



Eleanor
caring since 1979....

Newsletter

Lewisham Branch | September 2015

Eleanor gets behind the Borough of Lewisham

Huge steps taken to work with the local community and organisations

PLUS:

- Choose cycling
- A Lewisham success story
- Carers trained to use Makaton



- Mobility support
- Training facility
- We're listening

- Sign language training proves popular
- Eleanor hosts community meeting
- and more...

www.eleanorhealthcaregroup.co.uk

A Lewisham Success Story

Just ten years ago, we were a small business that started with only twelve carers and provided nursing to just a few local care homes.



We were then taken over by, Marc Santhiapillai, and we have since grown at an unprecedented rate. The picture is a stark contrast to that of a decade ago, with Eleanor now employing more than 800 staff and working in 30 boroughs around the UK – all while retaining the same local business ethos of our quieter past. We really have built Rome in a day.

From our headquarters in Lewisham, we have seen a meteoric rise from our humble beginnings, and we are now starting to be recognised for the work we have done. In 2013, we were commended at the South London Business Awards in the Best Medium Sized Business and Business Innovation categories, while last year we received a Business Award from the Mayor of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock, for Excellence in Environmental Practice.

Our efforts to go green are one of the many projects we have undertaken in order to give something back to our local community. We pride ourselves on being able to provide local people with new career opportunities – creating hundreds of jobs and supplying valuable training to our staff members. Through the Eleanor Foundation, we are also working with local charities and voluntary organisations to share our success with them.

However, at Eleanor we have had to overcome many challenges to get to where we are today. Health and Social Care has been one of the sectors worst affected by the Government's austerity measures that followed the financial crisis. Companies have been forced to centralise and make cuts in order to survive, compromising the level of care

they can deliver. However at Eleanor, we are swimming against the tide, investing as much as we can to provide high quality care through our unique local branch system.

Our determination to succeed is evident in our mission statement; "Eleanor aims to set the standard in the care sector... with a team who have a real passion for delivering client-focused care..." It is this commitment to the cause, coupled with a strong principle of community, which has caused our chief executive, Marc Santhiapillai, to reject numerous acquisition attempts from larger competitors.

Mr Santhiapillai makes his reasoning clear; "This is not an industry for people seeking purely to make a profit. It is those people who give the industry a bad reputation in the media.

"You have to possess a passion for care, and be guided at all times by a strong conscience; otherwise you're in the wrong business. Instead of sinking to centralisation or takeovers, we have relied on innovation to cut costs, working with their service users and stakeholders to deliver the optimal service."

The key to our remarkable success has been our passionate staff, each and every one of whom appreciates the value of their work, which gives them the motivation to succeed in the most challenging of environments. They have certainly proven themselves to be the jewel in Lewisham's crown.

Mobility support

Our service users are receiving support with their mobility thanks to our partnership with a number of local mobility shops, who have

kindly provided support, advice and equipment to those we care for.

This relationship has been extremely

beneficial to our service users, who are able to enjoy a higher quality of life thanks to their increased mobility, both in their homes and when out and about.

We're listening

The results of our most recent Quality Assurance Questionnaire have now been processed and published.



Firstly, we are very thankful to all of our service users for their co-operation in completing the survey, as these surveys are crucial for us to be able to improve the quality of our service.

We are delighted with the overall response we have had, with 97 per cent of our service users saying that they are happy with the care and support given to them, and 95 per

cent reporting that any concerns they have had have been dealt with quickly.

Our next questionnaire has already been sent out, and we encourage all of our service users to respond and let us know how they feel about our services. We rely on your feedback to perfect the service we currently provide, and we can only tailor our service to your needs if we are fully aware of what you need. The survey forms have been delivered with pre-paid postage, so please do not hesitate to identify services you are pleased with or any concerns that you may have.

Replies will need to be submitted by 11 September, so please respond as soon as you can. We are looking forward to publishing the results as soon as they are processed. We hope the next set of results will make us as proud as our latest set of results.

Carers trained to use Makaton

Carers at our Lewisham branch have been given training in the use of Makaton, a simplified form of communication commonly used by people with learning disabilities or limited verbal communication.



Victoria Taylor, Lewisham's Branch Manager, recently visited the newest addition to the Eleanor Healthcare Group – Smerdon Day Centre.

