



# SHARING STORIES ABOUT YOUR CARE COMMUNITY



Photo Credit: Rebecca Cresta

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LEAD AT VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

If you're a busy activities coordinator, it can be very hard to find the time to share the wonderful moments and connections you see every day. But you are vital, you can ensure that people in care communities are heard, seen and acknowledged by the wider community.

## Why bother sharing stories?

Many people who live in care communities aren't as visible to the rest of the community as they once were. They aren't out shopping, working, or visiting as many places. This has been amplified over the last few years as the local community has been unable to visit people living in care homes in the way they did before.

You may not know it, but you are perfectly placed to break down these barriers. You have a secret weapon – people.

The people you support, and work with, are all you need. You probably take it for granted, but you see moments each day that would be great to share. A story doesn't need to be long; it could simply be something that went well and made a difference to someone. The small stuff is great.

Sharing people stories is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the care and support you provide. It is a great way to celebrate the community you are part of, and make the move into a care community more appealing.



## Who to share your people stories with?

I suppose the question you are asking here is – who would be interested?

I think you might be surprised.

Here are four possible audiences, but you may be able to think of more:

- Families and friends – let them know what activities you have coming up as they may want to join in, or share something that went really well; use photos and videos if you have permission.
- The local community – churches, schools, social groups and other people living nearby; they may want to know what is happening in the care community even if they can't visit.
- Professionals – if you are doing something really well then other professionals would love to hear about this. In turn you can get pick up new ideas from them.
- Potential customers – this one often gets overlooked, but by sharing stories about people in your community you make it a place that other people want to be.

### Where to start

You probably won't be in charge of marketing for the whole of your care community, so sometimes it could be more about getting your stories to the people who are. Here are few suggestions:

**1.Social media** – if your care community has its own account see if you can get permission to post directly on there. This is particularly good when you are sharing how an event or activity has gone well.

**2.Website** – see if there is space to share your photos, videos and stories on there. It is probably the first place potential customers, and their families, will look.

**3.Email marketing** – it is likely your organisation is sending out emails and newsletters. They would probably be keen to hear your stories so that they can be part of these.

**4.Within your organisation** – you probably already do this, but make sure you share your stories with your colleagues. This could be when you talk to them, on a noticeboard, in a newsletter, in a meeting, or online.



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### Top tips

- 1.It is vital that people tell their own stories - don't speak for someone if they are able to speak for themselves; ask them, use their words, and let them know what you are doing.
- 2.Start small – try to post on social media at least once a week with something that went well and made a difference to someone.
- 3.Photos and videos are great if you can get them. Make sure you have permission to share these, and that the person you are filming or photographing knows you are doing it, and why.
- 4.See if it is working - if you can, look at how many people are viewing social media posts. You will be able to see what works and what doesn't.
- 5.Write stories up, or post on social media, there and then rather than adding it to you do to list. It won't take long once you get used to it.
- 6.Read through what you have written – it is easy to make mistakes. A quick read through really helps.
- 7.Find other people who want to help – for example, you may work with other people who are very confident on social media and would love to help. Good communication is a role that can be shared.
- 8.Share stories about staff too; it is all about the community you are part of.



**Remember, you can help care communities, and the people who live and work there, be seen and heard. Go on – give it try.**