

NEWSLETTER



Sussex
Digital
In-Reach
Team

Supporting Care Providers in Sussex

Welcome to The Sussex Digital Team Newsletter. We hope you find the information here helpful as you explore and grow your digital journey within your care setting. QR codes and website links are available in this newsletter to enable you to access more information.

NHSMAIL HAS CHANGED

There has been a lot of talk about NHSmail changing for some time, and it looks like it has finally happened today. We logged in and found that NHSmail had changed.

There is no need to worry. Your nhs.net email address has not changed. You can continue to use Outlook, send and receive emails and access shared mailboxes as usual.



The new system is intended to give social care providers more control over account-management tasks, including managing new starters, leavers and account access. We know that many providers have experienced challenging and frustrating issues with the NHSmail Helpdesk. It has been a difficult process for providers and for those of us supporting them.

We hope that the new self-service options will make some tasks quicker and easier, but it is too early to know how well they will work in practice.

The change has only just happened, and we are still learning how the new system works. There may be some early issues while everyone becomes familiar with it.

We will run two support sessions in August to help providers get used to the new system. We will publish the dates and booking details as soon as they are ready.

If you need help in the meantime, or if you find something that you do not understand, please get in touch.

We may not have every answer immediately, but we will do our best to help and share what we learn with other providers.

IS THERE A GAP IN YOUR COMPLIANCE?

If your organisation has not yet published its Data Security and Protection Toolkit for this year, your public record may show a gap. Commissioners, partners and others checking your status will not know whether your submission is nearly complete or the paperwork has simply not caught up.

The deadline has passed, but you can still complete and publish the current toolkit. It is expected to change in September, which may bring updated questions or evidence requirements, so completing it now is the simpler option.

Across East and West Sussex, more than **90%** of care homes are already compliant, so it is genuinely achievable. Most providers are already doing much of what the toolkit asks. It is often simply a matter of gathering the evidence and showing what you have in place.

WOULD YOU LIKE SOME HELP?

If you would like support completing your submission before September, please email us on

Nada@sussexdigitalteam.co.uk

or

Natasha@sussexdigitalteam.co.uk

or

Call us on 07833 302 466.

We would be very happy to help.

You can also use our 1:1 booking Calendar service on our website:

BOOK HERE!!



DATA SECURITY PROTECTION TOOLKIT - DSPT

The DSPT is a free, online self-assessment of health and social care providers' data security and protection policies, procedures and processes.

It is not just about technology and digital records – it is about any information that care providers hold about any person – staff, clients, funders, partners or visitors – including paper records.

By answering a series of questions, care providers can demonstrate that they are compliant with data protection legislation, the health and social care data security standards, and good practice.

The DSPT for social care is specifically designed for adult care providers.

Central and local government bodies, local authority and ICB commissioners, the Care Quality Commission and the National Data Guardian recognise it as the official tool to evaluate your compliance with legal requirements, data security standards and good practice.

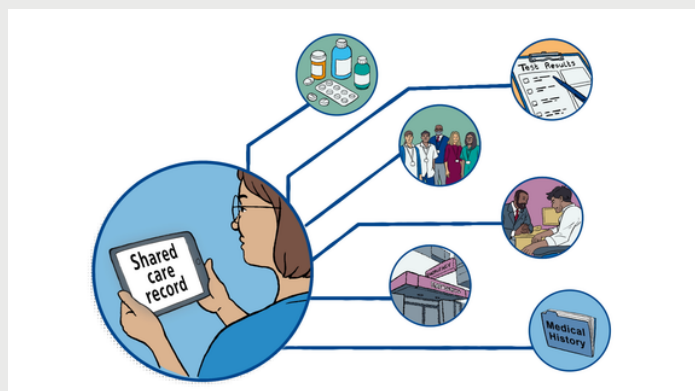
If you have services funded by the NHS, for example under continuing healthcare, there is a contractual requirement to complete the DSPT every year.

All adult social care services in England, including residential and nursing homes, supported living, homecare, extra care, shared lives and day services, are strongly recommended to complete the DSPT. It's increasingly what local authorities, ICBs and the Care Quality Commission will expect to see.