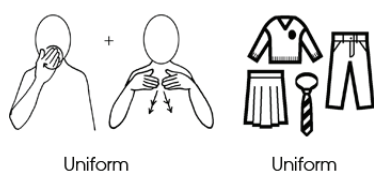
She was joined by three of her Lewisham care workers to allow them to gain some more knowledge of working with people with learning difficulties and receive Makaton training, which involves the communication using simple pictures and images.

She said: "It gave our carers a chance to learn something new and gain

experience in working with people with learning difficulties. It was a great day and the service users were very welcoming."

Makaton is an extremely flexible system that can be personalised to each individual's needs and is used by more than 100,000 children and adults to communicate.

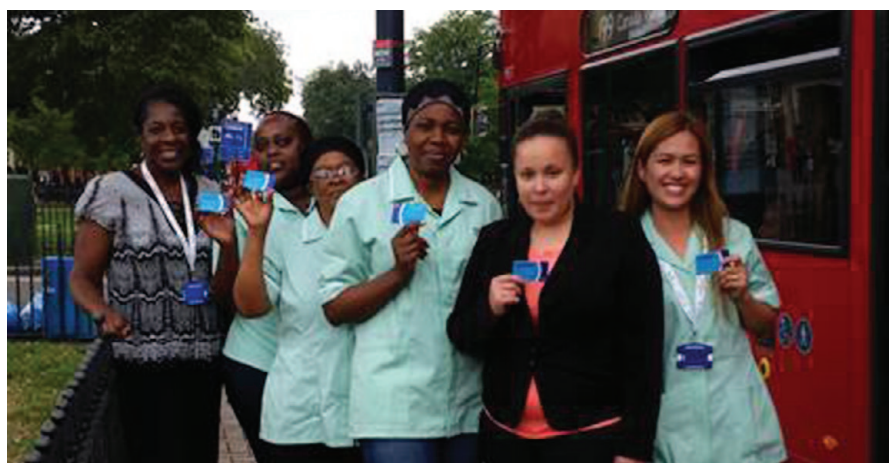
At Eleanor we are committed to providing a wide range of training to our staff, from basic care skills to advanced communication techniques, such as Makaton.



Green Initiatives

Free carer travelcards

At Eleanor Nursing and Social Care, we have taken huge steps to reduce our carbon footprint, and tackle the harmful levels of emissions within the borough of Lewisham.



The switch to riding a bike can also have huge health benefits; especially for the younger generation, who often struggle to find opportunities to partake in exercise. In many cases, cycling is also quicker than driving in London, as it allows you to bypass stationary traffic and cuts out, that all too familiar pain, of scouring the back streets for a place to park. By shortening journey times, we are able to provide a better quality of care to the vulnerable members of our community that we care for, as each of our carers has more time to spend with the service users that rely on them.

Our group, run by Marc Santhiapillai, are implementing a novel policy to help our homecare branches become more eco-friendly.

Our carers are being given the choice of a free bicycle or free monthly top-up of their oyster card, which they are permitted to use during work hours and in their free time. This innovative move will be a massive help to the local council, who have been pushing for Lewisham to go green and have

spoken of their need to support industry in achieving this goal.

We employ over 200 people within Lewisham alone, so the community stands to benefit immensely from our provision of eco-friendly transport alternatives for each of our carers. We hope that our carers will encourage their friends and families to make similar changes to their daily commutes, reducing both CO² emissions and traffic congestion within the borough.

Our commitment to going green has already been recognised by the Mayor of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock, for Excellence in Environmental Practice and we have since introduced unique software that has automated our back office, making it virtually paperless. This latest venture is furthering our reputation as a business that goes above and beyond to serve our local community. Hopefully other businesses will be encouraged to follow our lead and make an effort to go green.

Eleanor vehicles

At Eleanor Care we are always looking at new ways of improving our services and strive to ensure our care workers receive the support they deserve. We believe that supporting our staff in all aspects of their role will enable them to provide the highest level of care for our clients. In order to do this, we have introduced company cars to selected branches, which will be used by dedicated care workers to reach clients and deliver care in a wider geographical area.



Choose cycling

Our mission to promote cycling around Lewisham is progressing better than any of us could have hoped.



