



Pendine Park news

The newsletter of the Pendine Park care organisation

Issue 11



Unique double for Pendine Park



Pendine Park has struck gold. We are one of only a handful of social care companies across the UK to receive the coveted Investors in People Gold Award.

The IIP success marked a unique double for us because it's believed Pendine Park is the only care organisation in Britain to achieve the accolade while also having the ISO 9002 quality assurance accreditation.

Pendine Park was the first nursing home in the United Kingdom to be awarded ISO 9002 exactly 20 years ago, or British Standard 5750 as it was known then.

The IIP Gold Award was presented to proprietors Mario Kreft MBE and his wife, Gill, at a special ceremony by Wrexham AM Lesley Griffiths.

The event was attended by residents, relatives and staff representing all their seven care homes.

Lesley Griffiths said: "It's always fantastic to hear about a good news

story like this in the area and I was delighted to have the opportunity of presenting this richly deserved award to Pendine Park.

"IIP Gold is a rare accolade and is recognition of the constant quest to innovate and raise standards.

"This is a tribute to everybody who works at Pendine Park because this award could not have been achieved without their commitment to developing a framework of best practice."

Among those joining in the celebrations was residents' representative Alan Hassall.

He said: "The Investors in People Gold Award shows that people are really getting cared for at the top level, no matter how disabled or enabled they are."

It was a sentiment echoed by relatives' representative Malcolm Crosbie whose beloved wife Audrey passed away recently.

Mr Crosbie added: "It's yet another accolade for Pendine Park and it's well deserved because I doubt you'd find a better place anywhere."

It was a proud day for Mario and Gill, who was the main architect of the detailed IIP strategy which took in the whole organisation.

As part of the process, more than 80 members of staff were interviewed privately by the independent IIP assessor.

Mr Kreft said: "We're absolutely delighted because it's been such a team effort. It's been a long journey, but we think it is exactly the right thing for care organisations to aim for and then hopefully to succeed in.

"Our clear purpose and vision is very simple. It's about ensuring the best care for people, the best possible development and training opportunities for our staff, being a stable and sustainable organisation and importantly being a sector leader, and I think today has shown that we are delivering on all of those for objectives."

Hat-trick of excellence awards

Three learners from Wrexham picked up half the six UK excellence awards given out at a glittering ceremony in London.

Two of the people honoured by the Worshipful Company of Tallow Chandlers were from the Pendine Park care organisation while the third was a learner at Deeside College.

The event at Tallow Chandlers' magnificent hall was organised in conjunction with the City and Guilds examination body.

Care Practitioners Amanda Dexter and James Bowen both gained Level 2 Diplomas in Health and Social Care for which they studied with the organisation's in-house training arm, Smartcare Training.

Childminder Helen Wynne, who studied with Deeside College, was also judged to be the overall outstanding prize winner for her dedication.

The trio's remarkable achievements were recognised at a special celebration at Pendine Park.

Wrexham AM Lesley Griffiths was extremely proud that learners from her town had clinched 50 per cent of the excellence awards up for grabs in the whole of the UK. She said: "I am not surprised though because the people involved in the sector here take upskilling very seriously."

Deeside College Principal David Jones said: "It's highlighted the outstanding achievements of the people involved in social care in the region."

Mario Kreft was equally proud and added: "The professional and personal development of our staff is a key priority for Pendine Park."

James Bowen, who works at Pendine Park's Penybryn care home, last year won our Smile Award for his happy disposition and the difference it makes to the lives of the residents and their families.

He said: "The teaching at Smartcare is superb and I am now putting into practice everything I have learned."

Amanda, who works in Highfield, added: "It certainly made me feel a bit special."



Lesley Griffiths AM, David Jones, left, Deeside College Principal and Mario Kreft with, back, Amanda Dexter, Helen Wynne, Blyths Wood Childcare Services and James Bowden.

Movie magic is perfect training tool for carers

A bittersweet film about ageing opera singers provided a training day with a difference for over 100 of our care practitioners.

The group from Pendine Park decamped to the Odeon cinema at the Eagles Meadow shopping centre, in Wrexham, to watch the critically acclaimed movie, Quartet.

Appropriately, the film is set in a retirement home and the problems and pleasures encountered by the musical residents were used as part of Pendine Park's training programme.

