

# CareTalk

The voice of excellence in social care

Let's Talk Social Care! | Issue 81 | May 2019

## Dementia Matters



**DEMENTIA TODAY**  
Paul Edwards, Dementia UK

**RECRUITMENT AND  
RETENTION MATTERS**  
Anchor Hanover

**WHAT KEEPS ME  
AWAKE AT NIGHT**  
Sara Livadeas, Fremantle Trust

**STOP THE PRESSURE**  
Ruth May, NHS

Marking World Autism  
Awareness Week

See page 22 for full feature

“

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PROMOTING ADVOCACY PARTNERSHIPS WITH INFORMAL CARERS PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST



**Welcome to the May issue of Care Talk which focuses on Dementia Matters.**

As I write this in the aftermath of the tragic fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral, President Macron has asked French citizens to come together and move beyond the recent political turmoil that has resulted in violent street protests. Unity is very much the theme as we celebrate Dementia Action Week (20th - 26th May), and see communities come together to improve the lives of people living with dementia.

Receiving a dementia diagnosis for a spouse, parent or relative can be a bewildering and frightening experience and will strike a chord with many of our readers who support people in their own homes. In her piece on page 6, Julia Jones, co-founder of John's Campaign, explores why it is essential to make radical but necessary changes in dementia care at end of life.

Following last year's announcement from Matt Hancock on the inclusion of musical activities in care, Grace Meadows from The Music for Dementia 2020 campaign, looks at how a society that utilises the power of *Making Music* (page 9), can transform how we care for people living with dementia.

Promoting understanding is key to breaking down barriers for people living with dementia. A great example of this is Great British Care Awards winner Amanda Odd from Athena Healthcare Group. In our feature *Sharing knowledge With Force* (page 46), we see how Amanda works in partnership with her local police force to remove stigma and promote understanding in this area.

Enjoy this issue and please do keep your news and views coming in.

Lisa



**Circulation List**

Has this month's Care Talk been read by all your staff? Use our list to be sure!

- Chief Executive
- Managing Director
- Registered Manager
- Supervisor
- Care Staff
- Ancillary Staff
- Service Users
- Families

# Dementia matters

**Over the last 15 years there has been enormous progress in how the health and care system responds to the challenge of supporting people living with dementia. We have moved from a situation where the word dementia was a taboo, to one where there is increasing acknowledgement that people living with dementia can have a good life, if they are properly supported both by health and social care and also by the wider society.**

One of the great success stories has been the development of the Dementia Friends programme, which has seen well over a million people trained as dementia friends and this has translated into more understanding and better services within local communities. People living with dementia have the same rights, aspirations and desires as the rest of us, and what we need to do is to deliver a society within which people who are living with dementia and their families can live well.

*“We need a Commissioner who can call Government and service providers to account when they see ageism.”*

One of the most powerful things about Dementia Friends, has been the way in which it has addressed how to support people living with dementia, not only in health and social care, but more importantly in the places where they will spend much more of their lives. It is great to see supermarkets, banks, leisure clubs, transport providers and libraries leading the way in developing better understanding of how to support people living with dementia and ensuring their services are as dementia friendly as possible.

I was recently talking to a person who had early onset dementia and I asked her, what in her view, was the biggest challenge to Living Well? Without hesitation she said *“the attitudes and ignorance of other people who do not understand dementia and how it affects me”*. This interaction proved to me that we have come a long way in improving attitudes, but there is still a long way to go.

Underpinning much of the stigma and negativity attached to dementia is the fact that it is a condition that primarily affects older people. There is a stark reality that our society is institutionally ageist and many institutions of Government and state, find it difficult to deal with older people and still more so, people living with dementia. If we are going to improve things across society, we have not only got to ensure



**Professor Martin Green**  
 Chief Executive, Care England  
 DH: Independent Sector  
 Dementia Champion



that our communities and our services are dementia friendly, but we have also got to ensure that our society stops being ageist.

Care England recently brought together a group of leading thinkers in the field of ageing and we concluded that many of the rights and entitlements that were available to older people were not being delivered because of ageism in the system. We have concluded that we need to have a structural way of challenging this. In Wales, they have a Commissioner for Older People, who has structural power to ensure that both the system and the Government deliver support to older people on an equal basis with other groups. We have had for many years, the Equality and Human Rights Act, but this seems to have had little impact on ageism.

*“One of the great success stories has been the development of the Dementia Friends programme.”*

I believe we need a Commissioner with statutory powers, who can call Government and service providers to account when they see ageism. This is a role that should be fulfilled by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, but they have singularly failed to deliver equality of access to services in health and social care.

# Dying with dementia



**Julia Jones**  
Co-founder  
John's Campaign

**My mother died just before Christmas in the dementia nursing suite where she had lived for the previous two and a half years. She was 94 and had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's and vascular dementia almost ten years previously.**

It was early in the morning and I was lying next to her, listening, as her breathing stopped. I have never been with anyone before as they died. It was so gentle it took me a moment to understand what had happened. Then I called out to my brother, who was asleep elsewhere in the room 'Mum's not breathing anymore' and we listened quietly in the silence. She was gone.

Soon I got up and went to fetch the nurse. She had been such a source of strength earlier in the night when Mum's breath was gurgling horribly. She had been ready with the necessary medication and had administered it so efficiently and also correctly, getting a senior carer from elsewhere in the home to assist and monitor what she was doing.

Mum's skin was breaking down by this time so the night and day staff had had to liaise over the routines of turning Mum, moisturising and protecting her. All this was new to us, they needed to explain what they were doing every step of the way while we watched anxiously, determined that there should be no additional distress for Mum, that she should be touched and moved with the utmost gentleness and respect.

Not that we doubted them. The regulars had become our friends and the two agency carers who were on duty that night were equally professional and humane. They cared for the dying as part of their job (what an amazing job!) but they never forgot that, for us, losing our mother was a one-off.

The end-of-life drugs had been prescribed a few days earlier when we had made a definite refusal for Mum to be taken into hospital. She had been failing to fight off an infection so could have been given anti-biotics intravenously and also re-hydrated. But Mum had always made it clear that she didn't want to go to hospital and (fortunately) a previous GP had helped her complete a Preferred Place of Care form which gave everyone the official 'permission' to let her die where she had been living. The dementia suite was by now her home. Most people want to die at home.

**Julia Jones and Nicci Gerrard**





After Mum died my brother described it as a 'textbook' death. What had made it so?

**Relationships and communication:**

We were lucky, we had been building these over two and a half years but this was still a testing moment. It was crucial that we were given clear explanations - about the use of a syringe driver, for instance - and time to consider these.

**Space:**

Mum was in the right place for her and we were welcome to be there too. We had privacy when we needed it but there was always support available.

**Pre-planning:**

The preferred place of care form and respect by the doctors for our knowledge of mum's wishes was crucial. She could no longer express herself in words but when she stopped eating and drinking it was clear she was ready to die. It would have been so wrong to move her then.

**Aftercare:**

We welcomed the expertise of the home management in making arrangements for doctor's certificate, undertaker etc but even more we were touched by universal expressions of sadness and of sympathy and the continuing respect for Mum's body.

These are not difficult things. They take time, a clear understanding of priorities and the shared belief that every death matters to us all.

*“They never forgot that, for us, losing our mother was a one-off.”*

Julia Jones is co-founder of John's Campaign, a UK-wide movement which advocates for the unrestricted welcome and involvement for the family carers of people living with dementia.

For more information visit <https://johnscampaign.org.uk/#/>

# Dementia today



**Paul Edwards**  
Director of Clinical Services  
Dementia UK

**Firstly, we need to understand what dementia is at its most literal level. As a neurodegenerative condition, it causes alterations to the brain which can lead to behavioural changes, memory loss and ultimately death. Some people are confused about the differences between dementia and Alzheimer's. Dementia is an umbrella term encompassing over 200 different subtypes, of which Alzheimer's is the most common. In addition to this, some people are unaware that there are subtypes which affect much younger people. It's also not solely down to genetics and affects each family differently.**

*“The impact of dementia on families means we should help them to not be too hard on themselves.”*

Families are in urgent need of clarity around dementia. They come across myriad emotional and practical challenges; from managing the unpredictable behaviour of a diagnosed relative, to asking questions on financing care or end of life needs. Social isolation affects them hugely as they avoid meeting friends and family through fear of how others may perceive a diagnosis of dementia, or simply because their demanding caring responsibilities give them no time. The impact of dementia on families means we should help them to not be too hard on themselves, and see that dementia is a growing problem which shouldn't be ignored, or stigmatised. We should also make them aware that there is support out there from dementia specialists like Admiral Nurses, who can help them live confidently and with less fear in the face of the condition.

With society on the verge of a workforce crisis, employers need to be providing clarity around the condition as well. Recent statistics from Carers UK shows that over two million people have left work as a result of the emotional toll of caring. Whilst these figures do not exclusively relate to people with dementia, they show the scale of the problem. Many people within this bracket are sandwich carers, which means

they have the dual responsibility of caring for an older relative as well as a child. ONS statistics have further highlighted the struggles faced by this silent generation of carers with over a quarter now facing depression and stress. The impact of dementia for employers means encouraging open door policies at work, where no one should have to put on the pretence that they're getting by; it also means having flexible working hours in place and a carers policy which clearly enshrines the rights of our workforce carers.

*“The impact of dementia for employers means encouraging open door policies at work.”*

And what about the Government's clarity around dementia? In a clear lack of compassion and understanding of the true scale of dementia faced by society, the long-awaited social care Green Paper has been marred by yet more delays. It is hoped that this document will introduce ways to narrow the widening gap between the separate health and social care systems. Many people with dementia have their complex needs addressed by the healthcare system, when there is a growing body of evidence showing how early interventions through social care can lead to healthier, happier and longer lives. Dementia means that the Government should be investing in care and support so that people facing the condition no longer fall between the social and healthcare gap.

*“Government should be investing so that people facing the condition no longer fall between the social and healthcare gap.”*

If we truly want to overcome one of the greatest health issues of our time then we need a concerted effort across society; families, friends, employers and the Government need to wake up to what dementia clearly means.

This article first appeared on the Open Access Government website.

# Making music



UF | THE UTLEY  
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**Grace Meadows**  
Programme Director of The Utley  
Foundation's Music for Dementia 2020  
campaign and Senior Music therapist  
at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital,  
London.

**A society that utilises the power of music can transform how we can support and care for people living with dementia. Music is an evidence-based tool for the health and care sectors which can help to personalise dementia care. It's ability to bring joy, enliven, stimulate and bring people together can bring radical change to environments and relationships.**

Our health and care sectors are facing extraordinary levels of demands and pressures as we find ourselves living longer but not necessarily aging well. The strain can cause our workforces to become exhausted and close to burnout, both mentally and physically, ultimately impacting on the quality of care offered. This is where music can have a fundamental role in transforming care.

The music and dementia sector has recently received a major boost with the long-awaited launch of [www.musicfordementia2002.com](http://www.musicfordementia2002.com). This dynamic hub demonstrates how music, in its rich and broad variety of forms, is essential for people living with dementia and their carers. It carries the vital role of showcasing how music can be fully embedded in the culture of care and campaigns for music to be integrated in all dementia care pathways. It encourages people to collaborate and demonstrate transforming local and national dementia care through music.

The emergence of the website comes directly from the recommendations laid out in the International Longevity Centre's report on Music and Dementia. There was a call to action to create a centralised and interactive hub of information that focuses on music and dementia.

The Utley Foundation is the charitable trust behind Music for Dementia 2020. It is creating a taskforce of stakeholders across music, dementia, health and social care sectors; from people living with dementia through to MPs. The aim is to fully utilise music to improve quality of life for people living with dementia.

The report suggests that research, evidence and musical expertise is disparate and fragmented across the UK. However, music-making does happen in people's homes, communities, concert halls, care settings, hospitals and hospices. And yet, there are many places where there is currently little or no activity. The patchiness of provision may be due to a variety of factors but it's the campaign's aim to change this to ensure parity of offers across the UK.

The Utley Foundation is supporting the excellent work that is already happening to create wider access for people with dementia. This includes initiatives such as Live Music Now, Playlist for Life, Music in Mind and Together in Sound. Organisations such as these are working to create sustainable models for change. We want people living with dementia and those caring for them to access a range of musical activities, from playlists and performances, to interactive, participatory music-making and music therapy. Many are already available but practitioners and services need support to grow across UK regardless of postcode.

In line with the NHS' personalised care agenda people living with dementia and their carers should be able to make choices about what types of musical activities they want to participate in.

The Music for Dementia 2020 team are encouraging organisations to share the messaging - helping to increase awareness and understanding that for people living with dementia, music is a necessity, not a nicety and increase delivery of their musical offers.

We must continue to increase awareness and understanding of the role that music has in enhancing and enriching care. To support care providers to embed music into their services and care pathways. To encourage provision and choice and ensure we are providing the best possible person-centred care for people living with dementia.



*"Music is an evidence-based tool for the health and care sectors."*

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# Informed decisions

## The Importance of Information for Personal Budget Holders



### REFORM

**Dr Joshua Pritchard**  
Researcher  
Reform

**Dr Joshua Pritchard is a Researcher at Reform, an independent, non-party, public services think tank that focuses on achieving better public services and delivering value-for-money in the UK. He recently co-authored a report on personal budgets in public services.**

When the NHS recently announced their plans to roll-out personal health budgets to 200,000 people by 2025, it became clear that the large-scale use of personal budgets would no longer be confined to social care. Coupled with pilot schemes in maternity care, rehabilitation, and unemployment, this drive for personalised public services could see almost a million personal budgets in use across England by 2025.

