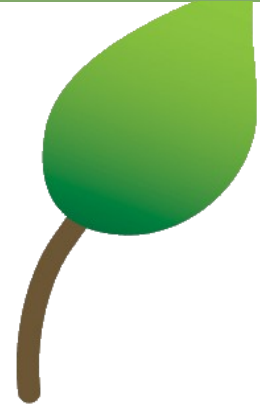


# Surrey Care Association



Supporting Social Care Providers in Surrey

## COVID AND BREXIT SUPPORT

SCA and our Commercial Members & Partners have come together to help you through the challenges of the next six months with hints and tips in this handy booklet.

### Contributions in this edition from:

**Care Friends**

**Florence**

**Hendeca IT Group**

**Royds Withy King**

**Towergate Insurance**

**Wightman & Parrish**

**Citation**

**Gordons Solicitors**

**Person Centered Software**

**Sekoia**

**Vat Solutions**



# Care Friends

Caring people know caring people

## **Recruiting & retaining staff in 2020/21: Challenges and solutions**

Surrey providers will have experienced the recent roller-coaster of supply in the labour market as well as concerns over the risk of staff loss – both from the existing team as well as recent joiners who have decided care isn't for them. Those who recruit from overseas will be facing regulation change.

So, what to do?

My advice is as follows:

- Look for evidence of family care experience or a family member already working in care when assessing applicants. Particularly in younger people, who are more likely to be on the job market, as this is a sure marker of potential.
- Consider reducing spend on internet job boards and move to recruit via your existing workforce with employee referral. They will know who has the right values and is hard-working and compassionate.
- To refresh your employee referral scheme, shift the payments earlier – don't make referring staff wait for 3 or 6 months to be paid.
- Introduce peer mentoring so new to care starters feel supported – it also gives existing staff an opportunity for professional development

Our Care Friends app turbocharges your employee referral scheme as well as enabling managers to instantly thank staff or to recognise an achievement.

To find out more visit <https://carefriends.co.uk/> and ask for the SCA discount!



# Care Friends

Caring people know caring people

# Citation

## COVID-secure rule changes

### Your free inspection-ready checklist

#### **COVID-compliance now a legal obligation - are you ready?**

Despite spending weeks encouraging employers to introduce their people back into COVID-secure workplaces, the government announced a dramatic 180-degree turnaround. They're now advising all those who can work from home to do so in an attempt to curb an increase in COVID cases.

However, there are still many businesses for whom homeworking is not an option, such as those in the care sector. For them, creating a COVID-secure workplace has never been more important.

COVID-compliance has now become a legal obligation and not meeting these standards in your workplace will result in fines of up to £10,000 and being forced to close your doors.

Wondering if your business is up-to-scratch and could confidently pass an inspection?

The Health & Safety and HR experts of SCA Commercial Member, Citation, have put together an extensive checklist of all the considerations you need to make to get your workplace inspection-ready and safe for your people.

## **DOWNLOAD NOW**

From staff mental health and wellbeing, professional bereavement and tricky HR issues, to infection control, risk assessments and visiting arrangements, they can help you operate both safely and compliantly in the coming weeks and months.

They can also help with care-specific training and e-learning, fire and electrical safety, Care Policies & Procedures, Care Mock Inspections, and CQC Pro – an application to demonstrate you're meeting CQC requirements.

You can also give them a call any time on **0345 844 1111**



# Florence

## **Fill rota gaps with Florence Exclusive**

At Florence, we have a clear mission - to transform temporary staffing recruitment within the social care sector.

Our online marketplace helps care providers fill rota gaps without the need for expensive recruitment agencies.

With the rise in coronavirus cases, you may be re-assessing safety measures at your care service. Staffing is vital to this - and Florence can help you safely fill any rota gaps you're facing.

We provide exclusive nurses and carers who only work with you, and not at any other care settings. This protects service users, limits the number of staff on site, and helps you follow the government's Adult Social Care Winter Plan.

All Florence Exclusive staff are Covid-19 tested, fully background checked and qualified. Find out how Florence Exclusive can help you fill rota gaps today.

