to the delight of the Residents.

The Christmas Fair was a great success, raising £145.80 towards the Christmas Party itself. Despite the adverse weather, the party took place as planned, although the snow and ice meant that the Carol

Singers and several Residents' families sadly missed out. The staff were keen not to disappoint the Residents, however, and decided to provide the entertainment themselves... with the aid of the RGN's Karaoke machine!

This creativity, team spirit and determination ensured all the Residents enjoyed a very special Christmas this year. In the words of Karen James, Crown Care Home Manager, "We are very lucky here at The Crown; we have a very dedicated team, of whom I am very proud."

### Welcome on board!

Our focus on Continual Improvement has meant a number of new appointments in the Southern and Welsh regions, with two very special additions to the Sales and Marketing functions.

### Richard Scarth



In October, Richard Scarth joined Southern Cross as Regional Sales Development Manager for the South & Wales. Richard has spent the last 5 years of his career

within the care industry. He has performed both Sales and Operational roles; his most recent position being General Manager of a 100-bed Nursing Home in Berkshire. The majority of Richard's career has been spent in the sales arena, however; fulfilling roles in both the care industry and in financial services. In this respect, Richard brings substantial sales experience and knowledge to his new position with Southern Cross.

### Mandy Macara



Mandy Macara joined Southern Cross in November as Regional Sales and Marketing Support for the South & Wales. Mandy is a highly experienced Project Manager and has spent the last 11 years managing and implementing sales and marketing strategies for a major care provider. Mandy brings with her a wealth of knowledge of lead and enquiry generation for the residential, nursing and dementia care sectors, and in this respect will be a great asset in supporting the region and improving their sales effectiveness.

# Caring for the future

## DIRECTOR OF CARE, PROFESSOR IRENE GRAY EXPLAINS HOW SOUTHERN CROSS IS PUTTING CARE AT THE HEART OF ITS BUSINESS



**Irene Gray**  
Director of Care

### Caring for the future

As Care professionals, it is imperative that we are continually seeking new ways of improving the quality of Care that we provide. A new Care Strategy and Framework, a Governance model, a team of Care Quality Inspectors and a revitalised Inspection Toolkit are just a few of the exciting changes that Professor Irene Gray, our new Head of Care, has implemented at Southern Cross since her arrival in July.

Irene has an exceptionally distinguished background in the Healthcare industry. With 24 years as a board director, including roles as Chief Operating Officer at University Hospital Bristol NHS Trust, Director of Nursing and Deputy CEO at Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, Director of Nursing at Guy's and St Thomas' and Chief Executive Officer for the Nurse Directors Association, Irene has driven the healthcare agenda forward

in a number of leading organisations, and has helped influence the political landscape.

"To me, it's simple: we have to place Care at the heart of everything we do", says Irene. "If that is at the front of our mind *all of the time*, the rest falls into place. For example, we should be caring for our staff in the same sensitive, empowering way that we would want to care for our Residents. It makes it real: it brings our philosophy to life."

### A Strategy we can all share in

Developing our Care Strategy has been a collaborative process – as anyone who has been involved will testify. Back in December, Irene and her team kicked off a number of Care Business meetings, with the objective of sharing the draft Strategy, and gaining input and ownership from our Area Managers, Service Quality Advisors, Service Quality Inspectors and Home Managers. The popularity of these events shows how passionately we feel about Care: despite the heavy snowfall that caused severe travel disruption, the Northern meeting alone saw over 80 attendees, while a similar event in the Central region attracted over 180. Even after the meetings, the emails and telephone calls kept on coming.

"It's obvious that this piece of work has really captured the hearts and minds of our people", smiles Irene. "Everyone felt energised, and was pleased to have been invited to contribute to our Strategy. Just

being together in the same room, sharing experiences and spreading good news, was incredibly motivational for everyone present – myself included."

The crucial next steps will involve analysing the outputs from the events which will conclude in January, incorporating the feedback into the overall structure, and then developing the Strategy in full, with the aim to launch around Easter time.

### Changing perceptions

The benefits of our Care Strategy are numerous and will be far-reaching. Aside from the most obvious benefit – that of improving our Care Standards – one of the biggest differences our Care Strategy will make will be changing perceptions of Southern Cross....