ACCESS TO SHARED SYSTEMS AND NHSMAIL

The DSPT opens up potential access to shared systems, as the toolkit reassures NHS colleagues that care providers are operating to the same data security standards as NHS bodies. By completing the toolkit and achieving 'Standards Met', care providers can access the following systems:

- GP Connect
- Local shared care records
- Proxy access to GP records
- Proxy access for medication ordering
- National Care Records Service



DSPT AND CYBER ESSENTIALS

The DSPT covers all aspects of information governance including: paper records and systems; verbal disclosures of information; digital systems; cyber security; and the duty to share information to support someone's care. Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus only cover cyber security issues.

The DSPT is free and is specifically designed for social care – Cyber Essentials is not. Both tools are useful and compatible. If a care provider has Cyber Essentials Plus, they can indicate this on their DSPT entry, and it will enable them to skip some questions. If they reach Standards Met on the DSPT and they also have Cyber Essentials Plus, they can get to Standards Exceeded on the DSPT.

COULD YOUR CARE SERVICE WITHSTAND A CYBERATTACK?

Two care providers here in Sussex were hit by cyberattacks recently. Both had IT companies looking after them. Neither escaped unaffected.

It's a useful reminder that good IT support is invaluable, but it can't protect an organisation from every risk. Even large organisations with specialist IT teams such as M&S, Co-op and Jaguar Land Rover, to name a few in the news lately, have been seriously disrupted by cyberattacks this year. They had the resources to manage and recover. A smaller care provider might not be so fortunate.



That's why we're offering care providers a **FREE** data and cyber security health check, as part of the national Better Security, Better Care programme. It's fully funded by the Department of Health and Social Care, so there's **NO** cost to your organisation beyond around two hours of your time.

CYBERCRIMINALS ARE LOOKING FOR AN OPEN DOOR

Think of a burglar walking down a street, trying every front door. They don't need every door to be unlocked - just one. Cybercriminals often work in much the same way, sending out large numbers of emails and testing passwords in search of a small gap. They may not be targeting your care service specifically. They're simply looking for a door that opens, perhaps an old password, an account without multi-factor authentication, or a member of staff clicking a convincing link.

"OUR I.T COMPANY HANDLES ALL THAT, DOESN'T IT?"

Good cyber security is about more than computers and software. Many attacks begin with an ordinary, everyday work - someone clicking a link, opening an attachment, or sharing information with a caller who sounds helpful. It depends on your technology and your people, in equal measure.

The health check takes a friendly, practical look at staff knowledge and confidence, how personal information is handled, your data protection policies, business continuity arrangements, and technical basics like access controls, antivirus and backups. It can take place in person or remotely, whichever suits you best.

NO INSPECTION, NO JUDGEMENT, NO PASS OR FAIL

This is a supportive conversation, not a test. Afterwards, you'll receive a confidential report setting out what you're already doing well, along with clear, practical suggestions for anything worth strengthening. Even a small change, such as a clearer process, a quick reminder to staff, one security setting adjusted, can close that open door before it becomes a much larger problem.

If you'd like to find out more please [visit our website](#), and to book your FREE healthcare check please contact us via our emails:

Nada@sussexdigitalteam.co.uk

or

Natasha@sussexdigitalteam.co.uk



ICO GUIDANCE ON AI AND DATA PROTECTION

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has updated its guidance on AI and data protection, with a stronger focus on fairness.

The update responds to calls from industry for clearer expectations around the fair use of AI. It also forms part of the ICO's wider commitment to helping organisations adopt new technologies responsibly, particularly where vulnerable people may be affected.



Following changes introduced by the Data (Use and Access) Act, the guidance is being reviewed and may change again. The ICO has also reorganised it around core data protection principles, including accountability, transparency, lawfulness, accuracy and fairness—to reflect how these principles work together in practice.

WHAT'S CHANGED?

A new standalone chapter looks specifically at fairness in AI. It explains how fairness differs from related concepts such as bias and discrimination, and offers practical considerations for identifying and reducing bias in AI systems.

Other chapters have also been reorganised or expanded, with updated content on accountability, lawfulness and statistical accuracy, as well as a significantly extended glossary of technical terms.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER FOR CARE PROVIDERS?

Many care organisations already use a range of AI-enabled tools for rostering, care planning, communication and administrative work. When these tools process personal or special category data, the ICO's guidance provides a useful reference point for understanding what fair processing looks like and what regulators may expect organisations to consider.

The guidance is still evolving, so information governance leads should keep an eye on future updates, particularly where their organisation is exploring or already using AI tools involving the personal information of the people it supports.