Quartet was directed by Oscar winning screen great Dustin Hoffman and features a stellar cast including Maggie Smith, Tom Courtenay, Pauline Collins and Billy Connolly.

The private screening was the idea of Pendine Park Director Gill Kreft and was organised by their teaching care centre, Smartcare, and Odeon Manager Andy Elvis.

Andy said: "Quartet is set in a retirement home and I am sure some of the situations depicted within the film form an ideal training package for care practitioners.

Mario Kreft added: "Quartet is set in Beecham House, a fictional retirement home. It's a wonderful film and Dustin Hoffman and the cast have done a remarkable job in capturing the emotions of life in a care home community.

"At Pendine we talk about the six senses of care, achievement, belonging, continuity, purpose, significance and security, these are wonderfully portrayed in the film.

"Being able to treat our staff and Smartcare trainers to enjoy watching a fantastic film such as Quartet helps us to get our message of just how important enrichment is to our residents and clients."

He added: "We are involved in a long-standing collaboration with the Hallé orchestra and we are also Welsh National Opera Gold Community Champions."

Danuszcza Jensen, who has 21 years' experience as a care practitioner, is team leader at Pendine Park's Bondlondeb care home, a centre of excellence for dementia care.

She said: "Coming to the cinema for a private screening was certainly a great idea and a tremendous way to train staff. There were lessons to be learnt that I will certainly remember for a very long time."

Jeanette Whiteley, a care practitioner with Pendine Park's domiciliary care company, Independent Living, said: "I think I understand more now the importance of having that sense of belonging and needing to feel secure. I certainly took a lot from the film."

Housekeeper Carol Bowen added: "It made me think how even little conversations with residents are really important and how vital it is to provide a homely environment for our residents to enjoy."



Top: Mario and Gill Kreft with Odeon Manager Andy Elvis and the Pendine Park staff who took part in the training day.

Above: Billy Connolly, Maggie Smith, Tom Courtenay and Pauline Collins star in a scene from the movie "Quartet."

Right: Gwynfor Jones talks to staff



Singing doctors are musical tonic



It was just what the doctors ordered. Two top performers from Welsh National Opera gave an intimate performance just for the residents..

Doctors Diva and Divo – alias the “singing doctors” Zoe Milton Brown and David Graham – gave show-stopping

performances in four one hour shows for residents of the Bryn Bella, Bodlondeb, Penybryn, Cae Bryn and Hillbury homes.

Artist in residence Sarah Edwards explained: “We thought this project would translate well for our residents.”

Main picture: Dr Diva has residents joining in.
Above: Resident Edith Williams receives a red rose from Dr Divo, David Douglas.

Elizabeth, 105, reveals the secret of youthful looks



A resident born in the year the Henry Ford changed the world forever with his Model T Ford car has celebrated her 105th birthday.

To mark the occasion, great great grandmother Elizabeth Hughes received her second telegram from the Queen - the first came on her 100th birthday - and held a party with her family and the Mayor and Mayoress of Wrexham.

Now Mrs Hughes says she is determined to get a third telegram from Her Majesty in five years' time when plans to celebrate her 110th birthday.

More than 70 members of Elizabeth's family joined her for a special birthday party at Hillbury House care home.

Mrs Hughes puts her longevity down to only putting up

with one man in her life.

She said: "One was enough. When my husband passed away I stayed away from men. They are more trouble than they are worth! I am really pleased to get another telegram from the Queen and I have had a lovely party too with all my family here."

Hillbury Manager Cindy Clutton said: "She is a remarkable lady and it's a pleasure to have been able to invite all her family here for a special birthday celebration party."



The Mayor and Mayoress of Wrexham, Cllr Ian Roberts and Hilary Roberts with Cindy Clutton, manager of Hillbury help Elizabeth celebrate.

Wonder Wagon transports musical joy

The wonders of Wrexham and music have been prescribed to schoolchildren and residents of Hillbury care home by Dr Song.

Youngsters from the town's Victoria CP School joined with residents for the performance by the musician – otherwise known as composer Stacey Blythe.

The bi-lingual hands-on event was part of Welsh National Opera's Wonder Wagon initiative, part of the WNO's Singing Doctors project.

Pendine Park is a Gold Community champion for its support of Welsh National Opera and its ground-breaking three year community project in Wrexham.

Photos of the residents and youngsters, posing in picture frames, will go on display in the town as part of the project.