*“Only half of adult social care personal budget holders said their local authority had made it “easy”.*

The scale of this expansion means there is an urgent need to understand how to make personal budgets (i.e. the ring-fenced allocation of money from a government body or local authority to help an individual meet their assessed needs) work for everyone - not just recipients of personal budgets, but the staff and providers tasked with supporting them.

The latest report by *Reform* think tank aims to achieve this.<sup>1</sup> Drawing upon the experiences of the 500,000 people with long-term social care needs who already benefit from a personal budget, the report highlights several key areas that are crucial to get right for personal budgets to be successful.

One such issue is ensuring that personal budget holders receive adequate information to effectively purchase their own services. Research by the National Audit Office found that a failure to provide this could lead to worse outcomes for service users or poor value-for-money.<sup>2</sup> A survey by Think Local Act Personal similarly revealed that only half of adult social care personal budget holders said their local authority had made it “easy” to get the right information to choose and purchase their care and support.<sup>3</sup>

Solving this problem requires a two-pronged approach.

First, there need to be improvements in the digital information made available to personal budget holders about what services and goods are available in their local areas, particularly given the “digital by default” approach of many local authorities.<sup>4</sup> The implementation of a “digital standard” for local service directories would be an effective way of guaranteeing a minimum quality across different local authorities and reducing the “postcode-lottery” of information for citizens. The seven million pounds Local Digital Fund has already begun to support local councils in sharing expertise and improving the digital services they offer, including around local service directories.<sup>5</sup> More local authorities should engage with shared improvement schemes to ensure that no areas and citizens are left-behind.

However, whilst online information could assist many personal budget holders, it is not a perfect solution. Many individuals can be “digitally excluded” due to poverty, age, or disability.<sup>6</sup>

Frontline and administrative staff must therefore be upskilled to better understand their obligations regarding personal budgets in social care. Yet evidence from previous schemes suggests that staff can struggle to gain or pass on information, due either to inexperience or being overworked.<sup>7</sup> A decade of austerity has further reduced the amount of time available for social care workers to undertake additional training.<sup>8</sup>

By making them available online, the accessibility of existing training schemes for staff could be greatly improved, such as the one-day course offered by the Social Care Institute of Excellence.<sup>9</sup> There also needs to be a greater engagement with peer-to-peer advocacy groups such as Independent Living Advisors who can share their knowledge with personal budget holders at no additional cost to the individual.<sup>10</sup>

Whilst personal budgets may improve outcomes for citizens, it is crucial that we learn the lessons from their use in social care before rolling them out into new areas of public services. Ensuring that personal budget holders are properly supported increases the chances of them receiving more effective and better value services, but only if they are given the information necessary to make informed decisions.

<sup>1</sup><https://reform.uk/research/proceed-caution-what-makes-personal-budgets-work>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Personalised-commissioning-in-adult-social-care-update.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>[https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/\\_assets/Resources/Personalisation/TLAP/Paper5TakingStockMovingForwards.pdf](https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Personalisation/TLAP/Paper5TakingStockMovingForwards.pdf)

<sup>4</sup><https://reform.uk/the-reformer/personal-budgets-preventing-wheel>

<sup>5</sup><https://localdigital.gov.uk/fund/>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.poverty.ac.uk/report-social-exclusion-disability-older-people/growing-problem-%E2%80%9Bdigital-exclusion%E2%80%99>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.carersfederation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Personal-budget-report-M-Larkin.pdf>

<sup>8</sup>[https://www.supportsolutions.co.uk/blog/care\\_and\\_support/adult\\_services/social\\_workers\\_are\\_inadequate\\_with\\_personal\\_budgets.html](https://www.supportsolutions.co.uk/blog/care_and_support/adult_services/social_workers_are_inadequate_with_personal_budgets.html)

<sup>9</sup><https://www.scie.org.uk/training/careact/personal-budgets-direct-payments>

<sup>10</sup><http://pendereltrust.org.uk/>

# Recruitment and retention matters



**Sam Leonard-Rawlings**  
National Learning and  
Development Manager  
Anchor Hanover

**Two big challenges for any care provider is recruiting the right people in sufficient numbers in an environment of many negative perceptions of care, and then retaining these staff.**

The demand for care home places has never been so great due to the country's ageing population but the challenges faced by the sector are equally huge: there will be a predicted shortfall of 1.1m social care workers by 2037.

Our research has shown the factors affecting this are society undervaluing social care with 22 per cent think social care work isn't valued by government. Men see care as a woman's job with 78 per cent of men being unlikely to think about a career in adult social care.

At Anchor Hanover we know things such as statutory benefits aren't the answer - no candidate ever says: "You get the amount of holidays or pay required by law, give me a job!" In fact, we were already paying above the actual living wage in some care jobs long before the government made this mandatory. The benefits we offer, such as shopping discounts and refer a friend scheme, are welcome but of secondary importance. What is crucial is that people join us because of what we do, our values, behaviours and culture.

We are always looking for opportunities to talk about the vast number of career paths within care. We work closely with educators, parent groups and the Department of Work and Pensions as well as the media.

We know there's a lot of work to be done and we make time to listen to our local communities so we can work out the solutions. We have taken this local approach to identity where we have the biggest challenges. There are fewer men in care roles in north England, for example, so we know to put more effort there.



Little soldiers at Elizabeth Court



*“We never underestimate the value of a role model who are great advocates of what they do.”*

We never underestimate the value of a role model, identifying colleagues who enjoy and are successful in their job and are great advocates of what they do. This includes men, BAME colleagues and women in leadership roles, and our apprentice ambassadors. They speak to groups or individuals who may never have considered a career in care. And we ensure we celebrate these great staff, nominating them for sector awards so they realise their hard work and commitment is appreciated.

But we have to be honest about what a job in care entails. It has challenges, especially when supporting people with dementia. With this in mind, we revamped our job adverts, and we revised our recruitment toolkits to ensure candidates were given an honest insight into care. The key message is that care is hard work but is so rewarding making a positive difference to the lives of society's most vulnerable members.

Anchor Hanover is England's largest not-for-profit provider of care and housing for older people so all profits are ploughed back into improving our services and training. Once colleagues join, on-the-job training, which is ongoing throughout their time with us, gives them the skills, support and knowledge needed, so they can do a job well in an organisation where they feel they belong. You can't underestimate the importance of ensuring colleagues enjoy their job and feel able to contribute to the best of their ability to help our customers.

We're doing our bit to professionalise the sector. We work hard to ensure that everyone is equipped with the tools to help them with the more challenging aspects of their roles.

Over and above any statutory training, we currently offer more than 30 separate learning sessions, such as eLearning and workshops, to help everyone be their best. These subjects vary from Mental Health Awareness to Commercial Caring which can be accessed through our Anchor Academy or face-to-face events away from the workplace.

Setting out a clear route to a varied and successful career plays an important part in us encouraging people to get into and stay in adult social care and we encourage these opportunities through our in-house talent management programmes.

In addition, we are fully on board with the Adult Health and Social Care Apprenticeship offer. More than 200 people have signed up and we now plan to introduce the Catering Standards, which provides another clear career route within the care sector.

If people leave, we actively seek feedback on their experiences in order to make changes.

Highlighting the rewarding roles and the fun we have in social care is the responsibility of us all, whether talking to friends, family or the media as this helps counteract the misconceptions of care. But it's also our responsibility as employers to give colleagues the training, support and recognition so we can retain this talented workforce and help turn them into ambassadors for the sector.

# Awe-inspiring people



**Karolina Gerlich**  
CEO and Founding Director  
National Association of Care & Support Workers Ltd

**This year I had the privilege, once again, of judging at the Great British Care Awards. I attended the regional event in London, and was lucky enough to judge the category that is the closest to my heart - home care worker.**

The morning was filled with talks by amazing care workers, about the great things that they do at work everyday.

One common theme between them all, was that they felt they were 'just' doing their job, and that care work was a lifestyle and not a career.

***"I was sitting there listening, feeling inspired and humbled by their work."***

A lot of the nominees had no idea who nominated them and didn't even think that they deserved it. I was sitting there listening, and feeling inspired and humbled by their work. I spoke to people that put those they look after before anything else. I heard of bosses that support their staff in making positive change; bosses that pay for taxis to ensure their valued care workers can come in to work and deliver outstanding care.

I interviewed Isabel, who went on to win the national final - who gets to work everyday with severe arthritis, and comes up with great ideas to support people in the forensic mental health setting. It took some probing to get Isabel to admit that many ideas were hers, as she kept on saying 'we' and 'our', since she leads an amazing team.

The afternoon session included Care Innovators who had demonstrated amazing innovations in social care - from new software, to new activities initiatives. It filled me with hope that so many people put such great effort into improving the sector.

The National Finals in Birmingham were even harder to judge, with all the regional winners coming together. This time I was speaking to care co-ordinators. It was very interesting to hear how their duties vary from one care setting to another, and from one provider to another. I learnt and heard a lot about

greatly supported in their personal development, and others were doing jobs of registered managers. All of them are putting an amazing amount of hard work into looking after people every day, to the best of their ability.

***"I wish that the mainstream media would consider broadcasting the Awards."***

Themes of person- and relationship-centred care came up quite often on both judging days.

Passion, commitment and drive to deliver the best care possible - sometimes within very specific confines of a particular care setting or situation - were awe-inspiring.

Judging at the Great British Care Awards is one of the most inspiring, humbling and motivating experiences I ever have.

I wish that the mainstream media would finally consider broadcasting the Awards Gala to show the society that amazing work worth applauding and awards is delivered in social care every day.

Let's fight negative media representations of care workers as low-skilled abusers and thieves. Let's promote and shout out loud about awards like this that show the real face of care work that is highly skilled and can be done only by a special kind of people. Care work that is extremely rewarding but also challenging and difficult; and most of all, care work that puts people first and gets very creative in delivering outstanding care.

***"Judging at the Great British Care Awards is one of the most inspiring and motivating experiences."***

# Supporting couples in care

**Commander Brian Boxall-Hunt, CEO at maritime charity the Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society, discusses why tailored support provided to elderly couples in care is so integral to their wellbeing.**

Moving into a care home setting and accepting that additional support may be needed is a huge decision. This is often made more difficult when there is a long-term spouse or partner to consider. For many that have shared most of their lives together, the desire to remain together in care is natural.

Traditionally, it has often been difficult to support couples with different needs and while every effort is usually made to keep partners together, sometimes they can end up living apart in their later years so the level of care and support needed for both is maintained. However, in the UK, 63 per cent of adults aged 52 or over who have been widowed, and 51 per cent of the same group who are separated<sup>1</sup>, report feeling lonely, highlighting the importance of personalised care strategies for couples to combat isolation and support wellbeing.

*“Traditionally, it has often been difficult to support couples with different needs.”*

Here we share some of our experiences of helping couples that have enabled us to promote a good quality of life.

## **Coupling partner care with individual needs**

More often than not, requirements differ later in life, yet this doesn't mean partners need to be separated. Recognising this, as a deliberate strategy at our care home, Belvedere House in Banstead, we offer shared rooms for couples but when this can't be achieved, we ensure they remain close by.

For example, our dementia annexe, which caters for 36 people, provides a dedicated area where residents receive expert care suited to their needs, yet this is joined on to the rest of the house, limiting the sense of detachment between couples. This ensures residents can maintain relationships as they would at home.

## **Privacy provided**

We have five couples living with us on our Weston Acres estate who have been with us from a few months to 16 years, in the case of our resident and tenant Captain and



**Commander Brian Boxall-Hunt**  
CEO  
Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society



Mrs Graham. One of our couples reside together in shared rooms and the remaining eight are a combination of residents and tenants, the latter living in our 22-unit sheltered housing facility on site. This allows for tenants, who do not require round the clock care, to still live independently on site, with a sense of community on their doorstep, and most importantly, the ability to spend as much time as possible with their loved ones. One of our key values is providing dignified and compassionate care, achieved in part by offering couples privacy when they desire it. By personalising care services, being mindful of gender, culture, religion and relationships, we build trusting relationships between staff and residents, reinforcing the care home setting as comfortable and intimate when needed.

## **Care following bereavement**

The additional benefits of such care mean distress is minimised should a resident pass away. When this does occur, the other member of a couple is readily supported by care home staff who will already know them well. This helps to combat loneliness and feelings of isolation that can follow a bereavement by remaining in a familiar, community setting surrounded by people able to offer support.

All in all, moving into care does not mean that longstanding relationships need to be disrupted; in fact, quite the opposite if the Home provider is flexible. Options such as shared living not only provide tailored support required of care staff, but a comfortable living environment. In the situations where this is not possible, it's imperative to personalise care to couples with different needs and to provide a supportive and compassionate environment for all.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research/>

# Aspects of age



**Clare Jacobs**  
National Officer for the Independent  
Sector and Social Care  
Royal College of Nursing

**A Royal College of Nursing nurse in social care know better than most that age is just a number. In this modern era, our later years can be as dynamic and productive as the start of our lives.**

The evidence of our ageing population is almost exclusively spoken of in hushed, negative tones in the newspapers, but numerous studies show many older people are seeking travel vaccinations and sexual health advice.

However, nurses are all too aware of the complex care needs of older people. A small but significant group require round-the-clock nursing with requirements that can be physically intensive but also ethically challenging.

The history of caring for our older generations is not always an easy one and it's for this reason that the RCN Library and Archive is focusing on the *Aspects of Age* in its latest exhibition. The story of care is shaped by how societies have viewed older people and how we value the role of those that care for them.

So, what can we learn from the attitude of the past as we await the social care green paper, the heralded blueprint to fund social care properly in the future?

*“Nurses working in social care may be interested in a joint event on the *The Joy of Sex beyond 70.*”*

In the nineteenth century, the elderly and chronically ill were often left to the mercy of the workhouse and the Poor Law system. Images of the Poland Street Workhouse in 1809, kindly lent from the Wellcome Collection to the exhibition, show a spartan set of wooden benches and long draughty windows – a world away from modern care homes.

