

# Sweet Life

Edition 4



**SweetTree**  
Home Care Services



## In this issue:

- | Changing lives with dementia therapy
- | Solving the puzzle of complex care
- | Research supports families affected by brain injury

*"Our job is to build confidence, so the individual can step into the real world"*

# Contents

Introducing Technology-Assisted Independent Living	3	Brain injury research supports families	10
Changing lives with dementia therapy	4	Meet our award-winning carers	12
Solving the puzzle of Complex Care	6	Alzheimer's awareness	14
SweetTree celebrates a hat-trick of awards	8	SweetTree Fields Farm cultivates confidence	15



## Foreword

by *Barry Sweetbaum*

2018 was a superb year for SweetTree, with great moments of pride being felt by us all in the wonderful things achieved by clients and team members alike. Our vision of helping our clients and their families to lead fulfilling lives and delivering exceptional care has been recognised by the 'Outstanding' overall rating awarded to us by the Care Quality Commission.

The recognition did not stop with our Outstanding CQC rating however. To deliver the high quality, professional standards of care we are known for requires that we invest in developing and supporting our team to the fullest extent possible. We are thrilled to report that our efforts in this regard have been recognised by being voted one of the 100 Best Companies to Work for in the UK for the third time by the Sunday Times as well as by Investors In People who recently presented SweetTree with a Gold Standard Award.

Each relationship forged between a carer, client and their family is equally important. Our role is to understand their individual needs and work closely with their family to support them to realise their full potential.

In this issue of Sweet Life we highlight the range of different services we provide and the important research and pioneering therapies we utilise to help improve our clients' lives. It also shines the spotlight on some of our amazing carers without whom none of the great work SweetTree does could happen. Above all within this edition of Sweet Life we aim to provide helpful information to families about latest developments and support available to ensure their loved ones enjoy the best quality of life possible.

I hope you enjoy the pages ahead.

*Barry Sweetbaum*

Founder and Managing Director



For more information see: [www.sweettree.co.uk](http://www.sweettree.co.uk)

# Introducing TAIL - Technology-Assisted Independent Living

SweetTree Connect's mission is to use technology to support people to remain healthy, independent and safe in their own homes. Product Director Rob Halifax explains how the team has been developing a new cutting-edge Technology Assisted Independent Living (TAIL) system.



At the core of TAIL is a powerful software platform which collects, organises and reports on data obtained from a range of low-power discrete sensors placed in clients' homes. The sensors monitor things like temperature, movement, floods, bed occupancy, and doors or windows being left open when they shouldn't be.

The valuable data collected is presented in an easy to use dashboard which clients and their families can view to make sure all is okay at home. Clients can choose to make the data available to care professionals, so they can consider what interventions might help someone to remain independent. The TAIL system is highly secure with all data fully encrypted and only accessible to those who a user says can see their data.

## Actionable insight

Simplicity sits at the heart of TAIL. While technology makes it possible to exponentially increase the wellbeing-related data we can gather, the last thing we want is to make people spend hours looking at dashboards and charts.

TAIL will reassure family members and care professionals that if anything is wrong - from the person not moving or eating enough to a fall or flood - they will receive an automatic alert by text or email.

Uniquely, all alerts and alarms generated by TAIL are also monitored by a sophisticated call centre with a trained operator available around the clock to respond in case of emergency.

The system is configurable for each individual. For some people, getting up three times a night may be normal, for others it could be

worrying. TAIL is designed to learn normal patterns of behaviour and respond in a way that's right for you.

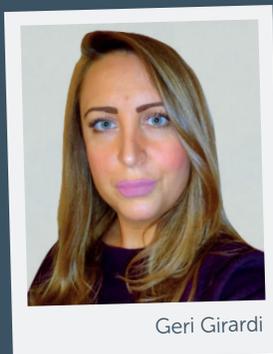
## Supporting, not replacing people

When it comes to caring for vulnerable people, technology can't replace people. But it can help them. Family members often say they spend significant time doing things for a loved one instead of enjoying socialising. If they knew mum had already eaten, was drinking enough fluid and the house was safe with the oven off and windows locked, it would be much easier to relax.



By using technology to support these needs we allow family members and professional carers to focus on the psychological and emotional well-being of the loved-one or client.

We are refining our TAIL system by running small-scale field trials to test it in real situations. To find out more or take part in a trial, contact us at [hello@sweettreeconnect.com](mailto:hello@sweettreeconnect.com).



Geri Girardi

## New manager of brain injury service

Geri Girardi has joined SweetTree as manager of our brain injury and neurological conditions service.

Geri has extensive experience in the areas of elderly care, stroke pathway co-ordination, neurology and specialist neuro-rehabilitation, gained during a 16-year career in the NHS.

Working at a number of London hospitals, she progressed in to service management and achieved a health-related management degree.

