Anniversary Congratulations! (Oct 2015-Jan 2016)

GSIL would like to acknowledge the following personal care attendants for their hard work and dedication and their many years of service in helping our consumers throughout the years. We extend a heartfelt thank you to all of you for all you do!

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<th>Name</th>
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Looking for More Hours?

4 Easy ways to find more hours:
1. www.gsil.org > Home Care Attendant Hub > Submit your availability
2. Email > mwhittemore@gsil.org
3. Call Maureen Whittemore @ 603-410-6512
4. Search our Job postings at www.gsil.org > Home Care > Attendant Hub > Home Care Job Openings

Save the Date!
April 16, 2016 - Our 2nd “Professional Development & Appreciation Day” will be held on April 16, 2016.
Welcome to ‘All the News You Can Use’

Thank you for being an important part of the GSIL team!

For you to do your job more effectively, GSIL must be continuously informing you beyond a new-hire initiation. Company policies and directions often change. Employees must be kept up to date on these changes because you are often the consumer’s everyday contact.

We hope you will find this newsletter informative, helpful and a good source to help keep you in the know with happenings for our care attendants at GSIL!

Travel Time Pay

Effective December 26, 2015, GSIL started paying travel time to attendant care workers when they travel directly from one consumer’s home to another consumer’s home. Workers will not get paid travel time if they have just one consumer, so you will not get travel pay when going from your home to the consumer’s home. You will not get travel pay if you work for one consumer in the morning and your next consumer is scheduled for the late afternoon.

How this works and what you need to know:

• If you work for one consumer and leave their home to go straight to another consumer (generally taking less than an hour), then you will need to fill out a Travel Timesheet showing when you left the first consumer and when you arrived at the next consumer’s home. You will need each consumer to initial these times and indicate the name of the town that you departed from and arrived at.
• This time will be paid at your current hourly rate.
• The overtime policy still applies and, therefore, you cannot work over 40 hours in one week, including your travel time, without the approval of your supervisor.
• Travel Time Pay applies to workers in both the Home Care Program and the Consumer Directed Program.
• Travel timesheets will be available through your consumer.

For travel time pay questions please ask your consumer or call Human Resources at 603-228-9680.
Dealing with Grief

One of the most difficult situations an attendant care worker might experience in the confines of their job is losing a person they have been caring for. That loss might be due to the person passing, or it could be that the person they have been caring for has been moved to a nursing home or other living situation that no longer requires the workers help. It might also be that the person being cared for has no further need for services or they lose the ability to receive the same services. Whatever the reason, losing your consumer can be a sorrowful and heartbreaking occurrence.

There is no clear definition of how long one must know a person to have a wonderful friendship develop. Every person is different and so too are the rapports between each other. It is the specials bonds of genuine friendship, trust, caring and concern for another person that makes the ending of those relationships the most difficult to face.

Grief is a part of us all, a part of this world we live in, a part of nature, yet is a topic we often avoid. The ways people deal with grief are vast. The seven stages of grief we hear most about are: shock/disbelief, denial, bargaining, guilt, anger, depression, and acceptance/hope. Understanding these stages and realizing the symptoms of grief can be emotional, physical, social or religious in nature will go a long way in working through grief.

So how does one process the loss of a person they have been caring for? There is no single remedy. Here are a few ideas to try if you have lost a consumer you are close to.

**Take some time:** This means take time for yourself. As a caregiver, your natural instinct may be to jump right in and start helping others, but don’t forget to care for you. It’s not selfish to take some time and focus on your own needs. If you can do that, you might be surprised at how much better you will feel. Put the “me” back in the statement “I’m taking care of __ first”. Be nice to yourself.

**Talk to someone about your feelings:** A friend, family member, neighbor, fellow parishioner or co-worker may be a good listener. GSIL has experienced supports available for you to utilize, as well. If you can, talk to someone you trust so that you can be honest about how you’re feeling. You will feel comfortable knowing they understand you and can lend support. If you don’t feel comfortable sharing your feelings with anyone, and you feel yourself not able to overcome your grief, think about seeking professional help in the form of a therapist or counselor who can guide you through your difficulties.

**Express yourself:** Some people are not talkers and are better able to deal with grief through positive self-expression. The release of emotions when doing something positive that you love to do is healthy and healing. Writing, photography, painting, exercising, listening to music or singing, cooking, reading a book, horseback riding and the list goes on for whatever positive self-expression that will permit a recognition, validation and release of one’s emotions.

