

Greensleeves Care holds Festival of Thanks for Care Home Staff

Thursday 29 April, 2021

Greensleeves Care held a virtual 'Festival of Thanks' on Monday 26th April to recognise and celebrate team members and residents across all 24 care homes. What is usually an annual awards ceremony was this year re-imagined as the Festival of Thanks, whereby instead of giving individual awards, home managers and the senior team expressed their gratitude towards those working and living on the frontline.

Frontline colleagues that run the homes day to day have always been integral to the residents' safety and happiness, but the last year has demonstrated this more than ever. At the time when care home staff deserve the appreciation more than ever before, they were not able to celebrate their achievements in the usual in-person format. However, this did not stop everybody from celebrating via Zoom!

Residents and colleagues tuned in live from Greensleeves Care homes across the country, with no shortage of party decorations within the homes, for videos and live recordings of thanks from Home Managers, as well as from Greensleeves Care's Chief Executive, Paul Newman, who hosted the hour-long event. Several homes were also visited by Greensleeves Care Trustees; Richard Costella, Maria Townson, and Liz Marsh.

Paul Newman said of the event: *"The Festival of Thanks was an important day for all colleagues and residents. We wanted to offer a collective and public thank you to everyone for their tremendous work over the last year. Everyone has gone above and beyond expectations and it was important to take time to recognise this."*

The Home Managers also praised the efforts of their respective teams over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that staff kept the residents safe and happy, despite dealing with their own fears and anxieties, and that many team members even moved into the homes in order to ensure the standard of care remained high, despite the challenging circumstances. Staff were also keen to thank the residents as well, as they have had to deal with the unforeseen circumstances of not having their families visit, and being unable to go out and about in the community.

One Home Manager called care home staff the 'forgotten frontline' which inspired a lot of reflection on the past year, as in the particularly difficult times of lockdown, there was often more focus on the activities going on within hospitals, rather than care homes. It is no secret that the pandemic hit care homes particularly hard; April saw Greensleeves Care homes partaking in the National Day of Reflection, to remember and honour the lives that were lost to COVID-19. As restrictions begin to ease, care home staff will hold these people in our hearts and remember that for many families, circumstances will never be truly 'normal' again.

The emotional aspect of the Festival of Thanks was heightened by Divisional Director, Tracy Nelson, who wrote and performed a heartfelt poem for the event. It was a perfect way to give thanks to colleagues as well as to commemorate those who are no longer with us.

There were many joyful moments too, of course. A particular highlight included a collaborative music video of multiple residents' choirs singing the classic Beatles hit 'With a Little Help from my Friends.' This perfectly captured the ethos of Greensleeves Care: 'You're among friends,' while emphasising the close bonds that have been formed between residents and care staff.

The event, although bittersweet at times, was a unifying occasion, demonstrating the effects of working alongside a friendly and cohesive team in order to achieve one goal: happy, safe and healthy residents.

To find out more about Greensleeves Care, please visit [our website](#).

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