

Bupa care home residents set to 'get into reading' with special reading aloud groups

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Bupa has joined forces with charity The Reader Organisation to encourage its care home residents to 'get into reading' with special reading aloud groups.

The 'Get into Reading' groups will be piloted in eight Bupa care homes (<http://www.bupa.co.uk/care-homes>) for six months from April 2011. Get into Reading aims to bring the benefits of reading aloud and of social interaction to people in health and care environments, such as residential homes (<http://www.bupa.co.uk/individuals/care-homes/types-of-care/residential-care>) or homes offering nursing care (<http://www.bupa.co.uk/individuals/care-homes/types-of-care/nursing-care>).

Each group will enjoy shared reading led by a project worker from The Reader Organisation for an hour each week. Members will discuss what's being read as they go along, and relatives, staff and members of the local community will be welcome to join in as well. Studies show that literature can have a healing or therapeutic effect on readers, helping them to identify with characters and situations in books or to be 'taken out of themselves' by the story.

The Reader Organisation's experience has shown that short stories and poetry have proved most beneficial for people with dementia. The project will ensure that Bupa care home staff members will be trained to deliver read-aloud groups themselves. Following assessment of the pilot, Bupa plans to offer groups to its 305 homes nationally as part of its industry-leading Activities programme.

Siobhan Drane, Bupa Care Services community manager said: "We are really pleased to be working with The Reader Organisation to deliver 'Get into Reading'. We hope that these reading aloud groups will reignite a passion for literature in our residents, spark a new interest or offer an opportunity for reminiscence. We believe our residents will benefit from the positive effect literature can have on wellbeing."

Jane Davis, TRO founder and director, added: "This pilot with Bupa is a great opportunity to spread the benefits of Get Into Reading and bring shared reading into the heart of care home culture. We've been running groups in care homes since 2006 and our evaluations have told us that the groups improve mood, decrease agitation and increase levels of concentration and social interaction."

About Bupa Care Services:

Bupa Care Services runs 305 nursing and residential homes in the UK and cares for almost 18,500 people. Bupa's homes are open to everyone - with over 70 percent of UK residents receiving state funding. Bupa is the only company to offer Alzheimer's Society-trained Dementia Champions in its UK specialist care homes and over 25% of its beds in the UK are registered for specialist dementia care. Bupa Care Services employs over 27,000 people and owns care homes in Spain, Australia, and New Zealand

About Bupa Group:

Bupa's purpose is to help people lead longer, healthier, happier lives. A leading international healthcare group, it offers personal and company health insurance, run care homes for older people and hospitals, and provide workplace health services, health assessments and chronic disease management

services, including health coaching, and home healthcare.

With no shareholders, Bupa invests its profits to provide more and better healthcare. It is committed to making quality, patient-centred, affordable healthcare more accessible in the areas of wellness, chronic disease management and ageing.

Employing nearly 52,000 people, Bupa has operations around the world, principally in the UK, Australia, Spain, New Zealand and the USA, as well as Hong Kong, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, India, China and across Latin America.

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