A form of nursing care did exist in these institutions but was delivered by older female inmates. The treatment of older people rapidly became a national scandal and a wave of bad headlines led to the disbandment of the Poor Law in 1929. Local authorities became responsible for those in need of healthcare.

The exhibition shows how pioneering nurses like Matron Eva Huggins pioneered a change for both older people and people with long term conditions. Their enthusiasm wasn't met everywhere, however. Accommodation continued to be substandard and equipment wanting.

As a profession, older people's nursing struggled to detach itself from the low status reputation it had gained over the past century. There was no encouragement for bright young doctors and nurses to pursue older adult care. It was simply not a popular place to be.

*“What can we learn from the attitude of the past as we await the social care green paper?”*

Fast forwards to the second half of the twentieth century and important strides were made. In 1985, the Nursing Development Unity at Tameside Hospital's Department of Care for the Elderly afforded nurses the chance to study and work abroad, refresh skills and use a state-of-the-art onsite library. Innovative as this project was, it couldn't match pace with increasing numbers of frail, older people.

Some futurists claim the first person to live to 1,000 has already been born. While that might be hyperbolic, technological advances that will allow people to lead very long lives may already be in the pipeline. The *Aspects of Age* exhibition will run at RCN headquarters in Cavendish Square until 30 September and throughout the exhibition, RCN members and non-members alike can take part in events throughout the country.

Nurses working in social care may be particularly interested in a joint event on the *The Joy of Sex Beyond 70* and what barriers older people face in continuing a romantic life, and what nursing staff can do support safe sexual expression and intimacy on 23 September in London. People based near Sheffield can enjoy a discussion on the history of care at home presented in partnership with the Queen's Nursing Institute.

It's more important than ever to learn the mistakes and triumphs of our past to ensure a bright future for care.

# Stop the pressure and improve care



**NHS**  
Improvement

**Ruth May**  
Chief Nursing Officer for England  
NHS Improvement

**Almost two-thirds (60 percent) of people living in residential and care homes are at risk of pressure ulcers, and 20 percent will go on to develop them.**

Pressure ulcers are injuries to the skin and underlying tissue caused mainly by prolonged pressure on the skin - and most are preventable.

That's why I encourage you to get involved in our Stop the Pressure campaign, which works with frontline staff to improve standards and reduce harm.

Pressure ulcers are a key indicator of the quality of a person's care: to prevent them, all health and care professionals (including social workers) involved in planning, commissioning and delivering care must be able to spot the risks and take speedy action.

The Health Improvement Network database, which contains anonymised GP patient records from over 500 practices, shows that 153,000 people (7 percent) had pressure ulcers in 2012/13.

Other estimates are higher. Between 400,000 (Posnett et al 2018) and 700,000 patients a year across the UK develop pressure ulcers (Patient Safety First 2013), with the estimated cost of treating them standing at £1.4 million a day (Guest et al 2017).

*“Pressure ulcers are a key indicator of the quality of a person's care.”*

For every ulcer that develops, a person will suffer pain and discomfort. For the most severely affected - or if they are already frail from other medical conditions - a deep pressure ulcer can be life-threatening.

Since 2012 the national Stop the Pressure programme (nationally from 2016) has worked with frontline staff to improve care standards across acute, community and mental health settings. Its prime objective is to reduce pressure development through focused workstreams. The National Wound Care Strategy for England, launched in September 2018, includes Stop the Pressure's work. The strategy is a crucial way of sharing work on preventing pressure with staff in primary care and domiciliary settings and developing new strategies.

*“Involving people and their carers is crucial”*

Pressure ulcers occur everywhere, from people's own homes to acute hospitals. So it's important that everyone in contact with people at risk can advise on preventing them and identify and act when pressure damage does occur. All health and social care staff should be aware of certain risk factors: for example, limited mobility, loss of feeling in part of the body, someone having had a pressure ulcer before, people who have not eaten well for some time, and those with a significant cognitive impairment such as dementia. At each contact, using prompt questions helps in assessing people in their own home or elsewhere.

Involving people and their carers is crucial: offer them written or verbal advice, so they are informed about what they can do to prevent damage - for example, by changing position or being aware of their diet. NICE (2014) suggests providing information about what causes pressure ulcers, early signs to look for, how to prevent ulcers, the effect of having a pressure ulcer on the person's health, and how to use any equipment needed to change position.

Collectively we can make a difference to our clients and patients and to those yet to access our services, by reducing the level of pressure ulcer formation. So get involved in our Stop the Pressure campaign. Reducing by 10% the lowest reported pressure ulcer numbers would mean that 15,000 people a year would not suffer the pain and potential complications that affect their daily lives. That would be a significant achievement.

**#StopThe  
Pressure**

[www.nhs.stopthepressure.co.uk](http://www.nhs.stopthepressure.co.uk)

@STPressure

#StopThePressure

# Making good support even better

**Victoria Neish, Director of Operations and Quality at Affinity Trust, on how the charity is rolling out Person Centred Active Support**



**At Affinity Trust, we've always been proud of the support we provide to people with learning disabilities and autism. Starting to use Person Centred Active Support has given us the tools and training not only to make good support even better, but also to evidence our approach.**

Active Support is about increasing the choice, control and ultimately independence of the people we support, in whatever is happening that day. Being able to demonstrate how we do this using tangible evidence is a great feeling.

We started introducing Active Support in the summer of 2017, when we set up pilots in eight of our locations in England and Scotland, enrolling staff in a training programme run by the Tizard Centre. The success of the pilots led us to start rolling it out from October 2018.

There was a huge amount of excitement when we announced plans to set up pilots. To ensure fairness, we put in place a formal application process, asking all our support teams to submit applications.

We wanted our managers to actively want to do this, and the response we received was overwhelming.

Our Senior Management Team made the final selection of pilots, taking many criteria into account, but mainly ensuring that we were representing a mixture of support provision, as



*“Active Support is about increasing independence of the people we support, in whatever is happening that day.”*



*“We measure the success of Active Support both formally and informally.”*

we wanted to be sure that Active Support would work for all of the people we support.

So far our pilot scheme and initial roll out has seen us introduce Active Support to 26 operational teams, supporting 130 people between them.

At Affinity Trust we measure the success of Active Support both formally and informally.

Formal measures of success include the quality of person-centred plans, internal audits, and regular observations where teams are scored against five engagement measures.

Informally, we meet regularly to discuss the difference that Active Support is making, both to the people we support and to our staff teams.

When we have rolled out Active Support to more teams, we will then look to expand our evidence base to include other data sets that may show how successful Active Support is, such as in reducing behaviours that challenge or improving staff retention.

With the pilot and first phase successfully completed, the application process for the second phase will begin this Spring. The participants will attend formal training with the Tizard Centre in October. We'll be running a number of such programmes, as we train practice leaders and observers, as well as trainers.

This time even our Divisional Directors will be trained as observers. This will give them the information they need to fully support and successfully embed the approach. Having buy-in from all levels is important, and we are very lucky that everyone at Affinity Trust can see the benefits of Active Support.

Active Support is about seeing all daily tasks and interactions as an opportunity to increase choice and control. In doing this, the person that we are supporting is engaged in a meaningful way, hopefully maintaining skills or learning new ones - so naturally we want all of the people we support to be supported in this way.

Through the pilot scheme and the initial roll out, our staff have told us how much they enjoy Active Support too. Our staff have loved watching the people they support grow in confidence and skill, and they get a lot of job satisfaction from that as well.



**Victoria Neish**  
Director of Operations and Quality  
Affinity Trust

# Recognising strengths, creating opportunities



**accomplish.**  
make every day amazing

**Sue Hullin**  
Quality and Service Director  
Accomplish Group

**At accomplish we encourage people to lead a full and valued life, enabling people to live more independently through a programme of active support and engagement, in life opportunities and to be part of the community where they live.**

We believe it is important to listen to the people we support and work with them to identify their personal goals, whilst also listening to their ideas for service improvements. Our commitment to listening has ensured the people we support are central to our person-centred planning strategy.

In 2016 we considered how we could better engage people supported in our service improvements, utilising their strengths and their experience and providing them with opportunity for skill development and paid employment. This led us to launching a new initiative which involved the recruitment of eight of the people we support to be our paid Quality Checkers.

The concept behind this initiative was that the Quality Checkers would work alongside our Quality Auditing team and bring an expert by experience perspective to the audit. They would be well placed to engage with people living in the service being audited and their observations would be judged by their own experience of what good care and support is and thus they would provide valuable insight for us to ensure we are providing the best service possible. Individuals who showed an interest in this initiative received an informal interview and those who were successful received training

for their new role which included auditing skills, safeguarding and confidentiality. They were then buddied up with an experienced auditor.

**John (l) and Ryan (r), Quality Checkers**



This role is particularly valuable to the organisation in conducting cultural audits and viewing the service through the eyes of someone who receives support. This initiative continues each year and has given people confidence in their own skills and has given them valuable work experience. This is what Ryan one of our Quality Checker's had to say about his role, *"Being a Quality Checker has given me purpose. I am so much more confident now in myself. I really enjoy the work and feel I am making a difference"*.

During late 2018 into 2019 accomplish has embarked on a new Safeguarding Awareness and Enablement Project, the aim of which is to provide awareness training for the people we support to ensure that they are fully aware about what abuse means including subtle abuse. We want everyone to know how they can keep safe, and to ensure that they know that they have a right to be safe and free from abuse.

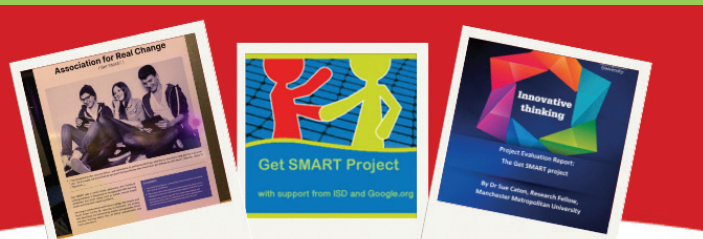
*"Being a Quality Checker has given me purpose."*

We want to ensure that they feel enabled (have the words or communication means) and empowered (have the confidence, within the right culture) to speak up for themselves and for others. This is an exciting co-production project which involves the people we support on the steering committee and as paid co-trainers. As part of this project we are also identifying Safeguarding Champions from amongst the people we support and from within our staff teams. We will be training up trainers and co-trainers to provide Keeping Safe training to everyone we support across all our services. People we support will receive training as co-trainers/facilitators which will be a paid role. This train the trainer training is planned from April 2019 and will then be rolled out to everyone during 2019. This is a great opportunity for the people we support to receive training to train others and to be part of a project that can really make a difference to the lives of everyone we support.

# Get SMART



**Roderick Landman**  
Regional Officer  
ARC England



**Get SMART (Social Media Awareness and Resilience Training) is a user-led project for young people with learning disabilities at risk of radicalisation through social media.**

In 2017, I was astonished to discover that 75 per cent of young people being referred to the Channel<sup>1</sup> element of the Prevent<sup>2</sup> programme on my part of South West England had learning disabilities or autism. Through a previous ARC project on mate crime<sup>3</sup> I knew that these youngsters were much more susceptible to online exploitation, but the scale of it still surprised me.

We had gathered much anecdotal evidence that people with learning disabilities were experiencing a wide range of abuse perpetrated via social media, particularly financial and sexual exploitation. This was at a time when access to the Internet was rare if you had a learning disability (one survey suggested that only one in five had access to a computer) but times have changed.

Our concerns grew following the historic case of Nicky Reilly<sup>4</sup> and the more recent examples of Damon Smith<sup>5</sup> and Lloyd Gunton<sup>6</sup>. Each of these young men came close to perpetrating terrorist acts. All are on the autistic spectrum. All were either groomed or grew their radical ideas online.

In 2018, ARC was awarded funding from ISD and Google.org<sup>7</sup> to support grassroots responses to radicalisation and extremism. We were one of just 22 successful applicants out of over 270, and the 'Get SMART' project was born.

The model we used was adapted from previous work completed on sexual exploitation and mate crime. Teams of young people were recruited from Brook Green Centre for Learning in Plymouth and Petroc College in North Devon. Students discussed the issues from their perspectives,

and invited expert speakers from ISD, Police Prevent leads and in-house safeguarding officers. The meetings led to some fascinating discussions, not just on social media and radicalisation, but on bullying, learning disability, and what it meant to them to have autism. Perhaps the most important insight was that every single student involved in the project preferred his or her life online to the 'real' world.

One student commented, "Real life is terrible, filled with crime and death. I am not happy in real life. Real life is boring. I am invisible in real life. Online I can be seen. I can be whatever I want. There are no limits. I can achieve things. Online is a drug, it numbs the pain that is life." This belief has highlighted a real gap with previous generations, who are the people now educating these students today.

Following their research and discussion periods, the students then used their insights to develop learning materials, both for their peers and professionals who support them. Pilot workshops were held at both sites, which proved hugely successful. One member of staff who attended a workshop said, "The staff have had a lot of training on [Prevent]...What was quite enlightening was to hear about it from the kids' point of view and to hear about how important their online world is to them...I missed out on being the generation that's grown up with computers."

*"We had gathered anecdotal evidence that people with learning disabilities were experiencing a wide range of abuse perpetrated via social media."*

The project was externally evaluated by Manchester Metropolitan University<sup>8</sup>, which proved to be very positive.

ARC is now delighted to be able to share all of the material produced through Get SMART. Our teaching plans, resources and evaluation can be downloaded from our website<sup>9</sup> - feel free to download yours today - and if you would like to know more or share ideas we would love to hear from you.