Stacey, who brought along her harp, accordion and a host of instruments for the residents to play, said: "These sessions are some of the most special workshops that I have been involved in. I am constantly surprised by the reaction for the residents – the power of music to move them is so beautiful."

The youngsters, aged six and seven from the school's Year Two joined the residents to create a musical work together, under the guidance of Dr Song, playing instruments such as drums, tambourines and even triangles.

Resident Annice Thomas, 80, said: "I've really enjoyed taking part in this." I was able to try Stacey's harp, and I've never done anything like that before.

Fellow resident Selina Jenks, 83, added: "This is good fun, these sessions are so enjoyable, you can't beat making music together – and it is lovely to see the children here as well."

Artist-in-residence Sarah Edwards said: "These workshops are very fulfilling and enriching for their lives. We know making music is very popular with the residents."



Dr Song (Stacey Blythe) with Victoria CP pupils Lucy Hilditch, six, and Thomas Ellerton, seven, with Hillbury House residents Betty Coggins, 84, and Annice Thomas, 80.

Work of care home poets goes on show at top bookshop

A group of our residents have turned their memories into touching poems.

Now the work of the senior wordsmiths from the Gwern Alyn care home has gone on show at the Waterstones book shop in Wrexham.

People can read the poetry or buy a copy and all the money raised will go to the Hope House children's hospice.

The Poetry Group saw residents of the home, working together to turn some of their fondest memories and most difficult experiences into verse. According to Waterstones manager Ged Armstrong, the poetry is already proving very popular.

He said: "People have really taken great interest in it. We are finding customers sitting in the shop and reading through it. I think many are touched by both the way the poems are written and of course the subjects."

Gwern Alyn's activities coordinator, Yvonne Moran, said: "We set up the Poetry Group as a way of stimulating interest and getting residents to think and talk to each other.

"The main thing is each poem we have written is relevant to a member of the group. Some are humorous while some are very touching and some extremely thought-provoking."

"It's been a wonderful experience and I feel very privileged. It really shows that older people have so much to say and we should never forget that."

Resident Marian Williams, 91, absolutely loves being part of the Poetry Group and really enjoys hearing the experiences of her fellow residents too.

She said: "It was really great fun sitting down and talking with my friends and reminiscing about what we used to get up to."

I have lived here at Gwern Alyn for about a year now and I really like it. I have lots of friends and we can be as busy as we want, there is always something for us to do.

"It's wonderful to see our book on show here at Waterstones, whoever would have thought. We might be famous yet, who knows!"

Tom Wynn, 88, penned War, a poem which draws on his wartime experiences of fighting on the front line.

He said: "I was called up at 18 and was originally sent to Algiers and later Italy. I saw things I don't like to think about and I suppose my poem is anti-war."

Tom's daughter, Susan Clutton, said: "I think it's a brilliant poem and I am so proud of him. It really brings it home what the war was about then. Perhaps we don't realise today quite what it was like."



War.

From eighteen to twenty-four,
No Hiding, no escape, no peace only war,
My body became the best it's ever been,
My hearing excellent,
My eyes supreme,
Friendships are made and lost,
Freedom comes at an incredible cost,
No time for beauty,
The birds or the trees,
I have no time,
Because I'm fighting for these.

Climbing Trees and Walls.

Girls weren't allowed to climb trees and walls,
Wrapped in cotton wool we weren't allowed to take falls,
But a burning desire, to climb ever higher,
Made me careless and my parents hairless,
My brother swung from tree to tree,
My dad said he was a chimpanzee,
They let him climb the walls and didn't object,
But I had to study books to raise my intellect,
I envied my brother the freedom to climb,
But as soon as I started I got caught every time,
Now that I'm older and freedom is mine,
Looking at trees brings everything to mind,
There has been talk and plenty of rumours,
That I did climb many a tree and showed off my bloomers!

From left, Joan Bowyer, Marian Williams, and Beryl Francis with their book of poems available at Waterstones, Wrexham with Ged Armstrong, branch manager and carer Yvonne Moran.

Rebecca is top of the class after a career change

Young mum Rebecca Griffiths turned her back on a career as a teacher to become a care practitioner.

The decision has paid dividends after successive promotions that have seen Rebecca, 32, appointed as the deputy manager of Hillbury House care home.

Along the way, she won Gold in the residential care practitioner category at the 2011 Wales Care Awards.

