

Mental Wellbeing: Leicester-Shire & Rutland Twilight Games

During August 2016 athletes were coming together to perform at what can only be described as the pinnacle event of the sporting calendar. This was their opportunity to shine following months of hard work, intense training and tactical insight and to perform at their very best ability.

For this was it, the long awaited inaugural **Leicester-Shire & Rutland Twilight Games!**

Whilst athletes from all around the globe were arriving in Rio for the 2016 Olympic and Paralympics Games, back in Leicestershire the residents of **6 care homes were keenly preparing to take part in a competition of adapted games and activities.**

The aim of the Twilight Games was to deliver a programme of **adapted sports to residents in care settings** with the objective of enhancing their day to day life through increased mobility and co-ordination, mental health, wellbeing and increased social activity.

To do this a programme of adapted activities were devised which could accommodate the range of abilities and level of mobility of residents likely to be residing within the care settings. This also included how the activities would help to support physical and mental co-ordination and increased mobility through exercise.

The sports included –

- Sitting Volleyball
- Petanque
- Table Top Boccia
- Bean Bag Target
- Audio Basketball

To enhance the programme, a cultural element was included to link in with the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games which would enable all within the care settings to be involved in a sporting activity and celebration.



Each care setting nominated staff members to be trained in the delivery of the activities and all received resource cards and equipment. The aim was to deliver the activities on a weekly basis so that residents became familiar with the formats and the range of mobility required.

In preparation for the 'Twilight Games' competition week each care setting nominated a country to represent and decorated their homes in flags and bunting to create a friendly competitive sporting environment which all residents could engage with. In-house competitions took place during the week of 15th – 19th August with all results collated in order to determine the overall winning care setting. Visits were made to the individual care settings to view competitions taking place, present medals to all participants and to gain feedback from both staff and residents involved.

The teams taking part were all extremely skilful at the activities and very competitive. They immersed themselves in the ethos of taking part in a competitive sporting event and

created a real cultural experience of the country they were representing. Some care homes even had authentic Italian and Spanish menus that week with Pizza and Prosecco for lunch on the last day! Others toasted each other with a small glass of sherry having received their medals and sang the national anthem – it was a wonderful experience for us as much as for them. All the residents cheering on Team GB and were keeping a keen watch on their achievements and every growing medal tally.

The feedback from staff and residents was extremely positive and all wished to continue to deliver the activity sessions which have become embedded into their weekly routine. Several of the homes have requested that the competition element becomes an annual event.

The feedback from staff told us that it was a **valuable resource** to have and felt reassured by receiving the training and the ongoing support by the coach. Having the additional competitive element enhanced the programme as it gave them an outcome to work towards and supported the momentum of the programme. The cultural aspect brought them closer to the Olympics taking place and enabled the whole care setting to be involved in the event at some stage. Staff were able to adapt the activities further where necessary to suit individual needs i.e. at one care home, the staff ensured that those bedridden residents were able to play the audio basketball game as they were able to take the equipment into their bedrooms.

Feedback and Figures

*“Quality of life has risen this week whilst being part of the games and crucially it has helped our residents with their **mobility, concentration and co-ordination whilst having fun, being active and socialising with others**” Moat House*

*“**Not laughed so much** for a long time and the residents are still talking about it” Moat House*

*“Our Care home really enjoyed taking part from the residents to the staff!! Such **fun and laughs** had by all and a healthy competitive competition grew and we were surprised at times at what some residents could do and all with a smile on their faces”. Longcliffe Nursing Home*

“We had great fun choosing our teams, practising the games and decorating the home with the Italian themed bunting. ” Oak House

“My shoulder isn’t as stiff since I’ve been playing sitting volleyball” Moat House resident.

- 2016 Winners of the Twilight Games – Moat House Care Home, Burbage
- 2016 Spirit of the Games Winners – Longcliffe Nursing Home, Loughborough

- Staff Training Sessions + 2 follow-up sessions
- Each Care Home ran their own sessions twice a week for at least 12 weeks
- Approx. 156 individual activity sessions took place
- 140 residents took part.

Video:

<https://youtu.be/QqzRHe1ZkWg>