[rod.landman@arcuk.org.uk](mailto:rod.landman@arcuk.org.uk)

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2017-to-march-2018>

<sup>3</sup><https://arcuk.org.uk/safetynet/>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/3201863/Exeter-terror-bomber-Nicky-Reilly-was-known-as-Big-Friendly-Giant.html>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-40059351>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-43257323>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.isdglobal.org/innovation-fund/>

<sup>8</sup><https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/>

<sup>9</sup><https://arcuk.org.uk/blog/resources-from-the-get-smart-project/>

# Marking World Autism Awareness Week



**Jane Harris**  
Director of External Affairs  
& Social Change  
National Autistic Society

Almost everyone has heard of autism. But far too few people understand what it can be like to be autistic. This is why children, adults and families came together last month to mark World Autism Awareness Week (WAAW) between 1 and 7 April and get people talking about autism. The sheer number of events and activities that took place was encouraging - in schools, social care services, offices and high streets up and down the country.

*“When things go wrong the root cause is often a lack of understanding of autism.”*

## Why we need to improve public understanding of autism

When things go wrong for autistic people and their families, the root cause is often a lack of understanding of autism and what it's like to be autistic. It could be an autistic boy who has been unfairly excluded from school, an autistic woman who has never been able to find a job, or a parent who has spent years fighting for a diagnosis and support for their child.

Better understanding of autism could transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of autistic people. It would help make sure our health service can support autistic patients, improve school staff's ability to teach and support autistic children in schools, and mean that employers know about the small things they can do to attract autistic talent.

## WAAW 2019

This year, we wanted to focus on trying to get the public to understand the challenges autistic people can face and how they can help. So we launched Stories from the Spectrum, a series of blogs highlighting the rich variety of autistic experiences. We heard from five different autistic people about their strengths and challenges that they face. We will be continuing to share stories throughout the year.





1. We often need extra time to process information, like questions or instructions
2. We can feel intense anxiety in social situations
3. We sometimes feel anxious about unexpected changes, like delays and cancellations
4. Many of us find noise, smells and bright lights distressing
5. All of these can lead to us becoming overwhelmed and having a 'meltdown' or 'shutdown'. This can be physically and emotionally debilitating

There was a lot of engagement with MPs, who play a huge role in making sure autistic people can get the support they need. Even before the week started, there was a two-hour debate in the House of Commons drawing attention to issues faced by autistic people, including public understanding, education, employment, health services, and the incorrect inclusion of autism as a 'mental disorder' in the Mental Health Act.

A real highlight of the week was Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, announcing plans for a new autism public awareness campaign launching later this year. He revealed that he wants the campaign to *"improve perceptions of the disability and ensure people are understanding and appreciative of the situations autistic people may find challenging."* This is something we have called for for many years.

The Minister for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP, also got involved. She visited our Birch House service in Godalming, met the people we support there and joined them at a street stall. She also took part in our first ever Understanding Autism session for an MP. We're holding a much bigger session in Parliament on 1 May and are encouraging as many MPs to attend as possible.

Away from Parliament, over 4,000 teachers and parents signed up their schools for free educational resources, like lesson and assembly plans, to help their children and young people learn more about autism. And hundreds of our supporters took part in our Spectrum Night Walks in five different UK cities. The fundraising has helped raise around £250,000 for our charity. This is amazing and will help us continue our work building a society that works for autistic people.

Away from Parliament, over 4,000 teachers and parents signed up their schools for free educational resources, like lesson and assembly plans, to help their children and young people learn more about autism. And hundreds of our supporters took part in our Spectrum Night Walks in five different UK cities. The fundraising has helped raise around £250,000 for our charity. This is amazing and will help us continue our work building a society that works for autistic people.

In Manchester, around 100 people from various businesses attended a special autism and employment event, organised by Auto Trader and Inclusive Companies to celebrate Auto Trader achieving our first ever Autism Friendly Employer Award. It was really encouraging to see so many employers interested in finding out more about autism - and how they can open up the workplace for autistic people.

*"Stories from the Spectrum is a series of blogs highlighting the rich variety of autistic experiences."*

### Conclusion

Our thanks go to everyone who got involved. It was amazing to see so much happening. And don't worry if you missed it - you can find out more about autism at any time by visiting our website. And we'll of course be working all year to make sure these issues remain on the national agenda and lead to real change for autistic people and their families.



# Log my Care launches new premium module for carers



**Log my Care, the care home software provider, has announced the launch of a new premium module. Log my Care - Pro is the first optional premium module for its free care planning software, designed to help care homes streamline their record keeping.**

Through Log my Care, carers can record care notes as they go on any smartphone. Care managers can see an overview of all care work and access all records on a laptop or desktop computer. The new premium module introduces a number of new features including Offline Mode, Instant Notifications, Policies & Procedures storage and a Handover Function.

Offline mode has been designed to enable carers to keep logging care records on the Log my Care app on smartphones, even if Wi-Fi has a weak signal or the internet connection is intermittent. Devices will be able to continue to work offline for up to 24 hours. Once the connection resumes, they will then synchronise back with the Care Office and log all the information recorded.

The new Instant notifications function will send alerts to the main care office as soon as a carer records an incident. This means the manager on shift is notified straight away, no matter where the incident takes place.

Through the Handover Function, Log my Care will group together handover information ready for carers starting the next shift. As an additional benefit, Pro users will now also be able to store documents online related to standard policies and procedures; for example fire, RIDDOR, Data Protection, Impact Assessments, Dress codes, and CQC notifications.

*“Through Log my Care, carers can record care notes as they go on any smartphone.”*

The core system of Log my Care is free for all users. Providers can upgrade to the Pro module through the website or app, and Log my Care are offering a free month trial for all users without the need to add payment or credit card details. Care providers will then pay £20 plus VAT per home per month, or can continue to use the basic version for no cost.

**Reece Welch, Registered Manager at Elizabeth Court Rest Home in East Sussex, worked with the Log my Care team to trial the new version and comments:**

*“Since making the shift from paper to electronic care notes our daily routine has been impacted massively, saving time and increasing accuracy of notes, as well as being able to have an overview of the care as it happens on the dashboard. The Log my Care Team have been excellent in responding to feedback so the Pro version has made this even simpler, with additional features making recording a breeze and offline mode meaning notes can be taken anywhere.”*

**Sam Hussain, Founder of Log my Care, comments:**

*“From the outset we wanted to build a system that makes care planning and recording easy and that can be used by anyone. Technology can really help us, but it can also be frustrating when Wi-Fi suddenly drops. It was really important to us to make a system that offers continuity for care staff, and also enables carers to benefit from technology even if the home they work at is in a location with poor signal.”*

Reece Welch at Elizabeth Court



To find out more and use the system for free, visit [www.LogmyCare.co.uk](http://www.LogmyCare.co.uk)



## Thought Leadership

**STAYING PUT:**  
DEVELOPING DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY  
CARE AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE  
WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY



V O D G

Leading the fight  
against dementia

**Alzheimer's  
Society**



**NCF is the strongest  
voice for the  
not-for-profit  
care sector  
Join us!**



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NCF supports its members to improve social care provision and enhance the quality of life, choice, control and wellbeing of people who use care services. We work directly with not for profit providers of care and support services across the UK offering:

- Expert response to government consultations and engagement with senior politicians and staff
- Innovation focus - influencing the future of the health and social care sector
- Direct support for individual members and their senior teams
- Regular specialist and general forums – bringing together practitioners from across the UK
- Weekly policy and information briefings
- National events spread throughout the year – offering expertise, collaboration and knowledge exchange
- Regular benchmarking surveys on key sector issues
- Opportunities for national and international networking
- Strong relationships with trusted industry partners
- NCF Quality First - a key sector mark of quality
- and so much more...

MEMBERSHIP

• NOT FOR PROFIT

• NETWORKING

• EXPERTISE

• INNOVATION

• QUALITY

• LEADERSHIP

# Enthusiasm for art proves infectious

**The discovery at work of an unexpected outlet for a 54-year-old care worker's dormant artistic talents, has led to a rewarding side-line producing pet portraits for colleagues and friends who admire what she has done at a local supported living service for people with learning difficulties and mental health issues.**

When Bev Holzman started working at Caeronnen, a Llangrannog-based service run by the Regard Group, she was happy to say 'yes' when tenant Angela Hurrell asked if she could draw something for her.

*"For Angela it's art. For another individual it might be nature."*

Bev said: "Angela has mild learning disability and mental health issues and finds art a rewarding outlet.

"As soon as she gets used to you, Angela always asks people if they can draw because she loves colouring in. She's very good at it.

"It started with me just drawing one or two sketches with a bold outline for her use, but 18 months on we now have a huge collection of canvases, many of which adorn the walls at Caeronnen. There are so many we need to rotate them!"

The outlines Bev was drawing for Angela started to attract compliments from her colleagues, which encouraged her to do some art on her own at home.

Bev said: "I started by painting a picture of our beloved cat who had passed away the previous year at the ripe old age of 21. It was a kind of tribute to her. I really enjoyed doing it, and my partner commented on how good it was.

"That inspired me to carry on and I have since produced quite a number of paintings, mainly of pets. I have recently delivered two separate portraits of dogs that I was commissioned to do, and I have two more in the pipeline - another dog and a parrot.

"Angela loves what we do together. She mainly uses colouring pencils or felt-tips, but she enjoys other craft activities as well such as collage.

"We also support Angela to attend HUTS in Newcastle Emlyn every week which is a craft workshop for people with mental health concerns and learning difficulties.

"Helping the people we support to live rewarding lives is a crucial part of what we do. For us it's all about ensuring they get as much out of life as they possibly can and making the most of all avenues available to them.

*"It started with me just drawing one or two sketches but we now have a huge collection of canvases."*

"For Angela it's art. For another individual it might be nature. We provide access to a wide range of interests at an appropriate level and support them to make personal choices that will make them happy."

Bev says she's thoroughly enjoying her job at Caeronnen which started in January 2018 when she relocated from South Wales to West Wales. She had spent the previous 18 months working in social care, before which she had spent 12 years as a teaching assistant, providing one-to-one support for pupils with special needs.

Caeronnen is run by Regard, the UK's third largest private care provider, which supports more than 1,300 people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and acquired brain injuries, employing a dedicated staff of over 2,600 people across 168 sites around the UK.



Angela Hurrell (left) and Bev Holzman

# Pets provide the best dementia care

**Cramlington House and West Farm Care Centre are care homes based in the North East of England, owned and managed by specialist care provider Craig Healthcare. Both homes have a specific dementia care focus, where providing personalised care of the highest quality is the priority.**

Animal therapy plays a key part in the care provided within Cramlington House and West Farm Care Centre. Residents living with dementia have a range of different needs and it's vital specifically designed wellbeing programmes are put in place to ensure each resident receives the care they need.

This includes proactive animal-assisted care initiatives that provide significant benefits including improved mood and overall wellbeing, increased social interaction, decreased feelings of anxiety and sadness, lower blood pressure levels and positive effects on challenging behaviour such as agitation and aggression.

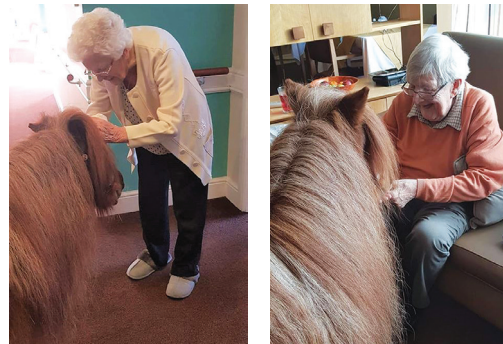
Research shows that regular interaction with animals is a key dementia intervention within care that can improve the overall wellbeing of residents. Evidence shows that even the most solitary and sedentary residents have shown distinct improvements during the time specific pets have been present.

Lucy Craig, Managing Director at Craig Healthcare, said:

*"Animals play such an important part in residents' lives day in, day out. At Cramlington House, we keep pet rabbits, Jack and Irene, who have such a positive impact. One resident in particular has responded incredibly well to the rabbits, developing a close bond with them and spending time caring for them, which has genuinely made him more relaxed and happier."*



Recently, a blind Shetland pony came to meet several residents living with dementia, including those who struggle to communicate and interact. Smurf definitely held an engaged and responsive audience, with residents able to stroke, pet and speak to him which really helped to bring them out of their shell.

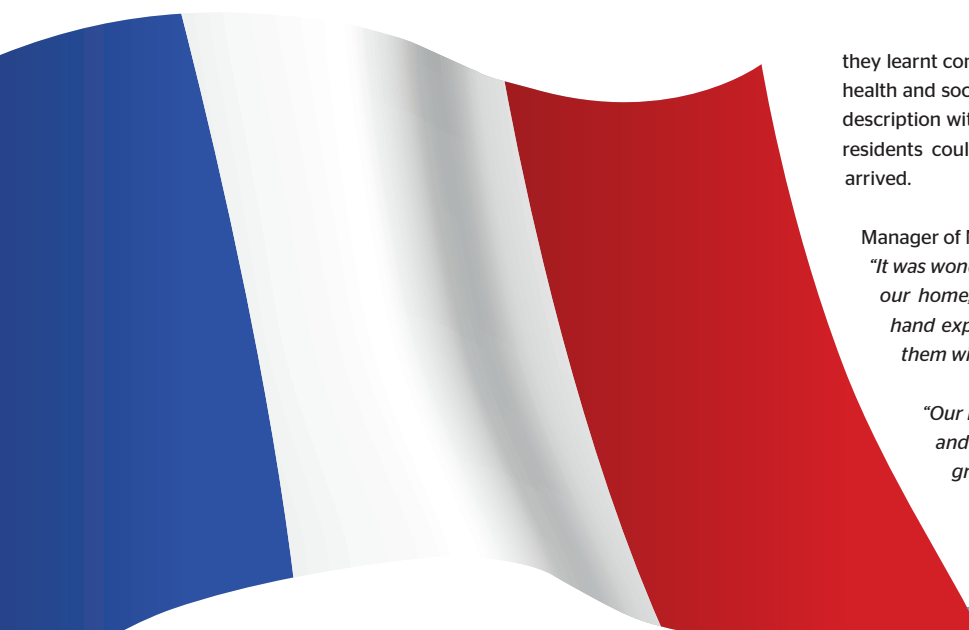


Lucy explained: *"It was amazing to watch the effect Smurf had on the residents. His presence, demeanour and interaction really did lift their spirits, encouraged them to engage with others and created a lovely atmosphere within the home long after Smurf left."*

***"Regular interaction with animals is a key dementia intervention."***

Craig Healthcare's dementia specialist homes also receive weekly visits from dementia friendly dogs who are brought in by specially trained carers to meet and greet residents and spend time with them, as well as visits from non-traditional pets such as lizards, snakes, spiders. Lucy added: *"Interaction with a range of animals, we find, massively boosts the confidence, self-esteem and social skills of those residents living with dementia. Animal therapy is underutilised across the care home sector, which makes us even more determined to demonstrate the important role it plays, especially in dementia care, and its many benefits. Aside from the many physical and mental benefits, animals-assisted therapy also helps to indulge in old memories - most of our residents have owned a pet in their lifetime - and create new ones from the visits and interactions with the animals we bring into our homes, which is vital to do in dementia care provision."*

# The French connection



they learnt communication English with an emphasis on health and social care and sent their CVs and a personal description with a picture to the homes so that staff and residents could get to know them a little before they arrived.

