

Care & Support West Award Finalists 2018

Huge congratulations to six of our staff who have been announced as finalists in this year's Care & Support West Awards 2018. There were a record number of nominations this year, with the number surpassing the 2017 total, demonstrating the breadth of care delivered by social care providers across the region and beyond. The panel met in June to discuss the nominees and agreed on the finalists in each category.

Our finalists, with an excerpt from their nominations, are:

Amber Torr – Care Home Frontline Worker

Amber is a team leader who is working at 2a Court in Kingswood supporting the 15 people who live there who have varying degrees of learning disabilities and complex needs. Amber is the most person centred, dynamic, inspirational, professional, dedicated person I have met for a long time! During her time at Court Road, she has built excellent reciprocal relationships with the people who live here and always puts the person first in everything she does. She has made such a difference to people's lives by putting the person first and ensuring their individual needs are being met.

Alan Nuttall – Care Trainer Frontline Worker

Alan's role is to provide PBS education and support to the people we support and the staff that support them.

Positive Behavioural Support is an effective and ethical way of supporting people with learning difficulties who are at risk of behaviour that challenges. This is something Alan has been passionate about his whole career – you could say he was a PBS trainer before PBS existed! It is based on an assessment of the broad, social, physical and individual context in which the behaviour occurs and this information is used to develop support interventions that improve the person's quality of life and those around them.

He improves the quality of life for many people the Trust supports by ensuring that service users and staff understand and embed the importance of supporting people with complex and challenging needs with respect, dignity and in ways that promote control, choice and independence for people.

Remi Makulek – Care Trainer Frontline Worker

Remi is the Moving and Handling Lead for Milestones Trust. Remi is a passionate and determined individual who leads a group of 14 dedicated and highly skilled, self-selected, moving and handling specialists.

The most significant and substantial examples of the outcomes of Remi's influence and direction of this talented and dedicated group of trainers are the development of a guide to Moving and Handling - The Guide to Handling of Standard Techniques (GHOST) which was published in 2016. The GHOST and supporting documentation have received praise and recognition from all internal divisions of the trust. And externally from Sheenagh Orchard, a registered member of the NBE and a nationally recognised moving and handling guru and by CQC, who were so impressed with the documentation during a recent inspection, that they took copies to show their internal colleagues at the Care Quality Commission.

Amy Gordon – Learning Disability & Mental Health Specialist Care

Amy is the Service User Involvement Coordinator for Milestones Trust. Amy's role is to empower the people the trust supports to lead the lives they choose to through education, inclusion, giving voice to and platforms from which they can be heard and influence the direction and culture of the Trust. Amy brings enthusiasm, tenacity and bounds of creativity to her work and has significantly developed this important role for the trust in her 30 month tenure. Her tirelessness, strength of will, community spirit and versatility have improved the lives and wellbeing of the people the trust support and the staff who support them. She is embedding Involvement principles in all aspects of the Trust. She is a keen supporter of human rights and access for service users and is unafraid to challenge complacency or mediocre practice in the trust.

Suzanne Creed – Supported Living Manager

Suzanne is Project Coordinator to a number of Milestones Trust service users, but I am nominating her for this award regarding her work with one particular individual, who is an adult with a learning disability.

Despite having a very small number of hours each week to work with the person, Suzanne has been extremely flexible in her approach and has worked hours to suit his needs even when they have encroached on her personal life and plans. This has been vital in ensuring that the person had effective and empathic support during a period that could easily be described as one of the most difficult of his life. Suzanne worked tirelessly with the person, his social worker and the police to ensure the best possible outcome for him when the outlook was bleak and a possible custodial sentence loomed. Through acting as an advocate for the person, Suzanne's actions have been instrumental in avoiding a custodial sentence.

Mulberry House – Learning Disability Home Organisation of the Year

Mulberry House is a home that supports five gentlemen to live meaningful and independent lives both at home and in the community. I'm nominating the team because of the outstanding work they produce with the people who live at Mulberry House. They are a skilled, passionate and dedicated staff team who always go above and beyond to benefit the lives of the service users. They are flexible and adapt to the changing needs of the residents/service. They work in person centred ways always ensuring the service users are at the heart of any decision making that impacts' their lives.

The service has been through major changes in the last 12 months, namely moving to a new location and a new resident moving in, and managing these changes and transitions has provided both opportunities and challenges to the staff and residents of Mulberry House.

Good luck to all the finalists who will be attending the Awards Gala Dinner at the Ashton Gate Football Stadium on 20th October. And if reading this has inspired you to think about making a nomination next year, we will be letting you know when the nominations open for the 2019 Awards early next year.