While working for a degree in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Worcester, she took a part-time job in a Midlands care home to help fund her studies.

The experience convinced Rebecca her career path lay in a different direction and after moving back to her home town of Wrexham, she joined Pendine Park as a care practitioner.

According to Rebecca, Pendine Park's training programme - from mandatory training through to additional training and career development - has been superb.

She said: "It's strange how things work out really as I was all set on a career in teaching. But, having worked in a care home in the Midlands to earn a bit of extra cash while I was at Uni, I realised I wanted to forge my own career in the care sector.

"I have enjoyed working in care from day one and as deputy manager of Hillbury House I am involved day-to-day with hands on care, as is Cindy Clutton, our registered manager, which is brilliant."

Rebecca says it was the training that was available to through Pendine Park's in-house training arm, Smartcare Training, that has helped her develop her career so quickly.

She said: "Having started as a care practitioner in February 2008 I was made a Senior Care Practitioner just after 12 months later. I then became a Social Partner making formal care plans for our residents.

"That is such an important role. It means we aren't forcing change in a residents daily routine which is vitally important. It is often the small things that matter.

"For instance, if a lady has her morning cup of tea before she cleans her teeth before coming into care then she won't appreciate that routine changing and been given tea after she's cleaned her teeth when she comes into care.

"That might seem such a small insignificant thing to us but to someone coming into care it can be a big issue."

Rebecca, a single mum to daughter Seren, eight, loves her job and eventually hopes to become a registered manager at Pendine Park.

She said: "There is so much opportunity here at Pendine Park and I believe in the company's ethos. Here, residents come first and everyone is treated as an individual and with dignity which is so important to me.

"I can't put it better than to say if I was looking for a care home for a member of my family. I have never seen anywhere where the staff are so friendly and so dedicated."





Happy birthday Daisy

A big birthday cake, a card and a bone to chew on were just some of the gifts handed to a birthday girl with a difference.

Tallulah Daisy Diamond, the snowy white Russian Samoyed who is a popular visitor to Pendine Park.

They celebrated Daisy's first birthday in style with a special party attended by staff and residents.

Susie Owen, Highfield House care home activities co-ordinator, says Daisy is very popular with everybody and is a huge tonic to residents.

She said: "Daisy always brings a smile to the faces of residents she comes into contact with. She's very gentle but loves to run off plenty of energy.

"Many residents just love stroking her and I often think they get a great deal of pleasure from being in contact with her.

"She's a very beautiful dog, her coat is amazing and she's definitely a welcome visitor to Highfield House."

Nicky Clarke, Bryn Bella care home activities co-ordinator agreed adding: "Residents really respond to Daisy when she visits."

Highfield House resident Emma Locker says Daisy brings sunshine into her life.

She said: "She's a beautiful, beautiful dog. We all love seeing her and playing with her."



From left, Irene Monks, Nicky Clarke, Yvonne Moran, Susie Owen and Anita Bassett with Daisy

Mentors take training out of classroom

Work-placed mentors are key to ensuring our staff are up to speed and constantly monitored to ensure the highest possible standards of care are maintained.

Care Practitioners at Pendine Park are mentored by team leaders, or partners, chosen for their skills and knowledge in important areas of the care environment in which they work.

According to Gill Hughes, Pendine Park's Responsible Individual, the aim is to take training out of the classroom.

Gill, who is responsible for ensuring the organisation complies with all relevant statutory regulations, says the scheme is based around competency assessments.

She said: "The scheme is run as a rolling programme ensuring every member of staff is targeted. Mentors are a valued asset and resource to the organisation.

"They are given responsibility because of the skills they possess and demonstrate on a daily basis in their work. Mentors are respected by their peers and the scheme promotes roll modelling which has many positives for the mentor and the member of staff being mentored.

"The scheme is currently on the third 'tool kit'. There are three 'tool kits', fire awareness, health and safety awareness and infection control. And each 'tool kit' runs for a two month

span."

"There is no doubt on-the-job mentoring means all our staff are learning and improving their skills on a daily basis."

Mentor Ruth Marr, 38, who works at Bryn Bella, said: "It's really important new staff learn quickly and feel comfortable carrying out their duties. Our residents come first and it's very important their personal care plans are taken into account.

"Working together within the care home means we can put things into practice straight away and new staff members can see the difference they are making to a resident's well-being immediately."