Manager of Mill Lane Nursing Home, John Savage said, *"It was wonderful to welcome two of the students into our home, so that we could give them some first-hand experience of life in a care home to support them with their studies."*

*"Our residents really enjoy meeting new people and during their time with us, they made some great friendships with the young people. They told us that they thoroughly enjoyed their time with us, and they were a real asset to the home."*

**Three Felixstowe care homes have welcomed a group of French students into the homes to help them learn more about working in the care industry.**

The group of four students, aged 17-19, from Lyon, are studying health and social care and are part of the Erasmus programme, which arranges for students to spend time in education and work placements across Europe.

In March, they spent time working in Mill Lane Nursing Home, Foxgrove and Maynell House residential home, working with a number of staff across departments.

The relationship between the homes and the Erasmus programme began in 2017, when the relatives of a resident at Foxgrove approached the homes' Manager to see if they might be interested in accommodating some students as part of a learning experience.

The students worked in the homes throughout March, spending time with members of staff in a range of areas including care, housekeeping and catering and activities, to really understand what life is like in an English care home.

The students are working on their last year of a three-year 'Baccalauréat Professionnel'. Before arriving in England,

*"The students are studying health and social care and are part of the Erasmus programme."*

*"We would be delighted to welcome them back to Mill Lane in the future."*

Mill Lane, Foxgrove and Maynell House are part of the Healthcare Homes Group.



# Championing good food

**Springhill Care Home in Accrington, Lancashire has worked with staff, residents, family members and sector experts including nutritionists to create a new menu to reflect changing dietary needs.**



The menu, which will be available until the winter when new options will be brought in, includes everything from main meals, desserts and snacks, and specialist options for residents who need them.

*“The pair worked to create nutrition champions across the home and its different shift patterns.”*

The new menu was the brainchild of Anne Wareing, a nurse at the home and the nutrition lead, and head chef Dave Laithwaite, who joined Springhill last year.

The pair worked to create nutrition champions across the home and its different shift patterns and services, and met monthly to review options and suggestions. Local producers were also consulted over the menu.

Now the food has been presented to staff, residents, family members and professional contacts at a special tasting event who sampled the new options and gave their feedback.

The new menu, which runs on a four-week cycle, will begin in two weeks. A similar exercise will take place later in the year to create a new autumn/winter menu.

Anne Wareing said: *“Good, wholesome food is such an important part of a healthy lifestyle and a key ingredient of modern care.*

*“We have more residents now than we used to who have extra nutritional requirements, so we decided this was a great chance to overhaul our menu.*

*“Dave looked at all the suggestions and feedback we had over the course of the exercise and has come up with some great ideas that we can’t wait to begin serving up. A lot of thought has gone into the menu, and the feedback was very positive and shows we are moving in the right direction.*

*“Our team is going to continue to meet on a regular basis to ensure the menu remains relevant and regularly updated, and we are looking forward to holding another tasting event at the end of the year when we introduce our autumn-winter menu.”*



*“Good, wholesome food is a key ingredient of modern care”.*



## Care Consultancy Ltd

# Our Services

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Working with providers in maintaining compliance. Working with administrators and insolvency teams to help manage and guide you through a difficult time.

### **Quality Assurance**

Working with services to ensure they provide high quality care. Supporting providers to maintain Good standards of care and work toward Outstanding.

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Supporting both providers and staff in working to the highest standard whilst keeping up with regulatory changes.

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Supporting services, and staff, in preparing for court and tribunal proceedings.

## A little about us

BKR Care Consultancy was founded in 2011 and has since grown to become a leading Care Consultancy firm in the UK.

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WHAT KEEPS ME



AWAKE AT NIGHT

# Sara Livadeas

## Chief Executive, The Fremantle Trust

**I have worked in social care for many years but, having recently been appointed as CEO of a care charity, the Fremantle Trust, and at the time of writing only five weeks into the role, inevitably my mind is on my new organisation and the challenges that face us going forward. I'd like to say that I am sleeping well but it would not be true!**

*“Working out how to increase the wages of our colleagues in the services definitely keeps me awake at night!”*

I am acutely aware of the huge responsibility that running a care organisation brings. There are thousands of interactions that take place every day between individual workers (providing for health and care, meals, cleanliness, a comfortable, safe and stimulating environment and giving emotional support) and every one of these interactions must be respectful and safe. The opportunity for things to go wrong is immense. Providing a safe environment is predicated upon culture, knowledge and treating people with dignity. However, we protect ourselves by requiring colleagues to provide vast amounts of evidence that they are managing risks, checking, reporting and checking again. On top of that we record endlessly in care plans that hardly every get read and are mostly defensive (in case anything goes wrong) or to appease the Care Quality Commission (CQC). I am convinced there has to be a better way of ensuring that people are safe and well supported - starting with getting the right people into the roles and then trusting them to do a good job.

Having just spent time staying in one of our care homes I am struck by the level of skill that we are requiring of care workers these days. The level of acuity of people coming into even residential homes, let alone nursing, is so high. Many people are presenting with severe mobility needs or needing end of life care. For those living with dementia, not only do they experience a loss of agency, but eventually they lose control of their bodily functions, such as eating, walking and continence and they need special care and attention. Care workers, sometimes working as quasi nurses, need to have technical skills, communication skills, emotional intelligence, the ability to deal with everything from the most intimate personal care tasks to administering medication, keeping accurate records, deal positively with relatives, professional, volunteers, the bereaved and the dispossessed, and to hand choice and control to residents to ensure care is person centred - and all on minimal wages. Working out how to

increase the wages of our colleagues in the services definitely keeps me awake at night!

I am very aware of the responsibility we give Trustees, often unremunerated, in the charitable sector. I am a trustee of the Disabilities Trust, so I have seen for myself how much expertise, work and worry goes with the role, with little in the way of training or oversight of our performance as a Board. Volunteer trustees are responsible for strategy, managing risk, assembling an effective top team, providing both challenge and support and ensuring good governance. I am grateful to the trustees at the Fremantle Trust, and collectively they have an immense amount of expertise and experience. However, at the end of the day they are running a multimillion-pound care operation and the buck stops with them should things go wrong. It's pretty impressive that they give their time for free! Supporting them and ensuring there are enough new trustees coming along to provide proper succession planning, is a challenge for the sector and for the Trust.

Finally, the positives of working with people who need support, being able to enhance their quality of life day to day is such a worthwhile experience and far outweighs the worries, even for a novice CEO.



**Sara Livadeas**  
Chief Executive  
The Fremantle Trust





## PEOPLE POWER

# Challenging social stereotypes



Each month we feature an inspirational individual or team who have overcome barriers to make a real difference in their communities. This month we see how John Morris, Expert by Experience at Certitude, uses his own personal experience to advocate for others.

Fiercely independent and with a head full of ideas, James Morris is an energetic 23-year-old who passionately believes society should be more accessible for people with autism.

Like many people with autism, James was once labelled as 'challenging and aggressive', but now, receiving the right kind of support from Certitude and living in suitable accommodation, James is turning his life around and using his own experiences to challenge social stereotypes.

James lives in an innovative housing scheme in Richmond specifically designed for people with autism. He has his own apartment - which means he isn't forced into routines which don't suit him - but can use the communal spaces to get together with his support team and the other people who live in the block, when it suits him.

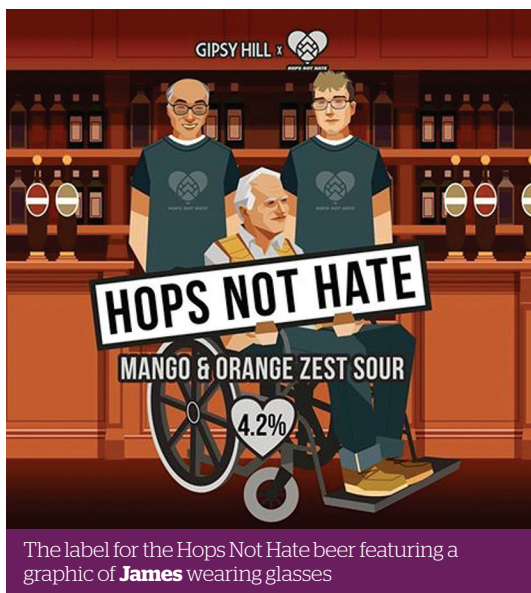
*"I love where I live, especially the area," says James. "I like to have my own space and I go out locally - a new Costa has just opened which is good - and it's easy to get into central London."*

James recently won a place on the prestigious Learning Disability and Autism Leadership List which was officially published online and in The Guardian newspaper. The list features 60 extraordinary people with learning disabilities and autism who are helping make society better for everyone.

*"It was amazing and breath-taking to receive this award," says James, "but I think I deserve it. I want people to understand what it is like to have autism and how society could change to help people like me. I think it's important that, as I can talk, I try to speak for other people with autism who can't."*

James regularly writes blogs and videos explaining the challenges faced by people with autism and works with Treat Me Right! - a Certitude project which trains healthcare professionals in how to interact more effectively with people with autism and learning disabilities.

*"I talk to doctors and nurses and describe to them how it feels to have autism."*



The label for the Hops Not Hate beer featuring a graphic of James wearing glasses

*"I talk to doctors and nurses and describes to them how it feels to have autism," explains James. "Of course I don't know how everyone with autism feels but I think that society could be more understanding. I would like Treat Me Right! to train other people who work with the public - like the police."*

*"James combined forces with the Gypsy Hill Brewery to help create beer designed to raise awareness of discrimination."*



Last year James combined forces with the Gypsy Hill Brewery and Certitude to help create a craft beer called Hops Not Hate designed to raise awareness of the discrimination faced by people with autism in pubs and restaurants. It was sold across London and the money raised went back to Certitude to provide more support. You can watch a film about this project here:

<https://youtu.be/FONGQ-pagqo>

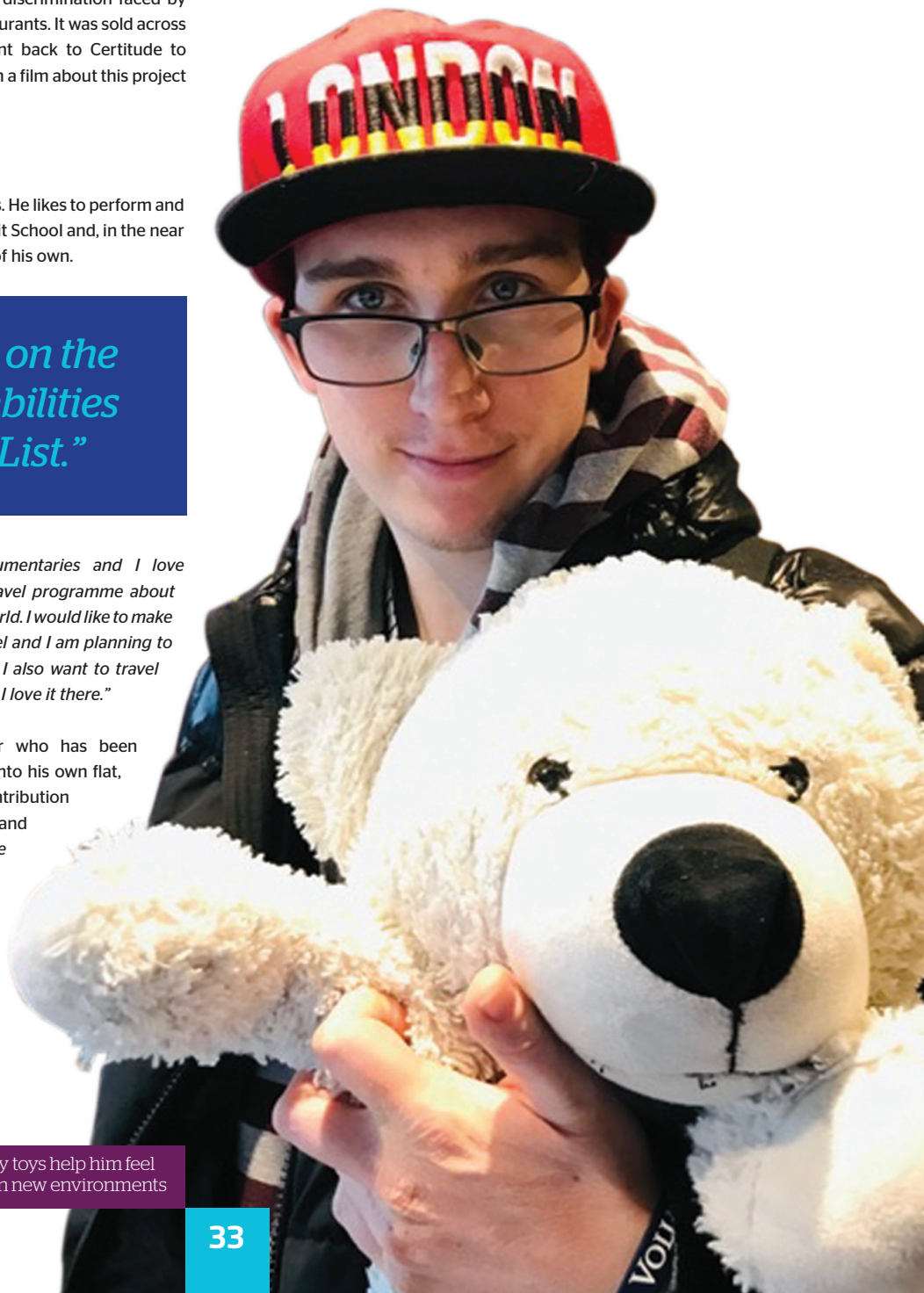
It's not all work, work, work for James. He likes to perform and has taken drama courses with the Brit School and, in the near future, is interested in making films of his own.

