

Hearing Impaired Care Workers Join Prospect Hills

CARE WORKER PROFILE

Over the last eight months Prospect Hills Service Centre has been recruiting care workers for the new Domestic Assistance Team. During that time we have hired three hearing impaired care workers with the help of the Deaf Society of New South Wales Employment Service who provide all interpreting needs and support for the new care workers.

The new care workers assist our Deaf and Deaf/Blind clients, and also provide Domestic Assistance for a number of hearing clients.

The Deaf and Deaf/Blind clients are all happy that we can provide care workers that speak their language. It has made a difference to their service providing them with someone they can communicate with. Our hearing clients also get on very well with the care workers and often will ring the branch to compliment them on the job they are doing. They have also shared the different techniques that they have worked out to successfully communicate with their new carers.

Recently one of our care workers, Kerry Priem, was nominated for the award of "Deaf Person of the Year 2010". Kerry,

who won the award in 2008, and her clients were very excited at the nomination. The Award Presentation was held in Brisbane and we were all hoping that she would win again but unfortunately this time she didn't. Another of our new care workers, Glenn Welldon, was "Deaf Person of the Year 2009". He achieved this award through his volunteer work and by re-establishing the Deaf Club in Sydney that had been closed for 11 years.

As the co-ordinator of the domestic as-



Above: Kerry & Glen



Above: Domestic Assistance Team with co-ordinator Linda Chen, who is relieving for Kim (back left)

sistance team, it has been a wonderful experience working with the new deaf care workers. I also, have had to find ways to communicate with these care workers as well as the clients. I use a lot of SMS and e-mail. Pen and paper is another good way when they come to visit me at the office and an interpreter attends our team meetings.

The deaf care workers at the Prospect Hills Service Centre are all a pleasure to co-ordinate. They are good workers and an asset to Home Care. *By Kim Herrington*

NORTHERN SYDNEY SERVICE CENTRE

Have two care workers, Simone and Katrina, who provide domestic assistance and personal care since April 2008 and May 2007 respectively. Both care workers are profoundly deaf but with the use of Telstra Online Text Buddy, SMS, emails, faxes, branch staff with signing skills, and interpreters, communication is made easy. Both regularly receive positive feedback from clients and are valued members of their teams. The aim is to provide them with further training to provide complex services. They have brought to the Home Care community a greater awareness and understanding of the challenges that deaf people face on a daily basis.