EXPLAINING AI DECISIONS: GUIDANCE FROM THE ICO AND THE ALAN TURING INSTITUTE

If your organisation uses artificial intelligence to support or make decisions about the people you care for, whether in care planning, risk assessment or administrative processes, you may need to explain those decisions to the people affected.

Joint guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and The Alan Turing Institute offers practical advice on how to do this. It is divided into three parts, with each aimed at different roles within an organisation.

PART 1: THE BASICS OF EXPLAINING AI

This section introduces the key concepts and the different types of explanation an organisation may need to provide. It is particularly relevant to information governance leads, compliance teams and anyone responsible for developing or overseeing AI systems.

PART 2: EXPLAINING AI IN PRACTICE

The second part is more technical and focuses on how to produce meaningful explanations in practice. Although primarily aimed at technical teams, it will also be useful to information governance leads and compliance colleagues working closely with system providers or internal technology teams.

PART 3: WHAT EXPLAINING AI MEANS FOR YOUR ORGANISATION

The final part is aimed at senior management. It covers the responsibilities, policies and documentation organisations should have in place so they can provide clear and meaningful explanations when required.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER FOR CARE PROVIDERS?

AI may not yet play a major role in every care organisation, but its use is likely to grow through scheduling tools, care-planning software and other systems that support decision-making.

Understanding explainability (and your responsibilities as a data controller) is something worth considering before an AI system is introduced, rather than after it is already in use.

Interested in learning more? Let us know what support your organisation needs.

To read more please visit: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/artificial-intelligence/explaining-decisions-made-with-artificial-intelligence/>



THE AI SHIFT IN CYBER RISK: WHY LEADERS MUST ACT NOW

FIVE EYES CYBER SECURITY AGENCIES URGE ORGANISATIONS TO ACT ON RAPIDLY TRANSFORMING CYBER RISK.

A CALL TO ACTION

While AI will help us improve cyber defence over time, it also accelerates the speed, scale, and sophistication of cyber threats.

Frontier AI models are anticipated to exceed current industry expectations, fundamentally transforming both offensive and defensive cyber capabilities. The timeline is not years, it is months.

In this environment, cyber resilience is integral to advancing business continuity, market confidence, and long-term value.

We urge leaders to:

- understand and assess risk, readiness and accountability
- prioritise foundational cyber security practices and controls
- empower cyber leaders with authority and resources
- stay actively engaged as threats and guidance evolve

Success will come from getting the basics right, acting quickly, and integrating cyber security into core business strategy. Those that do not will face growing operational and strategic disadvantage.

AI IS NOT A FUTURE CONSIDERATION – IT IS ALREADY HERE.



**TO READ MORE
PLEASE VISIT:**



WWW.NCSC.GOV.UK

PROTECTING TRUST: GETTING ACCESS TO CARE RECORDS RIGHT

People share some of their most personal information with health and social care providers. Handling that information carefully is an important part of providing safe, respectful care—and of maintaining the trust people place in your organisation.

Recent examples from healthcare offer useful lessons for social care providers. The principle is straightforward: only access someone's record when you have a clear, approved work-related reason.

WHEN GOOD INTENTIONS ARE NOT ENOUGH

Inappropriate access is not always driven by malicious intent. Sometimes a member of staff may be curious, concerned about someone they know or trying to be helpful. However, none of these provides a lawful reason to open a record.

Examples include:

- Looking at a friend's blood-test results because you are worried about them.
- Checking the record of a relative, colleague or well-known person out of curiosity.
- Accessing your own record through a workplace system.
- Viewing a family member's information because they have given you permission.
- Returning to someone's record to gather evidence after they have made a complaint.
- Using care-related access for another purpose, such as an HR matter, disciplinary process or legal defence.

In one healthcare case, a nurse accessed the records of people he knew, including a friend whose test results he wanted to check. Although he said he was concerned about his friend, this was not an approved work-related reason. The access was unlawful and caused the person considerable distress.

Another case involved a health worker who accessed the records of her former partner's family and used updated contact details to make nuisance calls. This shows how inappropriate access can form part of wider harmful behaviour.

USE THE RIGHT ROUTE

Having permission from the person does not necessarily make workplace access appropriate. Staff should use the same official processes as everyone else to obtain their own information or help a friend or relative access theirs.