Our new green commuting initiative, introduced as one of its features, the provision of a free bicycle to any carer who would like one – for use both at work and in their free time. The bikes have been acquired from local business, Compton Cycles, who share our passion for serving the residents of Lewisham.

The revolutionary initiative does not only have huge environmental benefits, but will also help to improve the health of our carers and their families, will reduce traffic congestion around Lewisham and increase the efficiency of our care service by reducing travel times.

Of course, the safety of our carers is of paramount importance to us and we are well aware of the dangers of cycling on London's busy roads. That is why we have provided our carers with free cycle safety courses run by Cycle Confident. Our hope is that this useful training will help keep our carers safe on the road.

We are thrilled to report that Lewisham-based carer, John Jatto (pictured above), has already undertaken training with Cycle Confident, and we hope that other carers will follow his lead and take advantage of this generous scheme.

To ensure that cycling continues to become a more popular choice, we now have free local cycle guides available upon request. Each booklet, produced by Transport for London, contains information on main cycle routes, quieter alternative roads, and cycle parking stations across the boroughs of Lewisham, Bexley, and Bromley. Please do not hesitate to ask for one if you are a keen cyclist, or are looking to take cycling up. If you are considering it, we encourage you to give it a go!



Eleanor team up with volunteer scheme

At Eleanor we are proud to announce that we have recently become a registered organisation at the Volunteer Centre Lewisham – furthering our already strong links with the community.



Volunteer Centre Lewisham is the first step for volunteering within the borough, making it easy for Lewisham's residents, from all backgrounds and abilities, to become a volunteer and get more involved with their community.

Since the centre's launch in 2001, it has worked with over 35,000 individuals, helping them to find volunteering that suits their interests. Volunteering continues to grow in Lewisham and volunteers play a vital role within many charities

and community groups. The centre supports a wide range of local groups and organisations to promote their volunteering opportunities and create new roles.

We are proud to be working with an organisation with a similar passion for our local community and we are looking forward to welcoming committed and motivated volunteers to help us with our cause of caring for service users.

At Eleanor we are able to provide quality vocational training for volunteers interested in a career in the rewarding field of social care. If you are interested in volunteering at Eleanor, please do not hesitate to contact us; either through the volunteer centre, or directly by calling us on 020 8690 2406 or visiting www.eleanorhealthcaregroup.co.uk

Eleanor pledge support to local football team

At Eleanor, we are keen to show our commitment to the local community, and are therefore delighted to be sponsoring Our Lady's Youth Under-18s football team.



Established in 1990 with just a single team, Our Lady's Youth FC has flourished into one of Greenwich & Bexley Junior Football League top teams and currently has teams ranging

from Under-7s to Under-21s.

They train and play at Metrogas Amateur Sports Association in New Eltham, just a few miles down the road

from our headquarters in Lewisham.

Eleanor Care's CEO, Marc Santhi said: "We are delighted to announce this link-up with Our Lady's Youth FC, which does great work in the local community providing football coaching to hundreds of youngsters throughout the borough."

"As a community-minded organisation ourselves, this sponsorship is a way of giving something back to our local community."

"We look forward to continuing our relationship with the football club, and wish them the very best for the upcoming season."

Eleanor Care gets fundraising

Jenny Quenaud from Eleanor Care's Essex Office in Holland-on-Sea has taken part in a 10 kilometre run to support local charity Tendring Specialist Stroke Services.

She set out from the specialist stroke centre based near to the town centre and made her way along the

seafront, getting as far as Jaywick before turning around for the return leg.

Jenny said: "We didn't do much training because we wanted it to be a real challenge, but I didn't realise quite how far it would be.

"The route seemed never-ending on the way back, but it was all worth it for a great cause. It was an amazing day and I'm really pleased with how it went."

She added: "We wanted to help a charity in the community and we decided to choose the stroke centre.

"It's only a small charity, but we went in there to see what they do and they really make a phenomenal difference to people who have suffered strokes and need help."

Jenny was originally supposed to run with one of her co-workers, who was unfortunately called into work on the day, but was able to complete the run with her partner Gary Lark instead. Between them, they raised more than £500 for the stroke centre.

Congratulations to Jenny and Gary for their amazing effort.

Staff at our Poole branch have also been busy fundraising, with carer Rey Vasquez deservedly stealing the show, with a both audacious and commendable exploit.

