



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dementia Action Week: How staff at Royal Star & Garter rose to the challenges posed by Covid-19

Royal Star & Garter understands how important it is to get access to the right adult social and dementia care. With Dementia Action Week running from 17-23 May, the charity is supporting Alzheimer Society's Cure the Care System campaign to provide quality care that is free and easy to access, no matter where you live.

Prior to the pandemic, residents living with dementia at the charity's Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe benefitted from exceptional person-centred care, in line with residents' feelings and wishes. While there have been many challenges since the outbreak of Covid-19, this has not changed. The charity's nursing and dementia areas have remained relaxed places, where residents are happy and comfortable.

Staff adapted to the added lockdown pressures, going the extra mile to ensure everyone feels valued and one of the family, despite the restrictions. With residents unable to see families during lockdown, staff devised exciting events, new clubs, music, arts and games to tackle lack of social contact, creating magical moments and raising spirits.



A resident reminisces while looking at a photo album

Activity teams came up with creative ways to occupy, stimulate, help reminisce and connect with residents. Examples across the Homes include Zoom choir sessions, multi-floor bingo, a month-long world cruise, virtual Tour of GB cycle rides, and a new book club for residents living with dementia. Staff have also visited each room with

Outdoor concerts occurred, which residents watched from their rooms, and bunting, sun-catchers and wind-spinners were moved around the garden to give residents different objects to view.



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

Each Royal Star & Garter Home has a physiotherapy room. These are popular with residents, and throughout lockdowns meant they were able to enjoy valuable physical exercise within the Home, boosting strength and balance and promoting well-being.

Since the first lockdown, staff have facilitated video and phone calls between residents and relatives. The success of this in dementia areas took staff by surprise. Kirsty, Dementia Care Lead at Solihull, said: "I wouldn't have thought video calling would be suitable for someone living with dementia, but residents light up when they see their family members on screen."



Music plays an important part of the Royal Star & Garter's dementia care

There have also been window visits, and some relatives participated in drive-bys, waving to waiting residents. Last summer the charity arranged socially distanced outdoor visits, before bespoke Covid-secure visiting rooms were built in November. With indoor visits now taking place, relatives are given clear facemasks, making it easier for residents living with dementia to recognise and communicate with their visitor.

On Mother's and Father's Days, staff arranged for relatives to send messages, which they then read to residents.



Residents living with dementia have been kept busy and engaged

Music is an important part of the Royal Star & Garter's dementia care, with in-depth observations in 2020 revealing its positive impact. Residents laughed, played instruments, sung, danced and socialised. The impact is long-lasting. Residents remained happy, relaxed and had improved appetites. For one resident who doesn't speak, music was described as being 'his voice'.

The charity's Chair, Major General Tim Tyler said: "Throughout the pandemic our Homes have provided not only places of safety, they have continued to enhance the lives of our vulnerable residents. This has been at a time when so many people have suffered and the care sector has experienced so many challenges with a workforce under considerable strain."



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

Royal Star & Garter Chief Executive Andy Cole said: "The pandemic's devastating impact on adult social care has not only highlighted the amazing work that happens every day to support those people living with dementia but also underscored the urgent need for reform and sustainable, long-term investment. Too many still struggle to access the care and support they deserve. The high standard of dementia care that we provide at Royal Star & Garter should be the norm, not the exception."

Royal Star & Garter provides loving compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

The charity is welcoming new residents to its Homes in High Wycombe and Surbiton. For more information on this, or if you're interested in working for the charity, please go to: www.starandgarter.org

Dementia Action Week runs from 17-23 May.

[Ends]

For further information please contact:

Goolistan Cooper
Communications Officer
goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org
0208 481 7669 / 07391 868796

Cally Madden
Marketing & Communications Manager
cally.madden@starandgarter.org
020 8481 7692 / 07881 017299

About Royal Star & Garter

Our charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

Twitter: @starandgarter

Facebook: facebook.com/starandgarter

Website: www.starandgarter.org



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage



Royal Star & Garter
is a member of the
National Care Forum