

a care service with a heart



For over five years Günter Schippel has filled an important gap in providing a special caring service for the elderly or ill. The frequently asked question "do I have to go back to my own country when I get ill or old?" is solved by Günter, who provides a great deal of support and help in a variety of ways.

What do you offer in the way of care services?

We offer an all round service for both elderly and ill people who either live here or spend their holidays here. We can offer medical care treatment, washing and dressing the patient, organising the household, shopping, excursions to the airport and hotel transfers for tourists, anything and everything that makes life more comfortable for the patient and their family, and we speak German, English and Spanish. At the moment we are working basically with residents, mostly elderly, disabled or ill, however we can also offer very individual services depending on the needs of the patient, we can help in all situations of day to day living.

How do you initially make contact with your patients?

I personally visit any patient who is interested in my service, this way I can discuss and assess the situation. At these first meetings I always take time, sometimes two or three hours. The reason for this is that the better you get to know the problems, the faster and better you can find a solution

Your motto is "Care service with a heart". What does that mean?

It means that we try to establish a good working relationship with the patient, not just your average care system. For example after doing our job we will stay for a cup of tea or coffee, listen to what they have to say, give them a bit of company if they wish. This personal contact is very important especially because so often the



Günter Schippel

patients have moved away from their own country and away from their families and relatives. The way we work, and the time we spend, is basically governed by the German care service regulations, however we always spend extra time on top of this to make sure that the patients are contented and experience being well looked after. We try to give the patients the feeling that just because they may be older it doesn't mean that we are not there to give them the support and care that they deserve.

Does a health insurance system pay for your services?

It rather depends on the treatment that is needed, they pay for some of the services. We always discuss the possibilities of getting money from the insurance system, and we can help them with any formalities. With an adequate medical report for example it is possible to get special care money. We work closely with the local doctors who help us with all our medical problems. Other services like shopping or excursions do have to be paid by the patient.

Does a patient have to book your services in advance or can you also act spontaneously?

We always try to be as spontaneous and flexible as possible, for example if someone has an accident and needs help for a little while, we are there. We also offer care services for people who want to go on holiday but need extra help. Right now I am caring for a 17 year old boy who has muscular dystrophy. Together with his

family we organised everything from the flight to the hotel - we even did an excursion programme with a special bus. All that made it possible for this boy to spend a fantastic holiday here on Lanzarote. I always say "nothing is impossible" and up to now I have managed to fulfill the desires and wishes of my patients. At the same time we also care for people with chronic illnesses who need to be visited every day.

Tell us about your care service experiences with European residents.

Many patients that I have got to know and have worked with, have lived on this Island for many years and do not want to go back and live in their home country. For them the Island is now their home and they want to keep it that way. For this reason I always say that anybody who wants to stay here can, no matter how old. We already have three flats where we care for patients, and to improve our services, together with some German investors, I am planning to build here on Lanzarote a home for elderly people which will be fully equipped. This will make it easier to spend the autumn of your life in comfortable surroundings on the Island. On top of this we offer house emergency systems operating 24 hours a day, all over the Island. In case of an emergency we can speak over this system directly with the patient, enabling us to organise help immediately - speed is often critical. These systems offer a great deal of comfort and security especially to those who live by themselves.

Thank you very much, Mr Schippel.