**Download our Winter Toolkit here**

**Contact** [managers@florence.co.uk](mailto:managers@florence.co.uk)

020 3936 8941

Fill rota gaps  
safely with  
exclusive staff

Sign up today



 Florence

Techspace Whitechapel 38-40 Commercial Road, London

# Gordons Partnership LLP

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## SOLICITORS

Gordons Partnership LLP is a respected and rapidly growing law firm based in London and Guildford with a leading Health and Social Care Provider practice led by Neil Grant.

Over the months coming months, infection prevention and control will continue to be the main focus of attention. Providers need lawyers who are up-to-date with the national guidance and can advise on all aspects of IPC compliance. As an example, we acted for a provider whose registration was suspended by CQC due to IPC concerns. We advised on the regulator's concerns and after one month, CQC lifted the suspension and the rating of the service went from Inadequate to Good under the Safe key question.

Another key area will be responding to employment issues, including whistleblowing concerns which are rising across the sector. At Gordons, we have experienced regulatory and employment lawyers who can advise providers in managing the myriad of employment and safeguarding issues linked to your business.

There is then the changing role and presence of CQC. The Adult Social Care Winter Plan highlights that CQC will be carrying out more physical inspections, looking beyond IPC to broader issues including safety, access and leadership, and notes that swift action will be taken if required. We have a team of experienced regulatory lawyers who are familiar with all aspects of CQC's jurisdiction and can step in to support you, whether it is an adverse draft inspection report or threatened urgent regulatory action. Neil Grant used to act for CQC at a senior level and takes a measured, evidence-based approach, looking at matters from the perspective of both parties with the aim of reaching a successful outcome for the care provider.

As well as challenges, there are commercial opportunities aplenty within the sector. We have been involved in advising providers in opening step-down facilities and acquiring new businesses. As a full-service firm we can deal with all aspects of commercial and property transactions. We have also advised providers on the legal aspects associated with the digitalisation of care services, creating more efficient and cost-effective working practices and using real time data to drive improvement. In time, this work will feed into CQC's "smarter regulation" strategy which includes using digital platforms to share live data about service quality and safety.

Finally, tight financial management is more important than ever and we can advise on contract management, fee recovery and bad debt prevention.

In relation to the latter, we have worked with providers in obtaining personal guarantees and putting charges on properties to reduce the risk of debts accruing and not being recoverable. Significant sums of money can be involved and we have been successful in recovering large debts, as well as putting in place mechanisms to reduce financial risk moving forward.

Please feel free to contact Neil Grant for a free, confidential and no-obligation chat on 01483 366069. We are here to help.



## HENDECA GROUP LIMITED

With lockdown measures increasing once again, we are likely to see a return to higher levels of home working, online consultations and reliance on technology in general.

It was estimated that during the first round of lockdown in the spring, 40% of care providers did not have access to online billing and invoicing. We can help you to implement systems to support your business as the pandemic starts to impact once again. Whether that's purchasing and installing standard systems or creating simple Microsoft Excel quotes and invoices, Hendeca can help.

Technology has really proven how it can bring us together, both at work and socially, but are you confident you are getting the best out of what you have available?

Is the kit your staff use at home set up in the most ergonomic way? Do you need a platform such as Teams set up to aid your communication? Perhaps you need a collaboration platform set up such as SharePoint. Or perhaps you would just like to talk through your current set up with a friendly and approachable IT technician.

Please do get in contact with us and arrange a free IT Health Check.

Contact us to make an appointment, click on the logo above or call:

David Robinson, Hendeca IT Manager on 07929 849 993 or [it@hendecagroup.com](mailto:it@hendecagroup.com)

An IT Health Check usually means checking that safe network and external connections are in place and working effectively.

We take a wider brief and check to see that all the IT you use is working well for you. We advise you on how to make sure that your IT equipment, however complex or simple, is working at optimum levels.

At Hendeca, we believe in really getting to know our customers and understanding where IT can support the care function. Our team have long experience in working with customers whose key role is to provide care and not to become IT experts.



## HENDECA GROUP LIMITED



## **94% of care environments benefit from going digital as Government urges industry to be prepared for potential second wave.**

At Person Centred Software, we adapted our Mobile Care Monitoring system to better support staff in care environments during the first wave of the virus, with 94% of users finding our coronavirus-specific features beneficial.