Long-serving staff honoured

Long-serving members of staff of a care organisation have been honoured - after amassing more than 2,000 years between them.

Special ceremonies have been held to present certificates marking the service of more than 50 members of staff at the Pendine Park, in Wrexham.

Proprietor Mario Kreft MBE, says the long service given by staff should dispel the myth of there being a high turnover of staff within the care industry.

He said: "The average time someone works at Pendine Park is more than five years. In fact, we employ 515 people with the longest serving member of staff having worked here for 26 years.

"Add together the years of service our staff have given to the organisation and the total is in excess of 2,670 years which is, I believe, a remarkable figure.

"On top of that 79 per cent of our care practitioner staff are qualified to NVQ Level 2 or above, while 15 per cent are working toward those qualification and the remaining six per cent are going through the induction process."

"I really believe our staff enjoy working here and take a great deal of pride in what they do.

"It's a positive message and I am delighted so many members of staff chose to remain with the organisation forging careers and seeking self advancement through the training we offer."

Carol Roberts has worked at Pendine Park for 26 years initially in the housekeeping department before switching to catering some years ago.

She said: "I probably would have retired this year before the government changed the goalposts! I do enjoy working here however, it's a great team and I think we all pull together.

"I have some lovely colleagues and I think everybody is singing off the same hymn sheet, that the residents come first."

Dave Slawson has worked in the maintenance department for 20 years and says he was delighted to be given a certificate to mark his long service.

He said: "It's flown by to be honest. I've always enjoyed working here."

Housekeeping manager Sheila George has 21 years'



service at Pendine Park and says it's all about teamwork.

She said: "It's absolutely true that none of us can do it alone, it really is all about teamwork.

"I have worked with some wonderful colleagues, both past and present, throughout my time at Pendine Park."

Finance Manager Cynthia Edwards, who has 19 years' service, said: "It doesn't matter what department you work in whether admin or as a carer, or in catering or maintenance, the reason we are here is for the residents. They come first and that's why it's such a happy place."

Admin worker Beth Mullock, who has 15 years' service to her name, added: "It been wonderful to be part of such a strong and such a contented team.

"Everyone takes pride in what we do and thanks to the training packages available to everyone, no one is left behind. It's a happy place and a calm and welcoming environment.

"That's why I think so many people are happy to remain working here."



Front from left, Carol Young, Carol Roberts, and Sheila George, with, back from left, Beth Mullock, Cynthia Edwards and Dave Slawson

Mayor joins Comic Relief zumbathon



The Mayor and Mayoress of Wrexham Cllr Ian and Mrs Hilary Roberts kick off the event with staff, from left, Chris Hodge, Leanne Hughes, Tracey Evans, Ceri Smith, Emma Roberts and Joyce Williams

Members of staff put their best feet forward for Red Nose Day - with a Zumba marathon.

Carers, trainers and assessors tackled a one-hour continuous sponsored zumbathon to raise funds for Comic Relief.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Wrexham, Cllr Ian Roberts, and his wife, Hilary, joined in the high-energy dancing in the chapel of Hillbury House.

The event was organised by Pendine Park Teaching Care Centre admin assistants Emma Roberts and Leanne Hughes.

Emma said: "I go to zumba every week at Brymbo Memorial Hall with Leanne so we asked our trainer, Zoe Holman, to

come along to Hillbury House so we could raise some money for Comic relief through a sponsored event.

"It been a real laugh and I'm sure there will be a few people with aches and pains tomorrow!"

According to Cllr Roberts, it is always a pleasure to visit Pendine Park and to join in with fundraising and social events.

He said: "Hilary and I really enjoy supporting these events which are always well organised and fun. It was certainly enjoyable, even if I have to look foolish by having red nose stickers glued to my cheeks!"

Pendine Park Teaching Care Centre manager Tracey Evans was delighted to support Emma and Leanne's initiative by

joining in the fundraising event.

She said: "I'll be aching tomorrow no doubt about that! However, Emma and Leanne wanted to raise more than £100 from the event and I'm sure they will easily do better than that.

"We have had more than 25 members of staff give up their time to join in and everyone has enjoyed the event while raising funds."

Pendine Park Teaching Care Centre diploma assessor Ceri Smith was exhausted after her work-out.

She said: "I have never exercised like that for ages but it was brilliant fun. It certainly makes you feel good even if I'm going to be very sore in the morning!"