**Get moving:** Energy creates energy and this applies to taking the steps to get up and going again. “The saying “It’s not about the race, it’s about lacing up and getting to starting line” is so relevant when we think about sitting around with our own grief. Give yourself the time you need to grieve (only you will know how much time that is), then get moving again. Emotions run hand in hand with your physical self. If you take care of your body, your mind will start to feel better, as well. It’s proven that smiling and laughter, even when you are sad, will trick the brain into thinking you are happy, so smile, laugh and smile some more… it really works!

**Re-engage with others:** Try calling a friend or family member you have not talked to in a while. Make a lunch date with a neighbor or co-worker. Volunteering somewhere outside your home will fulfill a need and make you happy. Re-engaging with others who make you feel good is healthy and helpful to keeping you busy and focused. Humans are social beings and just as you would want to be there for a friend, remember that others want to do the same for you if you let them.

**Pray, meditate, or just listen:** Quiet your mind with peacefulness and reflection. Again, taking the time for yourself in ways that are most meaningful to you will help you sort through the grief you are experiencing. Think about the good things in your life and focus to the positives you have been blessed with. Understand that grief will subside in time and things will return to a more normal pattern. If this is not the case for you, asking for help from a professional should be considered.
Winter Safety Tips

Winter comes with a few hazards for both homeowners and workers, but there are plenty of things you can do to protect yourself and your property.

With winter upon us, here are some Winter Safety Tips to consider:

- **Heaters**: Furnaces should have a checkup prior to heavy use to assure they are running properly. Make sure space heaters have proper ventilation, are not placed near anything flammable and are situated on a solid surface so they won't tip over.

- **Fire Detectors**: Be aware of Fire and Carbon Monoxide Detectors and that they are in proper working order. Change the batteries so you can be certain that they are fresh.

- **Frozen Pipes**: Older homes, buildings and mobile homes can be susceptible to frozen pipes. To prevent pipe bursts, leave water dripping slightly so that water is constantly running to reduce the chance of freezing or wrap pipes with the proper insulation.

- **Snowed in Driveways**: If you are going to a consumer's home and the driveway is not plowed, do not park in the driveway, as you can get stuck. If possible, park on the street or in an adjacent parking lot that is plowed.

- **Winter Parking Bans**: Know the winter storm parking bans in your area, if any, and when it snows, abide by those bans. If your vehicle gets towed due to a parking ban, the tickets can be costly.

- **Dress Prepared**: Make sure to dress warmly and dress in layers just in case you have to shovel a spot to park your vehicle or if you get stuck somewhere during a storm. Wearing clothing made from synthetic material helps to conserve body heat - avoid wearing clothing made from cotton fibers. Keep an extra hat, mittens, scarf and a blanket in your car during the winter months.

- **Travel Prepared**: Keep a shovel, salt or sand in your vehicle in case your car gets stuck or if you have to use stairs and walkways that are snow or ice covered and slick.

- **At Home Preparedness**: Items to keep on hand: a battery powered radio, flashlight/lanterns with spare batteries, drinking water, non-perishable food that does not require cooking, pet food, prescription medication and a First Aid kit.

- **Winter Month Driving Tips**: Here are a few safety tips for winter driving:
  1. Stay alert
  2. Avoid assumptions
  3. Use your turn signals
  4. Buckle up
  5. Follow traffic signals
  6. Respect yellow lights
  7. Come to a complete stop
  8. Do not text and drive
  9. Obey speed limits
  10. Give yourself space - make adjustments for the weather
  11. Exercise patience
  12. Be predictable
  13. Never drive under the influence
  14. Yield right of way
  15. Know where you are going
  16. Respect stopped vehicles
  17. Avoid distractions
  18. Use headlights when needed
  19. Share the road
  20. Make sure that you do proper vehicle maintenance

Kudos Korner

This edition’s winner of the Kudos Korner Award* is Anne Gingues of Berlin. Ann has been working with GSIL for 8 years and was nominated by her consumer. She has gone above and beyond in her duties as a personal care attendant and is a daily asset to her consumer. Anne is enthusiastic, always on time and reliable, will work extra hours when needed and is a great asset to her consumer!

Anne is the recipient of our $25.00 award and is deservingly recognized in our Kudos Korner section! Congratulations, Anne Gingues and thank you for all you do! Your consumer and everyone at GSIL appreciates you very much!!

*Do you have a worker who goes above and beyond? Nominate that worker for the Kudos Korner Award.

Nominees for this edition were:

- Karen Dyar
- Shannon Katz
- Joanne Bevins
- Phillip Gagnon

Thank you all for doing such a great job!

Nomination forms are available on the GSIL website “My GSIL” portal.

Holiday Raffle

“Thank you GSIL. These raffles are a great idea. I feel appreciated.”

- ACW Tom