*"John has been named on the first ever Learning Disabilities and Autism Leaders List."*

*"I like adventure films and documentaries and I love Departures on Netflix which is a travel programme about two young guys going around the world. I would like to make films about people and how they feel and I am planning to take a film studies course this year. I also want to travel more - I have family in Germany and I love it there."*

Mark Wallis, a Certitude Manager who has been supporting James since he moved into his own flat, believes James has a valuable contribution to make in helping people understand autism. He says: *"James has come a long way in his own life and is making a real difference for others. His gift is his ability to use his insight into autism to help other people understand autistic people better."*

**James'** cuddly toys help him feel comfortable in new environments





## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO CARE

# David Grayson Welder to Care Home Manager

Each month we profile a care professional who has come into the sector after a career change and who demonstrates that it really is **never too late to care!** This month we feature David Grayson who spent his early career as a welder on the railways and is now is now Registered Manager at Pathway Care Group.

PATHWAYS CARE GROUP  
A Solihull Healthcare Company



Working in care was the furthest thing from my mind as a youngster - in fact in my early working life, other than homes for the elderly, I didn't even know it existed as a career option.

I can vividly remember leaving school on the Friday and starting my apprenticeship on the Monday with British Rail at Shildon Wagon works in Co Durham. Over 2000 men working together in an industrial environment was quite an experience, always eventful and often frightening. On reflection however, it laid the foundations of my understanding of diversity and how to accept the opinions of others - it was that or you would find yourself welded inside a coal wagon for the day!

I spent 13 years as a plater/welder with British Rail and following the privatisation of many national companies and the subsequent closures that dogged industry in the 1980's, at the age of 19 (I was still an apprentice) I was transferred away from home to South Yorkshire. Following yet another closure I was sent back to my native North East in 1986.

### Coming into care

Fast forward to 1999 - whilst working in a local factory, I was fortunate enough to have a discussion with a colleague who was working relief in a residential children's home. I was intrigued by what he was telling me and how rewarding it was working with children and young people. This was a defining moment for me, as at 34 for the first time in my working life and with very limited knowledge I knew that this was something that I had to do.

I was very fortunate to be successful and get the first post that I applied for. I spent ten very happy years working for a private, family-run service. During this time, I worked alongside and learnt from some amazing people and equally some amazing young people. It didn't take long for me to realise that this career move was the best thing I could possibly have chosen.

I guess that the management saw something in me. I was given a senior role within the service and I was mentored and actively encouraged to further develop my knowledge at every opportunity, which culminated in me achieving the Registered Managers award in 2009.

Reflecting now on my move into management in 2012, I realise that it was a baptism of fire, but one that has served me well. The home was judged inadequate in all areas only 4 days into my induction -there was a huge rebuilding process required. I learned so much about myself and the resilience of the team during this period and their commitment to improving the outcomes for the young people that we support.

*"Welding laid the foundations of my understanding of diversity and how to accept the opinions of others."*

Seven years on and most of the staff team are still together, the home is unrecognisable from the one I entered back then. I am immensely proud of the team, they have supported me from the day that I arrived and together we have consistently raised the standards of care practices within the home.

In 2018 the service was shortlisted for the Laing Buisson children's services award and I was immensely proud to be the regional winner at the Great British Care Awards in the registered manager of the year category. I am quick to stress that these accolades are a reflection of the whole team and the fantastic care they provide to the young people we support.





## STORY TIME

## The Taj Mahal

By Debra Metha

The saris arrived in a big green case, and two boxes of flower garlands sat on Roger's desk. It was a darkly grey October afternoon at Haveling House, but as staff moved around the office, and people crossed from room to room, there were quick bursts of saffron, magenta and emerald.



Staff and residents were spread about like a great canvas of colour; Stan and Roger in white and gold, Clive all in black and the ladies bangle-wristed in every jewel colour.

"Sit here, love." Bev steered Ava to the bench they'd dragged from the garden to sit beneath the great palace on the wall.

Roger and Bev unfurled the Taj Mahal and Blu-Tacked it to the dining room wall.

"Jill sticking with the korma menu?" he asked, climbing down off the chair and stepping back.

"I think so...God, it really is bloody amazing!" Bev said staring up at the poster.

Ava had been the first to stick her leaf to the Wishing Tree. It read, in a shivery blue script: "Taj Mahal before I die."

The leaf surprised everyone; wouldn't she have chosen to visit the daughter in Paris who runs a fashion house, or buy a fur coat once again from Selfridges?

"My grandfather built it, you know," she had said when returning to her room.

Poor Ava, they thought. Poor Ava, who rarely smiles and never laughs.

As she was helped into her sapphire sari, a little of herself spilled into the mirror. It wasn't something she often allowed. Why would you, if your Faye Dunaway face had flaked away to leave crumpled ash paper? And that, despite the best of face creams. Unlike most of us, Ava had known a dismal fact for over 30 years; beauty doesn't last, and losing it - or rather people seeing you lose it - was a living disappointment, a misery. Perhaps her three marriages were a testament to this impermanence.

"Strings of sitar music reached her door."

Strings of sitar music reached her door and the smell of oily samosas clung to the curtains as she made her way to the dining room - to the Taj Mahal. She wanted to be happy - the manager and his team had tried so hard - and of course no one was ever going to take her to India.

Smile Ava, smile.

"Here she is!" Roger called out to everyone as he took her arm and led her into the dining room. "You look beautiful, Ava. Doesn't she, everyone?"

"Taj Mahal before I die."

Ava wouldn't sit - not yet. She stared at the vast poster and began to cry. And then she began to shake - shake so much that she had to be helped to sit down. On an old timber throne, she felt set apart from everyone, much as she had always felt.

The music played on, the korma was dished, and everyone enjoyed Ava's Wish.

Sipping a glass of wine, she at last made a request.

"I'd like to read you all something."

The room quietened as she pulled a little black book from her bag.

"My grandfather, Frederick Langley helped rebuild this palace with Viceroy Lord Curzon back in 1908. He was working on the gardens when he wrote this entry in his journal:

*'There is no place on earth like the Taj Mahal. At dawn when the first rays of the sun strike the dome it must be as I imagine heaven to be. And so begins my work. Then, at dusk, as I leave for the day, the dome sparkles in the moonlight like a perfect, perfect diamond. It truly must be the monument to immeasurable beauty and love. I will bring my wife and daughters here.'*

"And did he?" Iris called out.

Ava smiled. "No. And I nearly didn't - till today."

Six months later a postcard arrived addressed to 'All at Haveling House'.

It was a small inheritance, but Ava's daughter had seized the opportunity:

*'Dear All,*

*It's everything Frederick described and more. Mum would have adored it. It really is a giant jewel of a place and yes, I scattered some of her ashes in the gardens.*

*We all knew she was unhappy because she believed she'd lost her shine, but she'll always remain a diamond to me. Thank you for everything, and especially that day.*

*Sonja.'*



## VOICE OVER

# How do you encourage service users and their families to share feedback about care?



Following the recent report by the Care Quality Commission which highlighted that around 7 million people in England regret not raising concerns about their care. We asked a group of stakeholders at Christies Care, one of the UK's largest providers of live-in domiciliary care, "In your role how do you encourage service users and their families to share feedback about care?"

*"In the live-in care world, accurate feedback from our clients (and/ or their nearest and dearest) is one of the most important pieces of information we need to give a good service. They are the people who know if our client has indeed been getting the excellent care he or she deserves.*

*If someone has a concern, we want to learn about it as soon as possible. We don't care how big or small the concern is, wherever we might be falling short of giving excellent service, we take it seriously. If any concern is reported, our teams work closely together to investigate, to work out the root cause and to fix that problem at its root.*



**Freddy Gathorne-Hardy**  
CEO

**"Clients are always at liberty to request carers are replaced."**

*From my point of view, I know that our teams ask every client for feedback, which is our client's opportunity to raise concerns. This is done both over the telephone and face to face. I know that our teams do probe if anything in the conversation indicates that there could be an unsaid concern; and people do indeed raise concerns if our service is not good enough. I think we do a good job but, if the carer isn't delivering an excellent service, that client will almost always give us the feedback so we can address this.*

*I also know that we can always do better, and therefore we are launching a feedback improvement programme where we are working across the company to improve the quality of the feedback we get. We expect that this will help our clients give us better feedback,*

*"When setting up new clients we actively gather feedback from all involved in this package of care to strive to provide the best possible service.*

*We open the line of communication between clients, carers and family members from the start of the care package. We always set out how important it is for clients and their families to raise any concerns with us."*



**Emily Smith**  
New Client and Recruitment Manager



**Helen Drain**  
Training Manager

*"In training we encourage carers and Local Area Advisors to ask family members and clients to give feedback on their care.*

*On the odd occasion a family member will call to ask for advice or have a question, this also gives us a chance to get feedback."*



**Lin Barnes**  
Registered Manager

*"When our local area advisors visit a new client to undertake an assessment, they are encouraged to contact the office if they have any questions on the care we intend to provide. Once care commences their booking co-ordinator will contact them in the first week of care to obtain feedback to ensure the care, they are receiving is at the expected level.*

*Clients are always at liberty to request carers are replaced if they find they do not get on, are not undertaking the tasks as per the support plan and to their expectations.*

*Information on how to complain to the company and where to go if they are dissatisfied with the outcome are in the support plan kept at the client's home, in our brochures and on our website.*

*Annual anonymous surveys are sent to all clients with one of the questions being do you know how and who to complain to regarding your care - this usually has around 86 to 90 per cent yes.*

*There is also a mini survey every 3 months when the review is undertaken asking if they happy with our response to their feedback or complaints made. Any score of 2 or under are sent to the Registered Manager for investigation to try and resolve any ongoing dissatisfaction with the service."*

***"Wherever we might be falling short of giving excellent service, we take it seriously."***

### Key Points

- **Open lines of communication between managers, staff and service users and families**
  - **Regular surveys**
  - **Face to face feedback**
- **Robust quality assurance programme**
- **Transparent complaints procedure**

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**Leanne Scrogham**  
Human Support Group  
**THE HOME CARE  
REGISTERED MANAGER AWARD**



Awards presenter **Alison Hammond**,  
**Gareth Evans** representing sponsor Access Group,  
winner **Leanne Scrogham**, and awards host **Steve Walls**

**Leanne Scrogham from Human Support Group was the proud winner of The Home Care Registered Manager Award at The National Finals of The Great British Care Awards 2019. .**

What the judges said:

*“Leanne has faced huge challenges starting with a failing service and disenfranchised staff. She has turned this into an Outstanding service by sheer persistence and determination whilst managing three locations in a country wide rural area.”*

# Dulux Trade recognised for contribution to dementia care



Dulux Trade has been awarded the prestigious Exceptional Contribution to Dementia Care Award at the Dementia, Care and Nursing Home Expo Awards 2019.

The Dementia, Care and Nursing Home Expo Awards 2019 celebrate the very best in the world in innovation and cutting edge products, services and expertise that are currently helping care, nursing and residential homes.

The award was given in recognition of the groundbreaking work undertaken by Dulux Trade to support the design of the optimal environments for dementia care.

The judges commended the newly launched Dulux Trade Dementia Friendly Colour Palette and Design Guide, a set of evidence based design principles to help professionals design environments that optimise occupant wellbeing, sharing knowledge from decades of experience in designing supportive environments within the private and public healthcare field.

*“The judges commended the newly launched Dulux Trade Dementia Friendly Colour Palette and Design Guide.”*

In addition, they recognised the innovative work with partners including BRE Trust, BRE, Loughborough University and Halsall Lloyd Partnerships, to build a dementia demonstration home.

Located within the BRE Innovation Park in Watford, Chris and Sally’s House is a project to develop and test design solutions that are supportive of an ageing population staying in their own homes. The 100sqm Victorian house has been adapted to cater for different types and stages of dementia, with Dulux Trade adding its extensive knowledge about supportive and inclusive colour and design to enable both functional and wellbeing occupant outcomes.

Kathryn Ledson at Dulux Trade, said; “Every three minutes in the UK a person is diagnosed with dementia,

while one in four patients is currently in acute hospitals living with dementia. At Dulux Trade, we recognised that this growing global health trend required a radical change in thinking.