Records may legitimately be needed for complaints, audits, investigations, reflective practice or legal proceedings. However, they must be accessed through the organisation's approved process and by someone authorised for that particular purpose. This is especially important for staff who hold more than one role. Access granted for direct care should not automatically be used for complaints handling, safeguarding investigations, HR work or another function. If you are unsure, check with your manager or information governance lead before opening the record.

MISTAKES CAN HAPPEN

Opening the wrong person's record by mistake—for example, because two people have the same name—is different from deliberately accessing information without a valid reason.

The important thing is to report the mistake promptly. This allows the organisation to respond appropriately, manage any risks and check whether its systems and procedures need improving.

ACCESS IS VISIBLE

Electronic record systems usually record who searched for and viewed information. Organisations can audit these logs, investigate unusual activity and take action where access cannot be justified. People may also request information about access to their records and raise concerns about anything they do not recognise.

Deliberate inappropriate access can lead to disciplinary action, dismissal, referral to a professional regulator or investigation by the Information Commissioner's Office or the police. Depending on the circumstances, it may also constitute an offence under the Data Protection Act 2018 or the Computer Misuse Act 1990.

A SIMPLE CHECK BEFORE OPENING A RECORD

Before accessing someone's information, pause and ask:

Do I need to see this record to carry out an approved part of my role right now?

If the answer is unclear, check first. A short conversation with your manager or information governance lead can protect the person, the organisation and your own professional position.

If you suspect that someone has accessed a record inappropriately, report it promptly through your organisation's data-breach or incident-reporting procedure. You can also speak to your line manager, information governance lead, Caldicott Guardian, safeguarding lead or Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, where these roles are available.

PLEXUS - SHARED RECORD

Plexus Care Record connects health and care records for care providers in Sussex, providing them with the right information at the right time.

For more information you can express your interest to take part in the journey of integrating care.



FREE EVENTS THIS MONTH

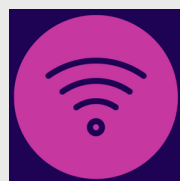
Don't forget to book onto our FREE online events this month. Use the QR codes to go straight to each booking page.



WEDNESDAY 19TH AUGUST

**NHS.NET CONNECT AND LAUNCHPAD:
WHAT'S CHANGING?**

Explore NHS.net Connect changes, mailbox owner responsibilities and support routes. The way social care providers manage NHS.net accounts is changing. The existing NHSmail Portal has been replaced by Launchpad, with new registration, account-management and support processes being introduced.



TUESDAY 25TH AUGUST

**NHS.NET CONNECT AND LAUNCHPAD:
WHAT'S CHANGING?**

Explore NHS.net Connect changes, mailbox owner responsibilities and support routes. The way social care providers manage NHS.net accounts is changing. The existing NHSmail Portal has been replaced by Launchpad, with new registration, account-management and support processes being introduced.



THURSDAY 13TH AUGUST

**COMMISSIONING FOR DIGITAL
MATURITY AND CYBER
RESILIENCE IN SOCIAL CARE**

Sharing best practice examples of how commissioners are supporting social care providers digital maturity and cyber resilience



TUESDAY 18TH AUGUST

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY: A
PRACTICAL CYBER
EXERCISE**

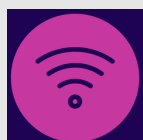
What would your organisation do if staff suddenly lost access to care records, rotas, contact details or other critical information?



WEDNESDAY 19 AUGUST

**BEING PREPARED FOR CQC
ASSESSMENT SEMINAR**

This one-day facilitated session brings together frontline managers to learn about the step-by-step ways to be ready to evidence that your service meets CQC expectations to achieve a Good or Outstanding rating in your next assessment.



OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS....



SUSSEX CARE SHOWCASE

This useful and informative event for care providers will focus on strategy and operations, the changing times within the care sector and upcoming changes both in legislation and devolution.

A range of speakers will include Ian Smith, Chair of Surrey and Sussex ICB, Directors of Adult Social Care, representatives from Care England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

There will be around 50 supplier stands as well as a digital area, with a panel on the use of AI and support services available on topics such as HR. Book your spot today!

Date:
Wednesday 16th September

Location:
**Brighton Racecourse
Freshfield Road
Brighton, BN2 9XZ**

Time:
9am - 3.30pm

FREE ENTRY!



BOOK NOW!

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS....



WE WILL HOST OUR FIRST DIGITAL CARE SUMMIT LONDON ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2026, BRINGING TOGETHER LEADERS FROM ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND TECHNOLOGY FOR A PRACTICAL DAY OF DISCUSSION AND SHARED LEARNING.

