



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

International Nurses Day: Care staff working nights

To mark International Nurses Day on Wednesday 12 May, Royal Star & Garter spoke to nurses and healthcare assistants (HCAs) to find out what caring through the night is like.

While the Home is full of life during the day, it is naturally quieter at night. "There's not the hustle and bustle, they're not taking part in activities, or being served meals," said High Wycombe HCA Nicky. "At night-time they're tired and nearly all are ready for bed."



Jen and Joan share a joke

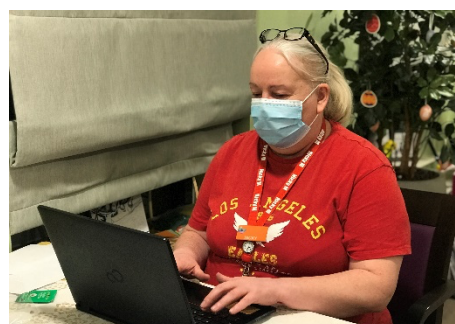
Staff stay with residents who are unable to sleep. It is one of the highlights for Solihull Nurse Trish. She said: "I have a chance to sit down and talk to them and really get to know them. It's really nice to be able to do that."

Nicky cares for residents living with dementia. She said: "When a resident is unable to sleep, we get to spend quality time together on a one-to-one basis. We sit with them, do puzzles, chat to them and get

to know them a lot better." Janine, a Surbiton HCA also caring for residents living with dementia, said: "We go by what they want. If it's company, we will sit with them and talk. If they're upset, we will comfort them. We can sing songs, do a jigsaw. We could listen to music, watch TV, or look at their life stories and memory boxes. It's very much resident-led."

If a resident feels peckish, Janine says they are offered a snack, and the fridge is always well stocked if something more substantial is required.

High Wycombe nurse Jen puts her quieter moments to good use: "I find I have more time to read residents' notes at night. I get to know more about them, their background, and their interests.



Nicky at work



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And I find more time to sit down with residents who are awake. At night, there's a deeper interaction."

Despite the slower pace at night, staff must actually hit the ground running at the beginning of their shifts. Surbiton Nurse Charlie said: "We have that window when we start our shift where we have to give out medication and meet the residents' needs before they go to bed. The first hour or so is busy."



Trish with Maggie

They also have to contend with tiredness. Trish said: "It gets to everybody at some point. When it happens you get up, you get moving and chat to colleagues. You get motivated. You open a window or stand on the balcony and breath in some fresh air. It takes a lot of time adjusting to nights, but your body does get used to it."

And having the support of colleagues adds to the positive night-time experience. "We're quite tight-knit and supportive of each other," said Nicky. Trish added: "We're like a second family, and that's important because in lockdown we've not been able to see some of our own family. So we've been supporting each other as well as our residents through the pandemic."

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