Tried and tested throughout the pandemic, our agile technology, used in over 2,000 care homes across the UK to evidence care interactions via innovative icons, saw the implementation of eight new features to help protect the elderly and vulnerable. These included coronavirus reporting, staff coronavirus auditing, track and trace reporting, and Relatives Gateway video link, allowing residents and families to communicate in real-time. In addition, our software saved each carer one hour per shift to complete administrative tasks, which is crucial at a time when staff absence and agency usage are on the increase.

Beata Czapla, Home Manager at The Chestnuts (Downing Care) says: "There are many advantages to going digital. Not only are you saving time, but as a Manager you have all of the information that you could possibly need in one place and it's easily accessible."

With winter and the pressures of flu season on its way, there has never been a more important time to go digital. Visit [www.personcentredsoftware.com](http://www.personcentredsoftware.com) for details on how Mobile Care Monitoring can benefit your care home.

see our links here for **[Going digital](#)** & **[Mobile Care Monitoring](#)** articles



## **SPECIALIST COVID-19 LEGAL ADVICE FROM ROYDS WITHY KING**

The Social Care team at Royds Withy King have provided invaluable legal support to Surrey Care and our members during the pandemic. As specialist care lawyers they provide practical, commercial and forward-thinking advice on how to tackle the legal and regulatory challenges presented by Covid19 including support with HR and employment law, CQC compliance, safeguarding, business insurance disputes, restructuring and refinancing, business sales and acquisitions and any other day to day issues you may be facing.

They kindly offer SCA members a **free** initial telephone consultation so do get in contact with them if you need advice.

Please contact James Sage, Head of Health & Social Care, on [james.sage@roydswithyking.com](mailto:james.sage@roydswithyking.com) or 07508 297597.

The team have had significant interest from care providers about their employment advice service during the pandemic due to the significant number of difficult workforce issues that have arisen. Here is a link for more information:

<https://www.roydswithyking.com/help/socialcare/> and feel free to call James to discuss the service.





"Enabling Care" has never been more relevant for a tech company than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Carers need to be caring rather than completing paperwork. It's what they are brilliant at and what the people you support need. When it's difficult to get together physically, it's even more important to have a real-time shared overview of what's going on in your services, and crucial to share information easily. So everyone can keep up to date in a quickly changing environment.

Holding on to those wonderful staff you already have and being able to attract new recruits is even more important. Here, a user-friendly and bespoke care planning system can really support your team in achieving their objectives. And help to keep the planning and documentation stress free. Leaving you to concentrate on delivering outstanding care.

### **On-boarding and training**

At Sekoia, we can on-board new customers in a virtual hand-holding way. Even if we aren't allowed onsite, we still deliver comprehensive training and implementation. We can work with you at your pace. No one size fits all in "going digital". We support you on your journey and are currently offering discounts on subscription and implementation fees to support Social Care emerge stronger from COVID-19.

We'd love to hear from you **[contact@sekoia.co.uk](mailto:contact@sekoia.co.uk)** or find us here – <http://sekoia.co.uk/>



**Towergate Insurance are here to support Surrey Care Association members during this difficult time.**

Back in March, we launched our dedicated COVID-19 information centre which has been regularly updated throughout the year, with informative and helpful content that is available for Surrey Care Association members to utilise.

This online hub includes a link to a free Health and Safety and Employment Law hub provided by our commercial partners, Ellis Whittam, as well as there being many business planning articles and risk alerts available for you to download, to advise, guide and support you in this unique situation.

To find out more visit [www.towergate.com/covid-19-updates](http://www.towergate.com/covid-19-updates)  
We have also made the most of the new digitally focused way of working together and have held a range of webinars, with information and speakers who are care specialists. We have recently collaborated with Surrey Care Association to hold a webinar dedicated to understanding the hardening insurance market.

In November, we will be holding another webinar available for members to attend on 'How to make your business look attractive to the CQC and insurers'.

If you are interested in attending this webinar, please email [james.anscombe@towergate.co.uk](mailto:james.anscombe@towergate.co.uk) for more information.



**VAT SOLUTIONS**  
INDIRECT TAX SPECIALISTS

## Post Covid-19 Financial Sustainability and the VAT Strategy of Contract Restructuring

A subject central to our ongoing sector conversation around VAT planning is that of 'contract restructuring'. The concept is not new to the sector, however, the technical detail of creating an operational VAT group and linking it securely, safely and effectively to the practical implementation through contract novation in a way that optimises the benefits, has been the missing part of the jigsaw. Without the complete package of both restructuring and implementation being securely in place, the process is, at best, unlikely to optimise VAT potential and, at worst, could lead to business exposure in tax, legal and regulatory terms.