THE SUMMIT WILL FOCUS ON:

- Digital transformation
- Partnership working
- Neighbourhood health
- With sessions exploring how digital tools, better data sharing and stronger collaboration can support more joined-up, preventative and person-centred care.

We are particularly pleased to be developing the programme in partnership with people with lived experience, Care City, London Care and Support Forum, Care Providers' Voice and NHS colleagues.

Further details, including the agenda, will be added shortly.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

The event is aimed at registered managers, directors and other care provider leaders, as well as wider system partners such as NHS colleagues, local authorities, technology suppliers and sector experts – including people drawing on care, unpaid carers and care workers.

APPLY FOR A PLACE

Delegates can apply for a place at the event now by completing our short form. We will use this information to help plan the content and ensure we have a spread of delegates. Places are limited so we cannot guarantee that everyone who applies will be able to attend. We will confirm if you have been offered a delegate place and provide you with full registration details at a later date.

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST



OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS.... HETT SHOW



We're excited to be partnering with the HETT Show (Healthcare Excellence Through Technology), taking place at ExCeL London on 29–30 September 2026.

HETT is one of the UK's leading events for digital health, bringing together thousands of professionals from across the NHS, local government and social care to explore how technology is transforming the way care is delivered.

As a partner, Digital Care Hub will be supporting conversations that matter to adult social care – helping ensure the sector is represented within wider discussions about digital transformation, data, cyber security, and innovation.

Across the two days, the event offers a packed programme of expert-led sessions, practical insights, and interactive learning opportunities, alongside a large exhibition of suppliers and solutions shaping the future of health and care.

HETT provides a valuable space to:

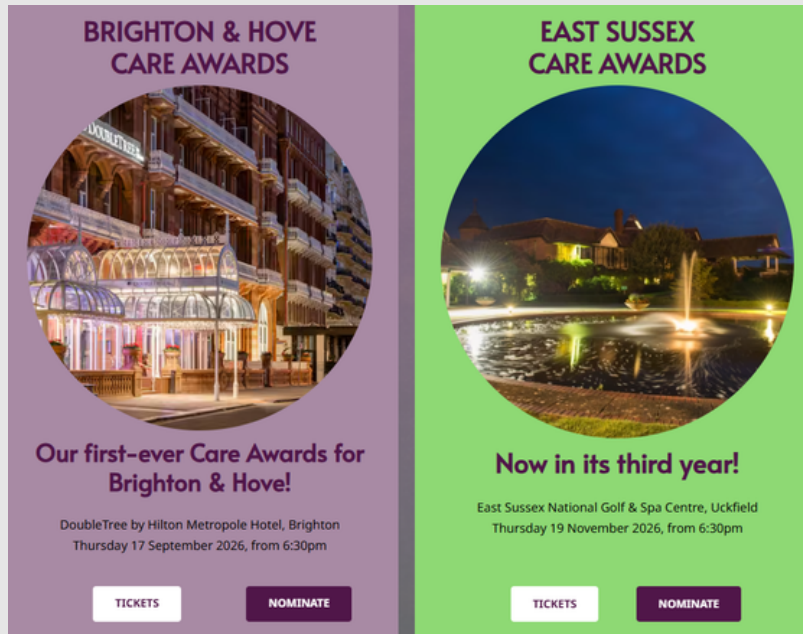
- Learn from real-world examples of digital transformation in practice
- Explore new technologies and tools supporting frontline care
- Connect with peers across health and social care
- Take away practical ideas to improve care quality and outcomes

For adult social care, events like HETT are an important opportunity to connect with the wider health and tech community, share experiences, and ensure that digital solutions reflect the needs of the sector.

Whether you're already progressing your digital journey or just getting started, HETT is a chance to hear what's happening across the system and be part of shaping what comes next.

CARE AWARDS 2026

EAST SUSSEX RETURNS AND BRIGHTON & HOVE LAUNCHES!



Two Awards Evenings Dedicated to the Unsung Heroes of Our Care Communities

We are delighted to launch our expanded 2026 Care Awards programme, which this year will feature two dedicated awards evenings.

Both events will combine a high-quality awards ceremony with a relaxed, inclusive atmosphere where colleagues can come together, reflect and be recognised.

GALA DINNER & ENTERTAINMENT

A formal three-course dinner with a live MC host and high-quality entertainment throughout the evening. Further details to be revealed.

