

Human Right to Family Life



A Slice* about We are Family

* Over 20 different strands of work took place between March and October 2022 as part of Rights Made Real Phase 2. Each of these strands was situated under one of 4 Human Rights. This Slice offers a slice of insight into one of those strands.

HUMAN RIGHT TO FAMILY LIFE

A Slice about We Are Family

The idea for the We Are Family emerged from a conversation with a staff member in a Glasgow care home and one of the Rights Made Real team. The conversation was about the visiting experience in care homes, and the staff member shared that in their home that quite a number of residents receive no visitors.

This led to the idea of an award specifically for people who may not have a family member or friend in their lives to buy them a gift or a treat.

The £150 award gave care home staff the chance to give particular attention to those who don't have visitors. In total 13 residents benefitted from the award. The main ways in which the awards were used were for residents to redecorate their bedroom to make it more homely and personal to them and special trips to places the resident had always wanted to visit with one-to-one time with staff.

Creating Connections with the right to family life 'Be Included' Principle from the National Care Standards

Some key elements of this opportunity connected with the right to family life and 'be included' were:

- Recognition that for some residents the care home staff as their family has particular meaning, and this enabled the special bond between the staff and residents to be celebrated in a particular way
- To 'be included' encompassing the opportunity to be favourably 'singled out' for special attention
- To have the person's uniqueness within the care home community valued through the award being spent on something significant to them

What we've Heard

Stories from 'We are Family' Award

"One resident in a care home had no living relatives or family and friends to visit. She had a befriender who came every week.

She had had to move to the home quite rapidly on Christmas eve and came with very few belongings.

She did not like coming out of her room her room was her safe haven .

She loves cats and another resident had a toy cat that made noises and was interactive Anne liked this. We bought her the cat – staff were so excited to see her face – she did not like it or want it. We sent it back. Staff were not disappointed just eager to think what she would like. So we asked her about decorating her sparse room. We got a cat throw, duvet covers and posters all with the cat theme. She loved this.

We don't have many residents without visitors – staff do recognise this and spend a lot of time with residents who have no family. It has made us think more that this is such a good use of our time and something that we don't want to compromise on".

"For one resident he was a single man with no visitors. He had worked all his life at the local farm and loved animals and talking about anything to do with farming. With the funding we were able to purchase a VIP pass to a local farm where he and one of the carers Tim were able to go for the day. It was a one-to-one experience where he was able to talk about farming, the animals, crops etc and even reminiscing about local farms in the area that he knew about. There were new conversations and we learnt things about him that we did not know. Farming is not our speciality topic. The one -o-one experience made him feel special and that people were really interested to be with him. We had never seen him so animated. There was also something about the all male environment. In the home we only have one male carer and most of the residents are women. He was out with the lads. After the farming visit we went to the local pub for a chippy and a pint – just the lads.

It has made us think more about the value of one-to-one experiences and also about the hidden aspects for example that he so enjoyed the male company".

Something you Might want to Ask or Think more About

- What did you like in the two stories above?
- Have you or someone you know done something a little bit similar?
- What has thinking about these stories sparked in you?

