

NELLSAR ATTENDS THE VEGETARIAN FOR LIFE AWARDS

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This week Adrian Silaghi (Head of Catering at Princess Christian Care Home) and I were invited to the Vegetarian for Life Awards held at the Houses of Parliament Jubilee room. It was a real honour to be invited and to meet those involved in this exciting charity.

Vegetarian for Life

Here's a little bit about Vegetarian for Life, taken from their website:

'Vegetarian for Life (VfL) is the leading authority on diet and healthy living advice for older vegans and vegetarians.

VfL was formed with resources from the Vegetarian Housing Association (VHA), which provided sheltered housing and meals to older vegetarians. VHA was established in the 1960s, but its activities became increasingly unviable because of changes in society. In 2007, VHA decided to

wind down its housing activities and redirect its resources to funding the formation of Vegetarian for Life – a charity whose aims are in sympathy with those of VHA.

Since there are only two fully vegetarian care homes in the UK, one of VfL's major goals is improve the standard of vegan and vegetarian catering in existing homes. We seek to do this through our UK List, which is a geographical listing of organisations and care homes that make a special effort to cater for vegetarians and vegans.

We are striving towards a vision where at least 1 in every 6 UK care homes are members of our UK List – and 1 in every 100 will be VfL accredited.

Meeting the needs of a diverse range of older people is important to us, too. We strive for VfL to be the first port of call for information, support and advice for older vegans, vegetarians, their families, friends and a broad range of care caterers. (<https://vegetarianforlife.org.uk>).'

Catering for a vegetarian lifestyle

There are more people choosing predominantly plant-based, vegetarian and vegan diets than ever before. It stands to reason that the care industry needs to cater well for those choosing to eat less to no meat or even any animal products at all. We not only need to acknowledge these dietary choices and understand them, but must importantly we need to know how to provide them to a well-balanced and nutritionally sound standard.

It was highlighted during the Awards that many of the ageing population are truly concerned about the prospect of going into care and not being properly catered for as a vegetarian or vegan.

Vegetarian for Life is the only organisation of its kind pushing the envelope and providing us care providers with the support and guidance we need to keep up with this increasing demand for vegetarian and vegan meals. **Nellsar** is now one of 1,200 care homes across the UK who has joined as a member.

Looking to the future

We currently have a very small number of vegetarians residing with us, which I expect to change over the coming years. As we welcome more and more veggies and vegans into our Homes, I want **Nellsar** to be recognised as a care provider who really knows how to provide for those choosing to be a vegetarian for life.

It is our aim to be shortlisted for the Awards next year!

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