### Southern Cross as a Care provider

Having a robust and meaningful Care Strategy that we can share means Residents and their families will know what to expect from Southern Cross. It will be a guarantee of excellence for our Company, and a benchmark for the Care industry.

### Southern Cross as an employer

Being able to articulate what good looks like – and knowing how to measure 'good' – will make life easier for our staff. It will also benefit us as a future employer for Care Professionals throughout the UK: positioning us as a high-quality Care Provider with career opportunities that are both motivating and rewarding.

### Southern Cross as a partner

Being able to provide specific, detailed information, on everything from our Care Strategy and Philosophy through to our standards and our inspection techniques, will strengthen our position with Local Authorities, Primary Care Trusts and charities, putting **us** in control of our future and our relationships, enabling us to forge new partnerships.

### Southern Cross as a business investment

Being open and transparent about our Care Strategy must appeal to new and existing investors. For the first time, we will be able to provide demonstrable evidence of how the service that Southern Cross provides is becoming more valuable and more sought-after: the benchmark for the Care industry.

### Our Care Strategy is built around 7 core objectives:

- Establish a robust Care Governance framework
- Establish Corporate Care and professional standards
- Become the employer of choice for Care Professionals
- Develop and establish a model for Dementia Care which sets the standard for the industry
- Develop and establish a model for End of Life Care which sets the standard for the industry
- Create a model for regulation and inspection which provides us, the commissioners and regulators with unquestionable assurances
- Enhance and improve relationships with stakeholders, creating a jointly-owned approach to individualised Care.

# New Appointment

## DETERMINATION AND DRIVE: WE WELCOME DAVID SMITH AS OUR NEW FINANCE DIRECTOR



**David Smith**  
Finance Director

New to the Board in 2011 is David Smith, who takes over from Richard Midmer as Finance Director.

"I am very pleased and proud with the new post and excited by the prospect of facing the challenges that lie ahead" says David. "Southern Cross is a superb company, and everyone I work with is committed to our strategic aims. In all honesty, this is the best group of people that I have worked with, and I am very excited to be a part of that group."

David has no hesitation about where his initial focus will be. "One of my top priorities is stepping up negotiations with our landlords. I'm confident that there is a resolution to be gained." David is also keen to drive our IT strategy forward, building on the good foundations that we laid last year. "We've seen the difference that the Time & Attendance system is making for our Homes, and there's more to come in 2011. Amongst other things we are currently investigating options for electronic Care Planning, Medication, procurement solutions in our Homes as well as improving our central systems." David is very clear that any investments made must be for the benefits of our homes, residents and staff, as he states. "Investing in our Homes and our People is a key driver to meeting our long-term objectives."

David believes that there is a good deal to be optimistic about in 2011... but what are his top three? "A superb Leadership team, significant progress with our landlords, and aiming for a best-in-class IT system by the end of the year", says David. And with drive and commitment like this, we can all share his optimism for the future.

## CONGRATULATIONS FRANK!

Congratulations to **Frank McKee** of **Belhaven Care Home**, South Ayrshire, who wins the Naming Competition for our new magazine. Frank, who manages the laundry at Belhaven, proposed **At Home** as the new name. The name stood out among all 145 entries: Frank

wins a £100 prize, plus a £100 donation towards Belhaven Care Home.

Many thanks to everyone who entered the competition... your creativity and enthusiasm was wonderful, and made choosing the final name a real pleasure.

# People in Focus



## FOR HR DIRECTOR, PATRICIA WILLIAMSON, OUR PEOPLE ARE THE KEY TO OUR BUSINESS

Being in the business of Care means putting people first, and for Southern Cross, that doesn't just mean our Residents. Over the last few months, our Human Resources function has undergone a significant change, and is now in better shape to support our people and the business. The changes and improvements that have been made over the last year have been led by Patricia Williamson, Southern Cross's Group HR Director.

"The role of HR is to support and develop our people", explains Patricia. "Whilst the original HR team were working hard to do this, the changing face of our business meant that we had to make some changes to our HR function, too, in order to meet the current and future needs of our people and our company."