Rey took the plunge and decided to have his long locks shaved, raising £350 for Macmillan Cancer Research.

Rey then went one step further and donated his hair to be used as wigs for cancer patients.

Many thanks to Rey for his generous, and courageous, actions.



Eleanor forges links with leading organisations



Eleanor Care's Lewisham headquarters has been striving to make links and create a network within the local community in order to raise awareness of local services and charities.

The charities, including Age UK, Mind, and Three C's, all offer a host of services and advice with regard to different areas of healthcare.

Age UK Lewisham and Southwark, whose local branch is located on Catford Broadway, offer invaluable drop in sessions, advising on a range of topics from finance to care for elderly people.

There is also a local befriending scheme, of which Eleanor hopes to become involved with following a planned meeting with the Age UK Lewisham and Southwark CEO in October.

Offering advice, counselling and support, not only to those with mental

health problems, but also their friends and families, Mind is a charity which is becoming more and more important in our current society.

Banishing the stigma associated with mental health is one of their objectives, and at Eleanor we want to contribute towards this goal. Utilising training offered by Mind, we aim to further the knowledge and skills of our care workers, who regularly provide care to people with mental health issues.

Three C's – Control and Choice in the Community – are a Lewisham-based charity that provides outreach services, community support and

housing to local residents with learning disabilities.

By promoting their services to local residents and offering our resources, we hope to see many of our service users benefit from their organisation.

For more information on any of the charities or services mentioned, please contact our Lewisham office on 020 8690 1911 or visit the organisation's corresponding websites below:

www.threecs.co.uk

www.ageuk.org.uk

www.mind.org.uk

Eleanor Care Raise Funds for Macmillan Cancer Support

The Lewisham Eleanor Home Care branch has raised an impressive £108.35 for Macmillan Cancer Support during their recent Coffee Morning.

The morning was attended by service users from Lewisham and our Smerdon Day Centre in Belvedere, staff and trainee carers. Sweet treats, including homemade cakes and biscuits, were generously donated by staff and were enjoyed by all who attended.

We would like to say a huge thank you, to all of you who donated to our coffee morning. We hope this will be the first step in supporting Macmillan Cancer Support and palliative care, along with additional training for care workers to further their knowledge in this field.



Training facility

At Eleanor Care we are immensely proud of our structured training programme and facility, which has helped a large number of people start their career in the care industry.

Our flexible approach means that we can as easily accommodate the requirements of employers needing health and social care training for their employees on an ongoing basis.

We can also assist individuals who look after loved ones on an informal basis and would like to build their confidence and care skills.

All our health and social care training is provided at our dedicated training premises in London – approved to deliver training by the leading UK qualification awarding body OCR – by an experienced team of tutors.

The courses we offer include:

OCR accredited courses

- OCR Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults)
- OCR Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults)
- Leadership for Health and Social Care Level 5
- Dementia Care Level 2 certificate
- Dementia Care Level 3 certificate

Home Care Mandatory Training (five-day course)

Basic Home Care (three-day course)

Personal Assistance (three-day course)



Individual modules

- Basic Life Support
- Death, Dying and Bereavement
- Dementia Care for Managers and Supervisors
- Principles of Person-Centred Care
- Role of a Care Worker
- Needs of the Service User

- Food Hygiene
- Health and Safety
- Home Economics
- Medication (Induction and Administration)

For more information about Eleanor Training Centre's health and social care training in London, please contact us.

Eleanor's relationship with Mencap flourishes

We have teamed up with one of the UK's leading disability organisations, Mencap, to provide support to our service users with learning disabilities. Our partnership with Mencap has allowed us to provide additional training to our carers and allowed us to offer additional support to our service users.

One area of support that has been particularly useful is their range of legal and financial advice, on issues such as Wills, trusts and advocacy, which has proven extremely beneficial to those that we care for.

As part of our partnership, we are also providing support to Mencap's own

service users in the form of carer support in return for the support they have provided to some of our own service users in the form of advice and guidance.

We hope that Eleanor's relationship with Mencap will continue to flourish and we can continue to provide benefits to the UK's learning disability community.

Lewisham Carer's Centre receives assistance from Eleanor Care

As part of our growing relationship with members of the local care community, we have agreed to provide carers to Lewisham Care Centre.

Our carers will be providing a range of services to the centre, including respite care and support for informal carers.