Geri said: "During my time as a discharge co-ordinator at Chelsea & Westminster Hospital I worked with patients who spoke highly of the care provided by SweetTree, little did I know I'd be working here all these years later."

# Changing clients' lives with dementia therapy



In the UK there are **850,000** people who have dementia. It is estimated that another **225,000** people will develop the condition in the next year, the equivalent of one person being diagnosed every three minutes. With these growing numbers, research into the condition, its triggers and ways to prevent it from worsening, is vitally important.

In 2016 SweetTree began working with Aimee Spector, a Clinical Psychologist at University College London, who pioneered Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST); a technique which aims to improve wellbeing by slowing down the effects of dementia on the brain.

After first studying Psychology at Manchester University, Aimee continued her studies at UCL where she began her research into dementia.

Before training as a clinical psychologist, Aimee chose to work with people who had been diagnosed with dementia as she wanted to understand accurately the condition's real-life effects. She soon realised that doctors were only recommending drug care. Although there was limited evidence of dementia medication being effective, as this was more widely researched, patients were routinely given medication over any other type of care. She recognised a clear gap in dementia research, and began her own research into therapeutic dementia care. From this, she developed CST.



## What is Cognitive Stimulation Therapy?

Cognitive Stimulation Therapy or CST is a treatment for people with mild to moderate dementia. It was designed by Aimee Spector following extensive evaluation of research evidence on the main non-pharmacological therapies for dementia.

Aimee said: "When I started to develop the therapy, people were immediately prescribed medication in the early stages. However, it was apparent that they wanted to be stimulated and challenged in the first stages of the condition.

"I also wanted to focus on people who needed live-in or home care, because I noticed that these people often did not have immediate access to treatment or therapy which specifically targets their dementia and keeps their brain stimulated.

"After years of research I devised CST, which involves giving people tasks and general activities that target different areas of the brain.



"Tasks are designed depending on what areas of the brain are damaged. They are usually word games, picture puzzles or questions which are formed in a certain way to target the areas of the brain which need to be exercised."

Even after all of these years, CST is the only non-pharmacological treatment recommended in the UK Government NICE guidelines on the management of dementia.

CST is now being used and adapted in over 27 countries across five continents, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, India and Nigeria.

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*"I wanted to focus on people who needed live-in or home care, because I noticed that these people often did not have immediate access to treatment or therapy which specifically targets their dementia and keeps their brain stimulated."*

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## Bringing the therapy to life

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Group CST treatment involves themed activity sessions which aim to engage and stimulate our clients, while providing an optimal learning environment and social benefits of being in a group setting.

Each session is different, with the level of difficulty changed depending on each client's cognitive ability, which ensures sufficient challenge and keeps them on their toes. These sessions typically run twice a week for seven weeks. The effects of this treatment appear to be

comparable to those reported with the currently available anti-dementia drugs. This is an incredible step forward, considering how recently therapeutic treatment has been considered.

Aimee also introduced iCST, which involves the same stimulation technique but is delivered in individual one-to-one sessions. She trained a group of SweetTree staff in the technique, which will enable many of our clients to access this treatment in their own homes.

She said: "The first training session was a huge success. It involved getting SweetTree's carers to really think about each client's condition to be able to tailor the treatment to each specific case. No client's dementia will be the same, which means the treatment needs to be different too."

This is an incredibly positive step for SweetTree. Our staff will continue to work with Aimee and Rikki Lorenti, who is championing the development of iCST within SweetTree, to improve the lives of our clients with dementia.



SweetTree's complex care service is designed to understand and meet the needs of those who are excluded from traditional services, the people whose needs cross boundaries and don't fit into standard assessments.

They range from clients with high-functioning autism, whose IQ is too high to qualify for traditional support services, to those whose needs might be invisible, presenting normally outside the home but suffering from a disorder such as excessive hoarding.

Complex care can mean complex physical care needs or complex emotional or behavioural needs and, for some, it means both.

Laura Cheek is SweetTree's Complex Care Service Manager, whose job is to unravel the puzzle to ensure the bespoke services put in place meet the individual needs of each client.

Laura joined SweetTree after 13 years' experience with Westminster Social Services, where she piloted a project to design a complex care service.

Laura completed her Assistant Psychologist programme in New York, before gaining her MEd in Autism in the UK. She is working towards a doctorate in Social Care Management.

Laura said: "At SweetTree we have taken our person-centred ethos to a new level, designing a bespoke service for people whose behaviours and presentation are too extreme to fit existing services, or who have several different needs.

"The aim was to say, if you don't fit into any

box, we're happy to work with you. We will figure out how to help you."

The team works with individuals with learning disabilities or brain injuries but who may also have mental health issues related to traumas such as domestic violence, childhood sexual or emotional abuse, or discrimination relating to gender identity.