### Our HR objectives

- Create a new HR model which is better aligned to the needs of the business, now and in the future
- Grow capability by having the right roles, in the right places, doing the right activities
- Develop strong people policies and practices that will transform people management
- Create standardised, efficient and clear processes
- Specify and implement a new HR and Payroll system
- Improve the robustness of HR reporting to enable better decision making
- Deliver significant bottom line value through improved performance

### A Framework for our People

One of Patricia's key activities since joining Southern Cross has been to develop a robust **People Management Framework**, clearly setting out the principles and the ways in which we care for and manage our people, in-line with our company vision, values and purpose.

"Our people are our most important asset and we want to invest in and nurture them to our mutual benefit", explains Patricia. "People who contribute through their skills, talents and experience will in return benefit from a fair and reasonable place of work, development opportunities, and reward and recognition."

The Framework will deliver a range of benefits to Southern Cross as a company and to our people too: helping us attract and retain the right staff, providing specific paths for training and career development, and ensuring that everyone at Southern Cross feels supported, motivated and proud to be a part of our business.

### A perfect performance

One of the core parts of our new People Management Framework has been the development of new **Performance Development** and **Training initiatives**. These initiatives, which are already being rolled out in some areas, will ensure every member of staff know what is expected of them at work, and will provide a structure where regular feedback helps everyone to get even

more out of their roles. By the end of 2011, all permanent staff will benefit from having an Annual Appraisal of their Performance, and will also participate in regular one-to-one meetings with their managers. Crucially, managers will be provided with 'how-to' guides, enabling them to provide useful, structured review sessions that will ensure staff feel listened-to and supported, and that their needs are being taken very seriously.

### A national team with local resources

Southern Cross has a national reach, but Patricia and the HR team are keen to maintain a local focus, with dedicated teams of people in each of our four main regions. Guided by our Head of HR Operations, Nicola Pattimore, the following Regional HR teams are now in place:

**Tricia Stewart** and **Alan Miller Young** for Scotland & Northern Ireland  
**Janet Bland, Jo Brewin** and **Lynsey Elliot** for North of England  
**Shelley Latham** and **Sam Arnold** for Central England  
**Kate Ware** and **Melanie Hall** for South and Wales  
**Laura Sellers** for Head Office functions and Active Care

At the centre of our HR 'web' is the HR Support Hub, headed up by Claire French, providing HR administration and query-handling support.

In other areas, too, our HR team is going from strength to strength.

**Linda Litherland**, our Head of Learning and Development, will be developing and enhancing our training and development, performance management, talent management and succession planning strategies. **Martin Keeler**, our new Head of Employee Relations and Employee Engagement, takes responsibility for our employment policies, and will be supporting our aim to be an employer of choice in the Healthcare sector. And in the field of recruitment, **Gareth Griffiths** joins us as UK Resourcing Specialist, helping us improve the way we attract and recruit our people.

### A fresh look at learning

Whatever learning means to you – reading a textbook, watching an educational DVD, or even shadowing

someone as they work – one thing's for sure: the new Learning & Development department at Southern Cross will have something for you.

Under the leadership of **Linda Litherland**, our L&D department has undergone great changes recently. With a range of new courses designed to meet the needs of our people and our business, the buzz-word is *choice...* and it's not hard to see why.

"We want Southern Cross to be an enjoyable and rewarding place to work", says Linda. "If we can develop a Learning & Development function that enables people to make a career out of what they really *want* to do, as well as what they're *good* at, then we will have a team of people who are skilled and committed,

and a company that people from all backgrounds will really want to work for."

Southern Cross's revitalised Learning & Development department will support our key initiatives *and* our people. The wide range of courses on offer, which include taught courses, e-learning modules and self-study options, will help all of our people to develop the skills and capabilities that will enable us to achieve our three core business aims: improving our Care Quality, growing our sales and controlling costs. From increasing commercial knowledge and understanding revenue growth through to people skills, sales techniques and team management – not to mention the wide selection of nursing and medical courses on offer – there is now an impressive range of opportunities for everyone to choose from.

## ON COURSE FOR SUCCESS IN 2011

Take a look at some of the new learning opportunities that will be rolled out this year...