We are delighted to have forged this new partnership with the centre and hope that it will help those most in need within our community.

Carers learn vital skills from M Power and Bridge Mental Health

A team of our carers from Eleanor Care have been shadowing skilled staff from Bridge Mental Health, a charity based in South London that offers a full range of services from 24-hour supported accommodation to floating support for people with severe mental health disorders.

They deal with a range of issues from challenging behaviour to substance abuse and by shadowing their skilled team; we hope that our team will be able to bring back useful tips for helping services users in our community.

This innovative partnership is part of our approach to engage with key stakeholders in the South London care community in order to share skills and resources to maximise the services on offer to local people.

We are also working in a similar fashion with another local organisation, M Power, that delivers services to people with learning disabilities and

challenging behaviour. Our carers are shadowing their staff to learn important skills, which can benefit service users in our area.



Sign language training proves popular



We recently offered our carers the chance to learn basic sign language to assist with the care of deafblind service users. We were unsure of the response we would have, but we soon had a number of our staff come forward for training.

During the course they learned to sign a number of basic phrases and words, commonly used by deafblind people.

All of those who took part agreed that it was a very useful and informative course and we hope more people will sign up in future and learn these vital skills.

Being able to provide carers with basic sign language skills sets us apart from other care companies and shows our commitment to helping a wide range of people with varying care needs.

Eleanor Care looks to the next generation of carers

At Eleanor Care we have begun to forge new partnerships with local schools and colleges, as we seek the next generation of care staff for Lewisham and the surrounding area.

As part of this drive to find new carers, we have contacted a number of local education providers, including Lewisham Southwark College, to see if they have any graduates or current students that would be interested in gaining experience with Eleanor Care's home care service.

All recruits would be working locally, within the borough of Lewisham, seeking to provide care to vulnerable members of the community who are reliant on our home care services.

Eleanor Care is always open to students with a passion for social care who are keen to use their skills to help those in need. As a company we take pride in the personal relationships we build with our carers, and are continuously striving to help all of our staff to develop their care careers.

Through our jobs and training schemes, we hope to provide

many future young carers with an opportunity to enter the home care

industry and cultivate a long and successful career.



Eleanor offers support to local day centre

We are glad to announce that Eleanor have recently formed a partnership with Cinnamon Court Day Centre.



Based in Deptford, in the borough of Lewisham, Cinnamon Court provides day services for people who are over 60 and who may be frail, isolated, or who have physical disabilities, dementia or mental health problems.

People attending the day centre can take part in a varied range of activities,

including craftwork, gardening, cooking, sewing, and exercise.

We have pledged to offer a range of services to the residents of the centre, including everything from home care to patient transport. We hope that this new partnership will improve the provision of care within Lewisham for those most in need.

If you have any feedback on our newsletter, or would like to suggest a topic for an article in a future edition or would like to learn more about Eleanor Healthcare Group, please contact us at info@eleanorcare.co.uk or on 020 8690 2406

Eleanor to host meeting of community stakeholders

We are proud to announce that we will be hosting the next meeting of Lewisham's Community Stakeholders' group at our head office.

The Community Stakeholders' Meeting brings together organisations, societies and groups from the Borough of Lewisham to discuss local issues, with the aim of working towards our common goal – to improve health and lifestyles in our community.

Those attending our meeting include members of Lewisham's local police team, GPs, district nurses, library and leisure service managers and members of the borough's social services team.

Our meeting will also be attended by a number of local organisations, including Age UK, Mind, Three Cs, Bridge Mental Health, Nexus, Alzheimer's Society and Lewisham Pensioners' Forum.

During this meeting we hope to discuss issues affecting elderly, disabled and vulnerable people in the area and look at what we, as stakeholders in our community, can do to make their lives easier.

The event will be held at our offices in **Eleanor House, 404 Lewisham High Street** on **21st October 2015** and we are looking forward to meeting with other local groups and organisations, many of whom may be new to the group.

We hope to continue this group's expansion in the near future, in order to make a real difference to the health and domiciliary services offered within our borough, not only for our service users, but for all people requiring care within our community.

If you are interested in joining our stakeholder group, please confirm your attendance by contacting Alison Duffy on **020 8690 2406** or emailing **alison.duffy@eleanorcare.co.uk**

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