

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inspiring others: Deaf student praises veterans' charity after placement

A deaf man is hoping his work placement at The Royal Star & Garter Homes encourages other people with auditory problems to achieve their goals.

Gary Cutmore says he is proof that barriers can be overcome after completing a three-week placement as part of his Trainee Nursing Associate course.

Gary, from Dagenham, worked at the Charity's Surbiton Home in November, communicating with people using sign language and an interpreter.

He said: *"I've really enjoyed my time here, I've learned a lot and felt very involved. The residents, staff and volunteers have been very approachable. I've really enjoyed my placement."*



Gary works as a Health Care Assistant in adult deaf services at South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, and admitted feeling nervous ahead of his first shift at The Royal Star & Garter Homes. However, he was made to feel comfortable and soon settled in.

"They have treated me like a normal student and told me things I wanted to know and needed to learn," said the 34-year-old. *"I've felt very involved throughout."*

"I always thought that as a deaf person this would be too much of a barrier. But I've realised there are no barriers. I've had loads of support and the placement has been fantastic."

"It's really important to me to show deaf people like me can get involved and support residents. I'm not different to any other nurse really. I hope this helps open the door for other deaf people to become nurses or qualified associates in the future."

The Royal Star & Garter Homes cares for ex-Servicemen and women living with disability or dementia. Many residents suffer from hearing loss, and Gary hopes staff have learned from him how to be more deaf-aware.



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**The Royal Star
& Garter Homes**
Caring for the nation's military family since 1916

The Charity's Director of Care, Pauline Shaw, agreed: *"I feel our team has a better understanding of the deaf community following Gary's placement. Like Gary, we don't think hearing loss should stop anyone from achieving their goals. I'm delighted he found his placement with us beneficial. We wish him well."*



Gary's Ward Manager at the NHS Trust's adult deaf services is Jean Pierre Foo Kune. He said: *"Gary is an example to us all. We endeavour to fully support and empower all deaf staff throughout their career, ensuring maximum communication support is provided throughout their professional pathway."*

END

Captions:

Gary with Surbiton resident Bob

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About The Royal Star & Garter Homes:

The Charity provides award-winning care for veterans and their partners who live with disability or dementia.

The Royal Star & Garter Homes is a charity founded in 1916 to care for the severely injured young men returning from the battlegrounds of the First World War. Today we provide specialist care to the whole military family in our friendly, state-of-the-art Homes. Disabled ex-Servicemen and women, and their spouses, can all benefit from our pioneering approach to nursing, dementia and therapeutic care.

We are in the process of building new Homes around the country to provide specialist nursing care for disabled ex-Service people in the best modern surroundings, including dementia care facilities to address this growing need. The Charity has award-winning Homes in Solihull, West Midlands, and Surbiton, Surrey, which also enables the Charity to offer interim care for young disabled Service personnel. Following the successes of the first two Homes, a third Home in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, is being built, with a planned opening in 2019.

We are proud to have enjoyed Royal patronage since our foundation, including that of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II from 1953 to the present day.

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