*“We have been committed for a number of years to supporting inclusive design within care environments.”*

*“We have been committed for a number of years to supporting inclusive design within care environments, to develop accessible spaces that improve quality of life for dementia patients and reduce feelings of stress or anxiety. We are delighted to receive this recognition for the work our team has done.”*

Jackie Pool, Director of Memory with Sunrise Senior Living UK and a judge at the Dementia, Care and Nursing Home Expo Awards 2019, said: “The passion and dedication of Dulux Trade was unmistakable, they are clearly committed to making a real difference to dementia care through supporting healthcare and design professionals to think differently about the development of care spaces, something that will notably improve care in the industry.”



The Dulux Trade team receiving the award

To access a copy of the Dulux Trade Dementia Friendly Colour Palette and Design Guide please contact the Technical Advice Centre:

[www.duluxtradepaintexpert.co.uk/contact](http://www.duluxtradepaintexpert.co.uk/contact)

# What the sponsors say...



There are many reasons to sponsor The Learning Disabilities & Autism Awards... but don't just take our word for it. Here some of the sectors' stakeholders tell us why they continue to support the sector's premier events.

## HEADLINE SPONSOR National Care Group



James Allen  
CEO  
National Care Group



*"National Care Group (NCG) is delighted to be headline sponsor at The 2019 Learning Disabilities & Autism Awards. We are supporting the award for the Support Workers from the independent sector. As an independent provider of care, we recognise not only the value these people provide but also the challenges they face. We are proud to celebrate the compassion, skill and remarkable efforts of support workers across the country. Support workers inspire people on a daily basis. These awards duly recognise the hard work, resilience and patience of support workers and commend their tireless efforts to enhance the quality of life of some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. As a company, National Care Group work hard to reward our care teams and deliver day-to-day support so that they can continue to deliver excellent levels of care to the people we support. Having the opportunity to sponsor these awards has reminded us of the wonderful work they do and of the support they merit. Working 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, in challenging and taxing environments, we believe that support workers deserve both our recognition and our gratitude. NCG would like to say a huge thank you to all the support workers across the country - we feel extremely privileged to work with such wonderful individuals who work tirelessly to help others and have a genuine and lasting impact on the communities in which we live."*

## Accomplish Group



Mel Ramsey  
CEO  
Accomplish Group



*"We are delighted to be sponsoring the Great Autism Practice Award as part of the 2019 National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards. The purpose of these awards is to pay tribute to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding excellence within their field of work. As an independent care provider and previous winner of this award, we understand how hard our staff work as advocates on behalf of the people they support, whether it be for small or bigger issues. For over 35 years, our priority has been to enable people to live fun and fulfilled lives, across our therapeutic, residential and supported living services. We encourage all our staff to demonstrate a creative and enthusiastic approach, going above and beyond to bring out the amazing in people and ensure everyone can reach for the stars. We understand the dedication and commitment undertaken by individuals working within this sector and we feel extremely privileged to work with such amazing individuals, who are committed to promoting independence and inclusion and have the belief that everyone can make their own personal contribution in life."*

## Affinity Trust



Victoria Neish  
Director of  
Operations & Quality  
Affinity Trust



*"Affinity Trust is delighted to be supporting the Learning Disabilities and Autism 2019 awards. These awards help to showcase and celebrate the successes of individuals, teams and organisations across the UK, who are really making a positive impact on people's lives. Affinity Trust is sponsoring The Employer of People with a Disability category as we are passionate about everyone having the right to work and employers should be positively leading the way to change attitudes, behaviours and cultures. People with a learning disability and/or autism are underrepresented in the employment market and this award is to celebrate those who are demonstrating how employing people with a learning disability makes a real contribution to the organisation and the wider community. It is truly inspiring to see the sector come together and to pay tribute to those who play a vital role in improving lives for some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. We know it can be a challenging job as well as a rewarding one, and that it is important to recognise people's achievements. We look forward honouring those outstanding achievements and spreading the word about just what a difference great support can make. We look forward honouring those outstanding achievements and spreading the word about just what a difference great support can make."*

## Care Management Group



**Michael Fullerton**  
Clinical Director  
Care Management Group  
(CMG)



*"CMG are delighted to yet again be involved in supporting the National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards, in 2019.*

*We see constantly, despite the challenges, that support teams are working incredibly hard to ensure people receive truly personalised support - it is essential that all of this fantastic work is identified, acknowledged and celebrated.*

*The National Learning Disabilities & Autism Awards is a brilliant way of reflecting on the great achievements, the teams and people who really make a difference and ensure people are recognised. This is not only motivating for those people who are nominated, but also more widely as these achievements can inspire others to be equally as creative and determined to make a difference.*

*One of the beauties of the Awards is that it is also people with learning disabilities and/or autism who are nominated, finalists and recipients of awards - it is everyone in the sector coming together to appreciate the positives and this is important to ensure we continue to strive for better support, services and inclusiveness up and down the country.*

*I would urge that everyone gets involved in the Awards. Let's all take the time to appreciate the positives and nominate someone we know!*

*We wish every single nominee best wishes, but mostly congratulate you for the great work you do every day."*

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## The Regard Group



**Carole Edmond**  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Regard Group



*"The Regard Group are proud to be sponsoring the Lifetime Achievement Award, as part of the Learning Disabilities & Autism Awards 2019. Many individuals have passionately devoted themselves to making a real difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities and autism and, by sponsoring of this important award we would like to acknowledge their hard work and dedication.*

*At Regard, we value our long-standing staff and how integral they are to helping us provide the continuity of care which is so important for people with autism and learning disabilities. Many of our staff have worked for Regard for more than 20 years, providing the commitment and passion to truly make a difference to people's lives.*

*We have inspiring, open and approachable leaders at all levels of our organisation - people who empower their teams to take responsibility and to use their initiative to provide the best support possible. Our recent Investors in People Gold assessor commented 'There is excellent evidence of career progression, based on career paths, encouragement and many examples, which are communicated to staff.'*

*It is central to the culture of Regard to celebrate success - both the success of our staff and of the people we support. We are very proud to recognise these extraordinary people and to celebrate their success with you."*

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## Select Lifestyles



**Sue Grice**  
Operations Director  
Select Lifestyles Limited



*"Select Lifestyles Limited was established in 2007, and since then our vision as an organisation has been to embrace the individuality of all the people we support, whilst promoting their independence by continuously encouraging personal achievement of all our service users through individualised support plans.*

*Our aim is to not only provide exemplary services, but to tailor support plans that aid the people we support with every encounter they have with us, with the potential to reduce support hours should the opportunity arise.*

*Whether it is due to a lack of opportunity, discrimination or an availability in resources, the potential in the service users is often overlooked. The support we provide is set out to maximise independence by enabling the service users to fulfil aspirations, however small these may be, that empower them and create a significant and positive impact in their lives with the ultimate goal of successful integration into their local communities.*

*In all instances where individuals manage to achieve against all odds, where they are seen to deliver something that holds the potential to improve or change the quality of lives of others in any way, should be celebrated and recognised. All reasons why the People's Award should be accepted with a great sense of pride and achievement."*

Care Talk has a packed agenda of conferences and seminars ahead. We are proud to be media partners and supporters for some fantastic events listed below.

## Coming up...

### Learning Disabilities & Autism Awards 2019

Date	Venue
<b>June</b>	
Thurs 20th	Wales, Marriott Hotel, Cardiff
Fri 21st	Northern Ireland, Hilton Hotel, Belfast
Fri 28th	England & Scotland, ICC, Birmingham
Sat 29th	The Islands, Guernsey
<b>October</b>	
Fri 25th	National Final, The Hilton Bankside, London

### Regional Great British Care Awards 2019

Date	Venue
<b>October</b>	
Thu 24th	East of England, Holiday Inn. Peterborough
Sat 26th	North West, Principal Hotel, Manchester
<b>November</b>	
Fri 1st	East Midlands, East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham
Sat 2nd	West Midlands, ICC, Birmingham*
Thu 7th	Wales, Marriott Hotel, Cardiff
Sat 9th	South East, Hilton Hotel, Brighton
Thu 14th	North East, Gosforth Park, Newcastle
Fri 15th	Northern Ireland, Hilton Hotel, Belfast
Sat 16th	London, Hilton Bankside Hotel
Fri 22nd	Yorkshire & Humberside, National Railway Museum, York
Sat 23rd	South West, Aston Gate Stadium, Bristol*

\*please note some dates/venues subject to change

# More than just 'moments'



**Jim Thomas, Programme Head, Workforce Innovation at Skills for Care, explains why delivering person-centred care isn't a one-time event. But the complexities and constraints that adult social care services face, often leads to services delivering 'person-centred moments' rather than holistic 'person-centred care'.**

Making person-centred care part of your everyday practice requires a cultural shift within teams and across your organisation. This can take time and effort, but a workplace culture that supports person-centred care puts people who need care and support at the heart of everything they do, involves them in every decision about their life and is responsive to change and innovation as people's needs change.

Culture is unique to every organisation, but there are some things that leaders and managers can do, to develop and embed a positive culture that supports person-centred care.

## Have values that support person-centred care

Values such as collaboration, respect, trust, openness, honesty and transparency are an integral part of delivering person-centred care.

Involving people who use and work in your service in developing your values, is a great way of ensuring they support better outcomes for everyone involved.

Your workforce is vital in embedding values throughout the workplace. Having a workplace charter or behaviours framework that shows what they look like in practice, will help staff to understand what's expected of them and how to behave.

You can link your workplace values and behaviours to staff goals and objectives, and review them in supervision and appraisals, to ensure they're always influencing the way that you work.

## Ensure policies and processes enable you to work in a person-centred way

Processes and policies need to support staff to work in a way that aligns with your culture.

For example, taking a values-based approach to recruitment can help you to find people who have the right values to work in your organisation, and who are, therefore, the right cultural fit. Planning your staff rota around people's care and support needs, gives staff the capacity to support people how and when they want.

Matching people with appropriate staff, based on their skills, knowledge, personality and interests, builds relationships and helps staff to get to know people better, so that they can deliver more person-centred care. And, training staff around the specific needs of the people they support, gives them the confidence and competence to support people in the best way they can.

*"Your workforce is vital in embedding values throughout the workplace."*

## Leaders need to embody your culture and support person-centred working

Leading by example is an essential part of having a values-led, workplace culture that supports person-centred outcomes.

Having leaders and managers who support an open culture, with good communication practices and a positive approach to performance management, will support and sustain your workforce, and enable them to deliver person-centred care. Good leadership and management should involve listening to people's views and experiences, and using what they say to make informed changes to improve. Asking for regular feedback through conversations, surveys, questionnaires, meetings and supervisions will ensure that your organisation can continually adapt to the needs of the people you support.

Getting your workplace culture right makes your service a better place for staff to work, and a nicer home for people to live in or access services. This can increase staff retention, improve health and wellbeing, make your service more efficient and, ultimately, improve the quality of care and support.

## Find out more

Skills for Care's 'Culture for care' toolkit can help you create a positive workplace culture. It explains what culture is, and has practical activities to help you think about how you develop a positive one in your organisation.

Access it from [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/culture](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/culture)



**Jim Thomas**

Programme Head, Workforce Innovation  
Skills for Care

# Consistently outstanding home care



Carefound  
Home Care

**Oliver Stirk**  
Director  
Carefound Home Care

Carefound Home Care is a provider of highly personalised home care services to older people in Yorkshire and Cheshire. They have a unique track record amongst home care providers in the UK having been consistently rated outstanding by the CQC. Oliver Stirk, Director, discusses some of the key drivers behind their success.

At Carefound Home Care we have a simple aim of enabling our clients to remain at home with 'well-being', regardless of their health condition. Rather than operating from a national head office or working under contracts with councils, our local care management teams tailor care directly with families which can range from visiting care of one hour upwards through to full-time live-in care as an alternative to care homes.

Our Yorkshire office is based in Harrogate and is one of the few services in the country to have achieved an 'outstanding' rating from the CQC at two consecutive inspections. We opened our Cheshire office in Wilmslow in 2017 which was recently rated outstanding in all five areas by the CQC - safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led.

*"Typically we recruit just 2% of people who apply for a role at Carefound Home Care."*

## Truly local care

Delivering a high quality home care service presents many challenges, the most obvious being that clients and staff are not all in one place. We therefore place great importance on our care being locally managed by our local care management teams. This enables us to maintain exceptional levels of communication and support for our carers, our clients and their families. It also helps us manage quality assurance effectively, for example through weekly support visits to our live-in carers ensuring they are happy and the care package is working well.





### Achieving well-being

We are very focussed on the idea that enabling well-being for our clients isn't just about keeping people alive, it's about giving people the reasons they wish to be alive. We try to embed this in our staff from the outset and it means that companionship and supporting our clients to be as independent as possible is a major part of our service. We also closely monitor our clients' health outcomes, for example for people experiencing falls, infections or living with a specialist condition such as dementia. This data helps us deliver a more proactive, effective service and ultimately reduce avoidable hospital admissions.

*“Data helps us deliver a more proactive service and ultimately reduce hospital admissions.”*

### Empowered staff

Employing the right people is obviously fundamental to sustaining an outstanding care service and typically we recruit just 2 percent of people who apply for a role at Carefound Home Care. However, it is just as important that those people are properly trained and supported so that they feel empowered to do their job to the best of their ability. All our staff undergo a thorough induction programme including shadowing experienced members of our team. We also ensure that they receive direct training in the specialist

conditions they may support, in collaboration with experts such as the Contented Dementia Trust, Parkinson's UK and the MND Association. There is then a strong emphasis on ongoing support through proper client introductions, mentor meetings, attendance monitoring, supervisions and appraisals.

### Effective technology

Technology is an increasingly important part of our service, providing greater transparency and helping our care management and carer teams be more efficient. This ranges from using specialist recruitment software, help desk software that uses machine learning to improve staff and client communication, through to a cloud-based care management system that enables carers and families to access and complete care records via an app on their telephone or tablet computer. Ultimately, the data produced across our technology will help us become even more proactive in managing the health conditions and risks our clients face, further reducing the likelihood of them ending up in a hospital or care home bed which is what we all strive to avoid.