However, when correctly structured and implemented, the process has the potential to unlock huge financial gain. It is important to emphasize that there are a number of key points which must be addressed before embarking upon restructuring to ensure that it is robust and secure for any care organisation. Firstly, the entire restructure must be supported by legal, regulatory and tax counsel. Full disclosure to HMRC of the impact of restructuring on a group's VAT liability must be considered, and any party carrying out such a process must understand, and be fully conversant with, the impact of HMRC's DOTAS regulations in relation to tax avoidance. This is of paramount importance.

As well as a safe and efficient technical restructure, the crucial element of the process, and that which may have been considered as the 'missing piece' of the jigsaw and a stumbling block for operators in the past, is successful and thorough implementation. It is here that we see how our specialist knowledge not just of VAT, but also a thorough understanding of funding streams and a history of positive dialogue and trust with local authorities and CCGs reaps its rewards. Coupled with this, it is our education of finance (purchase and sales ledger) personnel within the care operation, and our training in best practice and billing methodology advice which all combine to make implementation a success. A robust implementation strategy and project management approach which is firmly embedded in the finance function serves to streamline the entire operational fee contracting process.

In an uncertain post Covid-19 operating landscape, the immediate financial uplift available to operators through a sound and well-linked restructuring and implementation incorporating contract novation is of huge significance. We estimate that it is likely to inject an additional £1 billion into the sector if one also considers the potential for retrospective VAT recovery in respect of CAPEX incurred 4 years prior to VAT registration. Even if the ultimate goal of zero-rated status for the sector is eventually achieved, a combined restructuring and novation compliments and sits well alongside (rather than conflicts with) this aim. In terms of moving towards Post Covid-19 sustainability, the opportunity presented by restructure/novation offers a financially challenged sector a very positive step forward.

If you would like further advice regarding this opportunity, or if you would like us to prepare a free, no obligation cost benefit analysis for your company, then please contact:

**Rob Burton**  
**Managing Director**

Email: [rob@vatsol.com](mailto:rob@vatsol.com)

Office: 0114 280 3630

**Clare Newbould**  
**Business Development Manager**

Email: [clare@vatsol.com](mailto:clare@vatsol.com)

Mobile: 07905 506 909

**VAT Solutions**  
The Mansion House, 19 Kingfield Road  
Sheffield, S11 9AS



THE INTELLIGENT APPROACH  
TO HEALTH & HYGIENE

## Getting Brexit Ready on January 1st 2021

Here at Wightman and Parrish we have been working with the Government since July to try and get ready as we can be. Our plans are at an advanced stage and stock levels are already increasing. However we know that every “normal” Christmas and New Year we are hit by a spike of high demand. This is in the lead up to Christmas and then again at the start of January as everyone comes back from holidays.

This year will be different, as on top of Christmas, we have effects from:

- Brexit
- Covid-19
- A supply chain that is still fragile
- Increased online shopping (the UK logistics network is already struggling)

Having considered all the factors, we are suggesting that the best way forward is for our clients to do what they always do and plan their last December order and their first January order, but to do this in October. This avoids stockpiling and means that they can focus on other matters, in the knowledge that they have orders booked for Christmas and New Year demand.

### How can Wightman and Parrish help?

Our Client account managers are ready to look our client’s normal purchases and help place orders that will cover needs for December and January. Nobody in our market has faced a Christmas, with Brexit and Covid-19, so it makes sense that we plan as much as we can to ensure that we can support our clients.

**Contact** Stuart Durand, Director of Sales

stuart.durand@w-p.co.uk or call 01323 445001 / 07967 362308

# Surrey Care Association



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Supporting Social Care Providers in Surrey

## GOV.UK BREXIT HELP AND ADVICE

*CLICK THE LINKS BELOW FOR FURTHER SUPPORT*

**UK Transition Period**

**Post transition Period in Care**

**How Healthcare Providers can prepare for January 1st.**

**Actions for Adult social care providers**

# Surrey Care Association



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Supporting Social Care Providers in Surrey