

My Working Day

Kay Keelan is the Credit Controller for National Learning Network at Head Office in Dublin.



SHARE AN OFFICE WITH

Nora McDonald, Creditors Co-ordinator, and we start around 7.45am with a quick chat over coffee and biscuits. I see my job as a resource to centres and Head Office. The first thing I do is check my emails. You'd be surprised how many people work late so I try to reply promptly. I check queries with regional and centre bookkeepers and liaise with my counterparts in RehabCare and Rehab Enterprises. I'm quite task-oriented but I also enjoy dealing with so many wonderful people.

The arrival of the post is my big thrill of the day – I love getting the money in! I prepare a bank lodgement and write up my cash receipts book. I follow up unpaid invoices and set up new accounts. We have to follow quality standards to ensure information is complete and that we account for everything. Then mid-morning, Nora and I have a coffee and pastry at our desks.

Finance's work culminates in the year-end accounts, finishing in late January. Then the auditors come in for six weeks. Month-end is always very busy too but doing the bank reconciliations is one of my favourite tasks – so orderly.

Nora and I have a brief lunch-break and listen to political developments on the radio – we're on opposite sides!

Once, Nora and I did a parachute jump for Rehab. It was brilliant fun, though the high wind took Nora off the plane's wing before she could count 1-2-3! I found the sensation of falling through the sky heart-stopping – the pull of the parachute brought out a bit of a swear word but the rest was wonderful, only too short.

I've worked for Rehab for 26 years. I've great admiration for how it's developed. Back then, we produced goods; in National Learning Network now the focus is on training and is completely client-centred. I try to ensure that monies come in on time because we rely on our funding to carry on the fantastic work done in our centres.

I try to finish work by 5.30pm and go home to my three cats and my garden, which is a great source of relaxation. ■





Jenny Brewer is an Acting Sister in The Chaseley Trust in Eastbourne.



THE CHASELEY TRUST IS divided into two floors and I'm Acting Sister for the first floor which has 29 residents. If I'm on an early shift, I start with a handover from the night staff at 7am. The day staff does the morning drug round and changes dressings. I allocate the carers, taking into account what's in the residents' diary for the day – social engagements, visitors and hospital appointments – and discuss any issues that have come up overnight. A GP visits every day so we have to be ready to address any problems. Every six months we have a full review of care which involves staff preparing reports on each resident.

There's an Air Show each August and the staff fight over who works that weekend as Chaseley has a view the nearby Grand Hotel would kill for! Last year the Tornado Pilots came in to see us as we're linked to the Veterans' Association.

Chaseley was set up for ex-service personnel but, in the last ten years, we have moved to taking people with neurological conditions and acquired brain injury. There's a 70:30 ratio of men to women, ranging in age from 19 to 97 from all across the country.

Training and ensuring our nursing development is up to date is very important here. It's an extremely supportive environment. Everyone pulls together and we take great pride in our work.

I've worked at Chaseley for three years. I heard about it from my daughter, who is a carer here. I like my job because it's challenging – you can't get away from that – but it's rewarding because you build up a relationship with each resident. In a hospital, once someone is discharged, you rarely hear of them again. Our longest resident was here for over 45 years.

I get home around 3pm. Both my daughters are getting married this year so it's just me, my husband and the dogs, which I sometimes bring to work. The residents love to see them. ■