### Sustainable future

Achieving outstanding CQC ratings has been a huge benefit to Carefound Home Care, giving our professional staff the recognition they deserve and families an independent insight into how our company is unique. It also shows that highly personalised services like ours, working collaboratively with other parts of the health and social care system, are vital to solving the challenge of an ageing population and we plan to continue to sustainably develop and expand our operations in the UK.

# Amanda Odd

## Sharing knowledge with force



**Amanda Odd, Manager at Willow Park Lodge, part of the Athena Healthcare Group has demonstrated a commitment to forging links with their community by partnering with the local police force.**

For many years Kent Police has run a successful programme during the initial training for new officers, where they attend a 'Community Placement' for a period of two days, and further into their career another placement of four days.

*"I have learnt that dementia does not have a face."*

The aim of the partnership is to educate on the signs and behaviours common in people living with dementia, enabling a better interpretation of behaviours, removing stigma and promoting understanding. The outcome is improved police performance, greater communication and increased trust.

Amanda introduced the placement scheme at the home after having successes with the community placement scheme in previous homes that she has managed.

Amanda said, "Our ethos here at Willow Park Lodge is very much about partnership working with our local community. When we heard about Kent Police's Community Placement programme we were keen to get involved.

Not only does it gives the police officers first-hand experience of how tailoring your communication effectively to the individuals you are working with can prove effective, it also shows officers how to treat people as individuals, signposting them to community services to enable them to get the help and the support that they may need."

Officers who have been placed at Willow Park Lodge have been extremely positive about their experience, with one officer commenting,

*"I have learnt that dementia does not have a face. There are many different types of dementia and everyone is affected differently. I was taught how to try a diversionary approach, when someone may become frustrated or anxious, as well as to try and establish the cause of the anxiety.*

*It had never occurred to me to look for signs of pain, and to gain an understanding for signs and symptoms of potential infection.*

*I learnt very quickly from the staff at Willow Park lodge how important it is to get to know your residents and their life history. I recall one lady was becoming very anxious and she didn't know where she was, despite me telling her.*

*The carer I worked with had given me a book of old-time Dover so I sat with the resident and looked at the pictorials within the book. The lady became extremely responsive and was able to talk about her life history as a child growing up in Dover. The transformation for this lady was incredible and reminiscence therapy was something I would not have thought about until staff at Willow Park Lodge taught me how beneficial this could be."*

Amada says, "By knowing our residents and gaining as much knowledge about their biographical and occupational history as well as adopting a person-centred approach to care, can make a real difference.

*It is possible to live well with dementia and it is of vital importance that we share our knowledge of this to our policing partners so that the best outcome can be afforded to the most vulnerable in our society."*



# Jane Hewitt

## Continuing local recognition



**Jane Hewitt who has dedicated her life to supporting people living with dementia, is Assistant Manager at Marrow House Residential Care Home, a Stoke City Council-run home which features a specialist dementia care unit**



Jane scooped The Dementia Carer Award at the Great West Midlands Care Awards in 2018 and went on to represent her region at The National Finals in March this year. Residents were able to join in Jane's success when they were recently visited by local Lord Mayor Lilian Dodd who congratulated her on the award.

*"This is an outstanding effort and we are very proud of Jane,"* said The Lord Mayor. *"Her dedication to her work and the people she cares for has been rightfully recognised by this award."*

Marrow House provides accommodation and support for up to 28 older people who have a diagnosis of dementia, with 16 of the beds provided for residents requiring respite care.

The service provides rehabilitation to maximise potential for people to return to their home and community. This includes assessed risk taking to enable people to return home safely as well as confidence building, boosting self-esteem and supporting family carers.

Jane and her team aim to enable people to live well with dementia for longer, and to provide a measurable improvement in quality of life for people with dementia.

*"For those not able to return home we will continue to work with them to support the transition to extra care or residential care,"* says Jane. *"It's important to us that wherever our service users go after leaving Marrow House they continue to live well with dementia for longer."*

In her role Jane strives to improve the quality of life of all service users by generating wellbeing. She is passionate about developing Life Biographies for individual service users, which have helped to develop person-centred therapeutic activities.

*"The Life Biographies ensure people engage in a positive and active day,"* says Jane, *"This can aid good sleep through natural tiredness, satisfaction and reduced anxiety."*

*"My proudest achievements have included supporting individuals to return home against the odds."*

The team have also worked hard to develop links with the local community, especially the local primary school, to promote positive opportunities and experiences for the children and the people using the service.

*"There are many benefits to spending time with the children,"* said Jane. *"It increases wellbeing and helps the children to improve their understanding of people living with dementia."*

Commenting on her award Jane said: *"It was a really proud moment for me but very much represents a dedicated team effort at Marrow House. As I reflect on the past nine years, some of my proudest achievements have included supporting individuals and their families to enable them to return home, sometimes against the odds. This is achieved through strong working relationships and integrated working."*





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# World Health Day MediSupplies update

Offering an extensive range of low-cost medical supplies in the light of World Health Day

**MediSupplies**

Medical Essentials at Low Prices

**April 7th marked the birthday of The World Health Organisation, an anniversary that is celebrated each year as World Health Day. Every year has a different focus and the 2019 event “Universal Health Coverage” was aimed at raising awareness of the estimated 100 million people around the globe who are pushed into extreme poverty each year due to spending on health.<sup>1</sup>**

Universal Health Coverage would provide everyone with the right to receive quality health services they need, when and where they need them without financial hardship. Raising awareness of this vital issue is just one step to increasing primary care in the heart of communities and making health for all a reality.

In the light of World Health day and on the topic of affordable health provisions, we wanted to share information about our company, MediSupplies, with care providers across the UK and ask the question – **why are you paying more for medical supplies?**

Often the answer to this question is a lack of time and a need for convenience!

At MediSupplies, we believe you shouldn't have to spend time trawling the internet for the cheapest suppliers of each item—you have far more important things to do! And, why should you have to spend more to find all your essential medical supplies in one place with one convenient delivery?

Our team of MediSupplies buyers scour the globe for high-quality medical, infection control and diagnostic products and work tirelessly with suppliers to form essential long-standing relationships, giving us purchasing power and the best possible cost savings, which we then pass to you. We offer a wide range of CE marked reliable products certified to the latest EN standards.

Unlike some of our competitors, there is no minimum order quantity required at MediSupplies and orders over £65.00 (excluding VAT) will receive delivery absolutely-free of charge!

Having a large stock of items in our 35,000sqft Dorset based warehouse means that we deliver 95 percent of orders placed before 4.30pm on the next working day.



## So, what can MediSupplies offer you?

We give you the opportunity to buy premium products from the leading brands at affordable pricing. Our comprehensive portfolio includes:

- A broad range of medical grade vinyl, latex and nitrile disposable gloves
- Polythene aprons in flat pack or on a roll
- Centrefeed and C-Fold paper towels and couch rolls
- Needles and syringes from reliable brands including Terumo™ and BD™
- Mobility and living aids including wheelchairs, shower stools, walking frames and commodes
- Gentle patient wipes, skin cleansers and sterile water
- A vast selection of infection prevention and cleaning products
- An extensive range of first aid and safety supplies
- Hand sanitisers and dispensing systems
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Don't delay and find out how much budget you could save by visiting our website: [www.medisupplies.co.uk](http://www.medisupplies.co.uk) or call us with your requirements on **0800 160 1621**.

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organisation, World Health Day 2019 Key Messages

# New care home opens in Earl Shilton



Care Home operators Acacia Care Group has recently opened its latest state of the art 70 bed care home located in Earl Shilton, Leicestershire, creating 80 local jobs.

The care home, named Kingsfield Court comprises three floors of accommodation and in addition to several beautiful lounges for residents, the home also features its own pub, 'the Cobblers Arms', a cinema room, hairdressing salon and a library room. The contemporary and modern home was built by specialist care home builder, Wynbrook Care Build based in Radcliffe on Trent, Nottingham and was designed by HSSP Architects based in Leicester. Edward Cooper Young provided building surveying services and HWA provided structural engineering services.

The £5m scheme located on the High Street in Earl Shilton began in November 2017 and has taken 15 months to complete.

The project entailed demolition of an existing factory unit and general clearance of the site before the new build works could commence. Constructed from block and beam with a mono-pitched tiled roof design, the building frontage looks modern yet welcoming and sits in well within its surroundings.

Ashley Cooper, Senior Partner of Edward Cooper Young said, "It's great to be part of another significant care home project where our services and advice has been adopted since the inception of the scheme all the way through to practical completion. The combined partnership between Wynbrook, Acacia Care and Edward Cooper Young has been the bedrock of the developments success. We look forward to working with these partners on their next scheme".

The interior fit-out of the care home was designed by Sam Lloyd interiors and includes designer light fittings and bespoke cabinet joinery along with quality doors and complimentary ironmongery installed throughout. Each of the 70 bedrooms is beautifully furnished and contains its own wetroom. All areas are fitted out to a very high specification and residents can relax in fully furnished lounges featuring



Kingsfield Court lounge

and residents can relax in fully furnished lounges featuring wall art, luxury carpeting and other interior design décor, as well as take relaxed strolls along clearly signposted corridors.

The plant room, IT server room, fully equipped catering kitchen and laundrette are sited neatly on the top floor providing all required services for the development. Externally, the gardens, set in 1.5 acre plot, which can be accessed direct from the ground floor bedrooms and are laid with lawn, level pathways and seating areas for residents to enjoy.

Commenting on behalf of Wynbrook Care Homes, Mike Day said, "On walking into the light and airy reception area, visitors will be instantly impressed with the quality and high standard of build. This is complimented by luxurious interior design and features such as the bar, cinema and hair salon that make the environment more luxurious. We are proud that these exceptional and differentiating features are becoming a trademark standard for care homes built by Wynbrook."

Acacia Care Group is an independently run luxury care home group, offering residential care to older people and those with dementia and its associated conditions. Kingsfield Court is the third care home to be opened by Acacia Care which also operates another care home in Rickmansworth, Acorn House in Nottingham and a further new care home in Market Harborough has been granted planning permission.

Carehome Manager Jacky West said: "We're so excited to be bringing a new level of care to the area. Kingsfield Court will offer a slice of affordable luxury to older people, where they will be supported with outstanding care. We can't wait to welcome our first residents!"

Funding to build the home was provided by specialist care home investors Target Fund Managers.



Kingsfield Court bedroom

# Complaints in the spotlight



**RIDOUTS**

**Samantha Cox**  
Associate Solicitor  
Ridouts Professional Services Plc

In February this year CQC launched its 'Declare Your Care' campaign, encouraging people to share their experiences of care with CQC to support it with its regulatory work. The associated press release included data from a consumer research study commenting on people's regrets about not raising concerns about health and social care services when they had them.

*"We have seen multiple examples of CQC criticising providers without considering they had not been made aware of the concerns previously."*

The consumer research was carried out over a two-week period in November/December 2018 and included 2002 people in England who had had a health or social care service experience in the last five years. Despite the limited data set, this led to a number of overarching conclusions including:

- **Almost seven million people in England who have accessed health or social care services in the last five years have had concerns about their care but never raised them;**
- **Of the seven million, over half expressed regret about not having raised their concerns;**
- **The most common reasons for not raising a concern were not knowing how (20 percent) or who (38 percent) to raise it with, not wanting to be seen as a troublemaker (33 percent) and worries about not being taken seriously (28 percent).**

While it is positive that the regulator is trying to connect directly with service users and their families to better understand their experiences of care, this can create issues for providers if people go directly to CQC without having raised concerns with them first. At Ridouts, we have seen multiple examples of CQC criticising providers for not taking action in response to stakeholder concerns that had been raised with CQC inspectors during inspections, without considering the fact that the provider had not been made aware of the concerns previously. This is clearly unfair as a provider is unable to investigate or take action in response to something they are not aware of. However, it is clear from the

campaign that complaints are in the spotlight and providers should be taking time to reflect on their complaints processes to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Regulation 16 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 sets out the legal requirement for providers when receiving and acting on complaints. It states that:

*"(1) Any complaint received must be investigated and necessary and proportionate action must be taken in response to any failure identified by the complaint or investigation.*

*"(2) The registered person must establish and operate effectively an accessible system for identifying, receiving, recording, handling and responding to complaints by service users and other persons in relation to the carrying on of the regulated activity."*

The regulation should form the basis of a complaints policy but it also needs to go further than this to ensure it reflects other regulatory requirements such as good governance of a service. This can help to elevate a services rating to Good or even Outstanding.

Some key factors to consider when reviewing the effectiveness of a complaints system include:

- **Staff knowledge** – do staff know how to identify a complaint, how to respond when they receive a complaint (e.g. supporting the person to make a complaint) and how to report it?
- **Accessibility** – Can people easily access the policy? Is it on display at the service? Is there an easy read format? (where relevant, consider the Accessible Information Standard).
- **Details** – Is your policy clear about how people can raise a concern? Are clear contact details provided? Is there a clear process for logging complaints and a clear timeline for providing a response?
- **Recording** – Are all complaints being properly recorded including outcomes and actions taken? CQC has the power to request information about complaints and can take action if this is not provided or the records are insufficient.
- **Monitoring** – are complaints being monitored to identify potential patterns that could be addressed to improve the overall service?

Services should ensure they are actively encouraging stakeholders, including service users, family members and loved ones, staff, visiting professionals and others to express their views of the service directly with the provider. This can help encourage positive feedback which can be used to demonstrate good practice, ensure any concerns are dealt with at an early stage and help avoid any unexpected criticism from CQC.



The National  
Learning Disabilities  
& Autism Awards  
2019



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