



Press Release
Immediate Release

Staffordshire Care Manager Named Finalist in Inaugural Awards

A Deputy Manager from a Staffordshire service which supports adults with learning disabilities has been named a finalist in the inaugural Housing with Care Awards.

Cassandra Palin from Oakwood Gardens, Staffordshire Supported Living has been named a finalist in the awards which recognise and celebrate excellence in accommodation and services for integrated retirement communities, people with learning disabilities and people with mental health problems. She was nominated by her manager after demonstrating outstanding dedication to residents over the past five years.

Cassandra, who started working at the Cygnet Social Care-run service in 2018 as a support worker, said: "I have a very good working relationship with my managers, they gave me my confidence back and really helped me to grow within my role.

"I struggled at first with the transition to management but now I find it easy, I have good relationships with the staff and all of the service users and I will never ask the staff to do anything that I wouldn't do.

"I still work on the floor and support with personal care and incidents because I want to show my support to staff. I would describe myself as a hands on manager and I feel that gains respect from staff. I'm friendly and bubbly and try to be positive every time I come to work, I'd like to think this reflects on the morale of the staff.

"We have an amazing and diverse staff team, everybody helps each other which makes it a lovely place to work. The best thing about my job is seeing the people we support flourish, some of the service users here have only ever been in mental health hospitals and wouldn't have had the chance to integrate into the community if it hadn't been for Cygnet Social Care opening up Oakwood Gardens.

"It is such a unique and special place. We have all worked hard as a team and as a result of that the service users are doing things people would not have thought possible."

Cassandra is nominated in the Frontline Leader award, which will be given to a senior member of staff who has shown a clear commitment to improving the delivery of care and support within their organisation. A person who has shown leadership qualities by reflecting on what could be better and supporting others to bring about change.

Service manager Hardy Uppal explained: "I nominated her because of all the dedication and hard work she has shown to the service since she commenced working with us in 2018.

"She has built great therapeutic relationships with some very complex individuals. She has been a key member of the service who consistently strives to ensure the care delivered is at a high standard. She is always willing to help and learn more. The enthusiasm she has for the service and the people we support is not unrecognised and we appreciate all her hard work."

Oakwood Gardens is part of Cygnet Social Care's Staffordshire Supported Living which supports individuals with learning disabilities, autism, mental health needs and behaviours that challenge. Individuals are supported to hold their own tenancy agreement with a registered housing association.

The Awards ceremony will take place on 9 June with some of the team attending at the Marriott Hotel on London's Grosvenor Square.

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