



**Press Release**

**Monday, 8 April 2019**

## **Whiteley House care home strikes platinum for quality care**

A Surrey care home dedicated to providing the best possible care for all its residents right up until the end of their lives, has been recognised with a major national award – for the fourth time.

Whiteley House nursing home in Whiteley Village, Walton-on-Thames, is one of 35 care homes from across England to have repeated its success in winning the Quality Hallmark Award from the National Gold Standards Framework (GSF) Centre, the UK's largest provider of training in end of life care. Staff from the home received the award from Vic Rayner, Executive Director of National Care Forum, at a special ceremony in London on 5 April.

Vic Rayner said: "Residents in Gold Standards Framework accredited care homes like Whiteley House are receiving the personalised, proactive care people want and deserve as they approach the end of their life. These homes should be congratulated for being frontrunners by embedding the principles of the newly published NHS Long Term Plan ahead of time, helping more people die where and how they would choose as well as reducing avoidable hospital admissions."

Rachel Hill, Director of Care and Community for Whiteley Homes Trust said: "The care team at Whiteley House and across the whole of Whiteley Village, have a reputation for excellence – winning this prestigious award four times. But this year they have exceeded even that success by scoring 100% in their assessment and securing a platinum level award. This is a truly amazing achievement for which the Whiteley House team, guided by Ethna Mertens, Clinical Governance & Safeguarding Lead, should be justifiably proud.

"Providing person-centered care, enabling choice and ensuring dignity, sits at the heart of what we do, but it's especially important for residents who are approaching the end of their lives and so we are delighted to be recognised for the quality of our palliative care. The timing of this award is also a fitting end for the much loved Whiteley House, as it will soon close. Its residents will move into our new state-of-the-art care centre: The Eliza Palmer Hub, where although the building will have changed, our commitment to providing excellence will remain exactly the same!"

By satisfying the team of expert assessors who visited the home that they were still meeting the necessary quality standards, including leadership and support, dignity and respect, Whiteley House has proved that it has embedded all the elements necessary to deliver good care for all of its residents right up until the end of their lives, for the long term. Homes that demonstrate their credentials for the second, third or fourth time are recognised with the Platinum award.

GSF Quality Hallmark Awards are presented to homes that demonstrate real improvement in the quality of care they provide. Many halve the number of their residents dying in hospital as well as halving crisis hospital admissions, leading to greater satisfaction for families, residents and staff and significant cost savings for the NHS.

Everyone in the home, ranging from nurses to the activities coordinator and catering staff, is involved in regular reviews with the residents. All aspects of their lives are considered including spiritual beliefs, personal interests and care preferences. Staff talk to the residents about their end of life care, giving them the opportunity to decide where and how they would like to be cared for. This has helped the residents and their families feel secure that they will be comfortable, and their preferences considered at all times.

Professor Keri Thomas, GSF Founder and National Clinical Director, said: "The aim of the Gold Standards Framework is to help care homes ensure they are delivering quality care for all of their residents not just today but for tomorrow and the next day. Whiteley House has proved that its commitment to providing personalised, compassionate care is long term and should be congratulated for its efforts. Its residents can feel reassured that staff are dedicated to delivering a high standard of coordinated care, in line with their wishes right up until the end of their life."

The GSF Care Homes Training Programme and Accreditation is recognised by Care England, National Care Forum, National Care Association and Registered Nursing Home Association and by Skills for Care as an Excellent Provider. GSF training and accreditation is a proven step towards improved CQC ratings. Of the 430 care homes rated 'outstanding' by CQC, 65 are GSF accredited.

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#### **Attached Photo shows Ethna Mertens and Rachel Hill of Whiteley Homes Trust with the GSF award:**

Left: Ethna Mertens, Clinical Governance & Safeguarding Lead, Whiteley Homes Trust

Right: Rachel Hill, Director of Care and Community, Whiteley Homes Trust

**The Gold Standards Framework** gives outstanding training to all those providing end of life care to ensure better lives for people and recognised standards of care. The GSF Care Homes Training Programme started in 2004 and is the biggest and most comprehensive programme to improve care at the end of life. Staff in accredited homes say GSF has helped them feel better equipped to deal with the challenging task of looking after patients until they die by providing a framework for identifying, and then planning and assessing the care of those people in the last years of life. The GSF Centre launched a revised version of its Care Homes Programme in 2018 which is more accessible, more affordable and even more focused on outcomes. Drawing on the learnings of the Vanguard and the experience of GSF accredited homes, this new version is being delivered by the 13 regional centres across England. [@GSFCentre](http://www.goldstandardsframework.co.uk)

[Whiteley Village](#) is a vibrant retirement community of around 500 people, the majority of whom are of limited financial means. The Village is owned and managed by The Whiteley Homes Trust. Most residents live independently in 262 almshouse cottages but for those who need more support there are care at home services and a range of extra care facilities including Whiteley House, which is due to close in Spring 2019. Its current residents will move into the new £10.5m Eliza Palmer Hub, with 30 extra-large care suites, therapy facilities and a stunning public café. The Hub is integral to the Trust's strategy to revolutionise how it provides care in the community. Work will begin later this year to convert Whiteley House into c.44 leasehold apartments for those of retirement age.