

GORSEY CLOUGH NURSING HOME A TRAILBLAZER IN DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER'S CARE

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Gorsey Clough (<http://www.gorseyclough.co.uk>) has become the first care home in the North West to adopt the SPECAL (<http://www.specal.co.uk>) (Specialised Early Care for Alzheimer's) programme, which takes a holistic approach to Alzheimer's and dementia care.

The Tottington-based care home has embarked on this innovative yet controversial training programme for the care of its residents suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia. SPECAL advocates prescribing minimal medication and encourages care homes to impose fewer restrictions on their residents.

There are approximately 700,000 people living with dementia in the UK and this figure is forecast to double by 2031*. It's becoming increasingly important for nursing homes to offer a high quality of care and expertise in relation to dementia and Alzheimer's patients.

Home and deputy home managers respectively at Gorsey Clough (<http://www.gorseyclough.co.uk>), Collette Conway and Janet Dawson, are fully trained in the SPECAL (<http://www.specal.co.uk>) programme and care strategy and are now passing this on to other members of staff at the home.

Collette has long been an advocate of this approach and has already introduced aspects of individualised care to Gorsey Clough (<http://www.gorseyclough.co.uk>).

She explains: "When I started in mental health nursing, everyone was treated the same way. All our residents used to be prescribed a range of medication which greatly reduces their ability to function normally.

"For many years now we've been carefully evaluating each of our residents and their particular medication. We aim to reduce this to the lowest possible level, which allows them to function at a much higher level and vastly improves their quality of life."

Collette believes that SPECAL (<http://www.specal.co.uk>) is a natural progression for the home in terms of its care. "Being involved with SPECAL (<http://www.specal.co.uk>) provides us with a definitive structure that we can implement on the floor. It's a big change to the way we work currently but it's worth it to see the positive impact it has on our residents and their families.

"Many dementia sufferers follow their own 'missions' as it were. For example, one lady may decide that she wants to wear her coat inside all day. Many care homes will try to force her to remove her coat, but this will only distress her and make life difficult for the care workers.

"SPECAL (<http://www.specal.co.uk>) encourages care staff to work around these 'missions', which results in far more relaxed and happier residents as well as much less stress for the staff. Family members notice a difference too and can see that their loved ones are happy and more responsive."

Adam Goldsmith, director at Gorsey Clough (<http://www.gorseyclough.co.uk>), commented: "The feeling around the home is very positive. We're all very excited about the impact that SPECAL

(<http://www.specal.co.uk>) will have at Gorse Clough (<http://www.gorseyclough.co.uk>) and hope that this will be a real boost to our already high levels of care.”

-Ends-

*Figures from the Alzheimer’s Research Trust

Notes to editors:

- The Gorse Clough Care Home (<http://www.gorseyclough.co.uk>) is based in Tottington, Bury. It is a family business that was founded over 20 years ago.
- The home specialises in providing 24 hour nursing and residential care for persons with diverse mental health or physical needs.
- Gorse Clough (<http://www.gorseyclough.co.uk>) has forged an excellent reputation among healthcare professionals and in the local community for the high quality care service it provides.
- SPECAL (<http://www.specal.co.uk>) aims to achieve a better quality of life for sufferers of dementia and Alzheimer’s and their families and carers. It adopts a bespoke approach to each case and encourages care tailored to the individual.

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