AWARDS

A carefully curated programme celebrating the very best in adult social care, with categories recognising new starters, experienced professionals, exceptional leadership and innovation.

CELEBRATE WITH YOUR CARE COMMUNITY

An opportunity for providers to take their teams out to recognise their achievements, connect with other services, and celebrate alongside fellow providers, leaders and industry representatives.

"This year marks an exciting step forward. We're bringing our care community together like never before – two events, two celebrations, and countless stories of dedication and excellence. Let's make 2026 a year to remember!"

Mike Derrick, Chair of East Sussex Partners in Care

**NOMINATION DEADLINE FOR
EAST SUSSEX HAS BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL 31ST AUGUST 2026**



The Care Awards would not be possible without individuals and teams being nominated to receive an award. We are committed to ensuring that all unsung heroes are acknowledged, respected, and celebrated for their hard work and dedication to the care industry.

Every day, an army of people go to work helping the most vulnerable people in our society. Help us to celebrate their amazing work, say well done and thank you!

WHO CAN MAKE NOMINATIONS?

- **If you receive care**, tell us about your carer(s) and the difference they make to your life. We know that care needs impact the whole family so nominations from family members are welcome.
- **If a relative of yours receives care**, tell us about the staff or team who provides them with that care or the care organisation which employs them. Tell us how well they support your loved one and talk with you about how they welcome your ideas on how they can care for your relative.
- **If you give care** tell us about the colleagues, you most admire; tell us about the manager/leader who really motivates you; tell us about your service and what a great place they are to work at.
- **If you are a care manager or an owner**, tell us about the staff members who've made you proud this year; tell us about the projects they've done that made a difference; tell us about the achievements your staff have made.
- **If you are a visiting professional** (GP or District Nurse, Social Worker for example) tell us about how well, you see your patient/client being cared for and maybe pick out a particular member of staff or manager/leader for praise.
- **If you are a member of the public connected to social care** (unpaid carer or volunteer for example) and know an individual or group of people who go above and beyond to give back to the community and deserve recognition.
- **Basically... anyone can make a nomination; you can even nominate yourself!**

FOR GUIDANCE ON HOW TO WRITE A SUCESSFUL NOMINATION YOU CAN WATCH THE [YOU TUBE RECORDING OF OUR VERY POPULAR EVENT.](#)

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE BEST AND MOST NOTICED ANSWERS INCLUDE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND EXAMPLES OF THE WORK/CARE/DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT. PLEASE INCLUDE AS MUCH PERSONAL REASONS AS POSSIBLE

THE CATEGORIES THAT ARE CRYING OUT FOR MORE NOMINEES ARE:

- Ancillary Worker / Team Award
- Care Newcomer of the Year Award
- Care Manager / Leader of the Year Award
- Outstanding Contribution to Social Care Nursing Award
- Hidden Gem Award
- Workplace Wellbeing Award 2026
- Excellence in International Recruitment Award
- Dementia Care Award 2026



OVER TO YOU.....



EXAMPLES OF OUTSTANDING BEHAVIOURS & ATTRIBUTES JUDGES ARE LOOKING FOR EVIDENCE OF:

- Inspiring others and promoting best practice
- Strong leadership, vision, and values
- Clear and effective communication
- Innovation and continuous improvement
- Supporting staff development and learning
- Engaging with the wider community
- Adapting services to meet individual needs
- Demonstrating dignity, respect, and compassion
- Exceptional dedication and commitment
- Positive role modelling
- Bridging health and social care effectively
- Promoting independence and personal growth
- Going the extra mile

IMPORTANT: ALWAYS SUPPORT CLAIMS WITH CLEAR EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES

GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK TO CLAIRE



FROM ALL OF US HERE AT THE SUSSEX DIGITAL TEAM WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK CLAIRE FOR ALL OF HER HARDWORK OVER THE PAST 4 YEARS. MANY OF YOU MAY HAVE MET OR SPOKEN TO CLAIRE ALONG YOUR DIGITAL JOURNEY AND YOU MAY SEE HER IN THE FUTURE DURING MORE EVENTS AND TRAINING. CLAIRE HAS OPENED HER OWN DOMICILLARY BUSINESS, GOOD LUCK TO YOU CLAIRE, WE WISH YOU THE VERY BEST IN YOUR FUTURE AND THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR TEAM.

THE SUSSEX DIGITAL TEAM X

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