

**Press Release**

**29 September 2017**

**Somerset nursing home named GSF Care Home of the Year**

**Outstanding end of life care rewarded with national award**

A Somerset nursing home where hugs and laughter have replaced boredom and sadness was today (29 September) named Care Home of the Year by the National Gold Standards Framework Centre for End of Life Care. (GSF).

Cholwell House, in Temple Cloud, which specialises in care for people with dementia, was judged by an expert panel to be delivering the best end of life care, beating off stiff opposition from five other homes on the shortlist for the award.

The judges, who included national independent experts from the care homes sector, assessed all six finalists against 20 standards. Cholwell House excelled across the board.

In their report, the judges said residents at Cholwell House and their families enjoyed thoughtful, understanding and compassionate care throughout their stay. They added: “Cholwell House is an extraordinary example of the very best kind of care for dementia patients at the end of their lives and throughout their stay at the home.”

Fiona Trezise, Registered Manager of the 46-bed home said Cholwell House’s success is the culmination of a major transformation in the way it looks after its residents.

“When I started at Cholwell House in 2008, we had no clear way of looking after people at the end of life. They were really dark days. So, it’s an amazing honour to win this award. It is fantastic recognition for all of the staff here. They truly do give themselves and are so motivated and passionate about providing the best care they can.

“GSF has helped us to give gold standard care and to celebrate lives and have fun. We have had a lot of deaths recently but nothing has diminished their commitment. I hope we can use this opportunity to support other homes in Somerset to adopt GSF to help improve care for more people.”

Fiona says everyone from the directors to the maintenance man shared the same vision that Cholwell House should be seen as a way of life and not a care home.

She added: “Cholwell House will be the last residence for everyone who comes here, so as soon as they arrive it is about end of life care in its widest sense. It is the ultimate privilege as it is the last thing you can do for someone and gives an enormous sense of satisfaction to support them and their families. I want everyone to have the best possible memory of their loved one.”

Fiona invites every resident and their family to a meeting, soon after admission, to discuss how and where they would like to be cared for, in the form of an Advance Care Plan. In line with their wishes, all residents at Cholwell House who died in the last year, did so at the home. There have also been no crisis admissions to hospital from the home since 2010.

All of the shortlisted homes demonstrated sustained, quality end of life care, when they were assessed by the GSF team three years after their initial accreditation.

The other shortlisted homes were:

**Amberley Lodge, Surrey**

**Birtley House, Surrey**

**Bluebirds, Milton Keynes**

**Ebury Court, Romford**

**The Aylsham Manor, Norfolk**

Fiona says staff, who don’t wear uniform, are encouraged to show their emotions adding: “We call ourselves a feelings based nursing home. When you walk in people will be having hugs and giving them a kiss and having a laugh and joke. People need love and security – emotional care is paramount.”

As well as the Care Home of the Year Award, 14 homes were receiving the GSF Quality Hallmark for the first time, while 68 were being re-accredited.

**Vic Rayner, Executive of National Care Forum, who presented the awards said:** “It is a huge privilege to present the GSF Quality Hallmark awards knowing that all of the successful homes are dedicated to providing compassionate care from the day they are admitted right up until the end of their residents’ lives.

“The whole team at Cholwell House Nursing Home deserve enormous praise for the passion, commitment and professionalism that has earned them the title of GSF Care Home of the Year. They are an inspiration for all care homes, demonstrating exactly how to provide the personalised care people need and deserve.”

Anne Keating, Managing Director of the GSF Centre, said: “As people approach the end of their lives they want to be cared for in familiar surroundings, by people who know and understand their wishes. By engaging all of their residents and their families in detailed conversations about these wishes, allied with a tangible passion for fulfilling them, Cholwell House is an exemplar for care homes across the UK.”

Those care homes that have received the GSF Quality Hallmark Award have demonstrated real improvements in the quality of care they provide, and halved crisis hospital admissions of residents at the end of life. To be accredited, homes have to achieve 20 quality standards, ranging from leadership and support to dignity and respect.

CQC recognises the achievements of GSF accredited care homes and the awards are endorsed by all major care homes’ organisations and Skills Academy for Social Care.

Three thousand care homes have completed the GSF Care Homes programme since it was launched in 2004 and more 600 have gone on to become accredited. The GSF Centre is working with expert partners from the care home and hospice sector to revise its care homes programme in line with recent national initiatives. Full details of the new programme will be announced later this year.

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Notes for Editors:

GSF gives outstanding training to all those providing end of life care to ensure better lives for people and recognised standards of care. It is the largest national programme to help improve care for patients approaching the end of life, helping health and social care professionals provide coordinated, personalised care for patients and their families and reduces hospital admissions.

To qualify for accreditation, care homes must have undertaken the full GSFCH Training programme over nine-twelve months, embedded this into their homes for at least six months and then undertaken a rigorous accreditation process. This accreditation process is endorsed by all major care homes’ organisations and supported by all major care homes trade organisations- NCA, NCF, ECCA and RNHA.

More information on the Gold Standards Framework can be found at: [www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk](http://www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk)

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