### Management & Leadership Development

Southern Cross's new Management & Leadership Development programme, due for launch in January 2011, is anticipated to be one of the most comprehensive leadership courses in the Healthcare Industry. The programme is divided into 3 modules (Leading/Managing Yourself, Leading/Managing Others, and Leading/Managing the Business), and will equip Leaders and Managers with a range of practical skills and tools that will enable them to develop personally and professionally – all the while building teams and supporting our business.

### Home Administrator Training

Due for roll-out in Spring 2011, this new programme will equip Home Administrators with tools and techniques to help them work more efficiently and effectively – making their role more productive and enjoyable, and enabling them to provide greater support to their Home Managers.

### Sales Training

2011 will also see the launch of a new suite of sales training materials, which will be delivered in partnership with sales training specialists.

### Home Manager Induction

Following a successful pilot in Scotland back in November, this friendly and informative new induction programme will explain all about Southern Cross, outline our processes and procedures, and will provide new Home Managers with all the support and information they need to 'hit the ground running'.

### e-learning Pilot

For maximum flexibility and support, our e-learning programmes will allow staff to access learning materials online, at a time that fits in with their shift patterns and their working lifestyles.

### Finance Training

The first of our Finance Training was rolled out in August 2010, and will continue to be offered as part of the New Manager Induction programme. The course provides an in-depth understanding of the financial demands of the Home Manager role, with practical tools and thorough, detailed tutoring.

### Accredited Care Courses

Southern Cross now offers a wide selection of fully-accredited Care Courses, including Infection Control, Customer Care and Safe Handling of Medicines. The courses, which are marked and accredited by Coventry University, each last around 12 weeks and hold the equivalent of 80 CAT points. Best of all, they are free to take: talk to your Home Manager or a member of the Learning & Development team to find out more.

**HR Support Hub**  
01527 511650

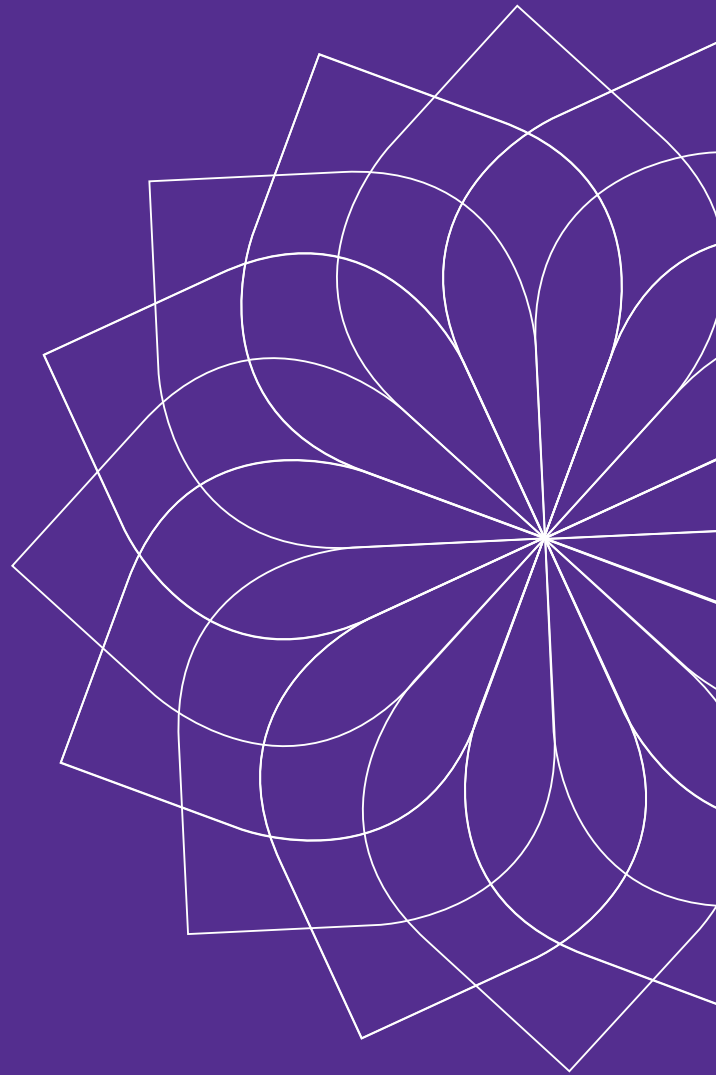
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