



# Cantref Care Home

Building a family of support: families helping families through care decisions

## Background

Cantref Care Home in Abergavenny has provided care for older people since 1986. The home supports up to 21 residents aged 65 and over with a team of 30 staff. The team recognised that choosing residential care is one of the most difficult decisions families face, so they created a way for families to support each other through this journey.

## What are they doing differently?

Cantref asked current families if they would speak with those considering the home. The response was overwhelming. They now have a team of family members who share their experiences. The approach includes:

- Family-to-family support, where relatives share their worries and emotions, and reassure others these feelings are normal
- Honest perspectives from lived experience, with families offering insight in ways staff cannot
- Transparency and trust, with staff keeping families informed and involving them in decisions, building trust through long-standing relationships
- Extending the 'family feel' as new families join an established community where they can approach staff at any time

## Impact ...

- Emotional reassurance for families who receive support from people who truly understand
- Reduced guilt and anxiety through hearing others' experiences, normalises difficult feelings
- A calmer environment for residents, because when families feel at ease, residents sense this calm
- A growing advocate community, with families gladly supporting others through the journey
- An exceptional reputation, with one family sharing that someone described Cantref as "the best care home they had ever visited"

“ Care is not just about meeting needs - it's about trust, honesty, and the 'family feel' we share with residents, relatives, and staff alike. ”