Laura explained: "People may have complex health presentation. Their life experiences are such that they require a really holistic way of working to move forward.

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*"The aim was to say, if you don't fit into any box, we're happy to work with you. We will figure out how to help you."*

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"We have a student who has a stoma bag, peg feeding tube, and a central venous line and needs medical support, but can manage their own health condition with our support.

"Another client has a full-time job and lives in his own property but needed to be part of society. Our job is to build confidence, so the person can step into the real world, whether it's going to the pub or supermarket by themselves.

"We may need to risk assess the location to be sure they can make the journey for themselves."

SweetTree's complex care clients may be referred by Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities or may self-refer. Aged from 17 to 70, some live in residential homes, others have life-limiting conditions and live with parents or family.

Laura said: "I work with the individual for the first few sessions, unpicking what support they need. Sometimes we point out problems they haven't realised. We also liaise with their multi-disciplinary team.

"It's very holistic and very bespoke.

## Meeting complex care needs is like trying to solve a puzzle



Then I introduce staff alongside myself and help them to apply the support plan and our ethos.

"We use a co-production model, the individual and I write their support plan together.

"It is important to take the person as they choose to present themselves, in terms of emotional age and their gender or sexual identity. Their diagnosis is acknowledged, but our focus is on figuring them out, listening to them and identifying how we can help."

Support packages range from a few hours a week to 24-hour care. Some individuals exhibit challenging behaviours and SweetTree staff are trained to physically intervene.

They are also highly trained in therapeutic approaches, such as talking someone through their aggression and asking questions about why they are angry or afraid.

"We try to avoid physical intervention by choosing another way of managing the situation," Laura explained.

Around 30 members of staff work in the team. Their intensive training covers practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding the SweetTree ethos and approach.

Laura said: "Staff with a talent for working in complex care have that openness and interest in the whole person, they are hungry to know more and understand, and are willing to spend time exploring each individual's history and triggers.

"Complex care is so intriguing, you have no idea what dilemmas will arise. If you like doing puzzles you will love this kind of work, constantly figuring out how to achieve something, going through the maze of need."



## Lucy's choices: college and curry

Lucy is 26 and has complex needs including a learning disability. She receives 24-hour care from SweetTree. Her support workers are Hibo, Katie, and Hannah. Kezban and Chiara are her case supervisors. Sweet Life asked her about her life and her care.

### Q What is your favourite activity during the week?

Going to college where I am studying art. I enjoy painting, especially in my favourite colour, purple. I like being creative and am very happy to be attending college as it is something I have wanted to do for a long time and gives me a sense of feeling normal. I enjoy the activities I am taking part in and have a new and busy social life.

### Q What do you enjoy doing with your Support Workers?

Taking my dogs Lola and Marley for walks. Lola is a good girl and is my baby, Marley is older. We took Marley to the vet and were told that he is depressed, he has been prescribed anti-depressants. Since then Marley has seemed much happier and has stopped hiding in the corners of the room.

### Q Tell us about your important possessions?

I have a thoughts book where I sit down with a Support Worker and write my feelings, emotions and behaviour for that day.

I also have a board in my bedroom which has pictures of my activities and support workers. Every evening I attach pictures to the board so I know what the structure of my day looks like. I can then plan what I am going to wear etc.

### Q Who do you most admire?

Lettie Lutz, the bearded woman from The Greatest Showman. She doesn't care what people think of her, she is her own person.

### Q What is the most annoying question that people ask you?

When I'm in my wheelchair and people ask me to hurry up!

### Q What is the most annoying habit that other people have?

I can't stand it when someone is writing about me but not telling me what they are writing.

### Q Where do you see yourself in the next 10 years?

I would like to be working, helping both adults and children.

### Q What's your favourite food?

Curry! I love spicy food. I am PEG fed but I also choose to eat small bites of food because I love eating. I know the risks of eating solid food but I am happy to accept them because it improves my quality of life.

### Q Are you happy with your care?

I get good care. If I was not happy, I would make it known. If I have any questions or concerns I pick up the phone and let Kezi know.

*Lucy gave her answers with Kezi's help*

# SweetTree celebrates a hat-trick of awards

SweetTree scored a hat-trick of awards in 2018, which recognise the high standards of care we provide and our commitment to developing and supporting our staff.

We were delighted to be rated as 'Outstanding' overall by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Outstanding for providing a well-led and responsive service.

As we take great pride in ensuring our staff have the skills and training they need to make a positive impact on our clients' quality of life, we were equally thrilled to receive a Gold Award from Investors in People.

This came soon after we were announced as one of the UK's Top 100 Best Companies to work for by The Sunday Times.

*"This is an exceptional achievement and cements our position as one of the best performing home care providers in the UK."*

SweetTree's Co-founder and Operations Director Nikki Bones said: "This trio of accolades really demonstrates our commitment to following best practice in everything that we do."

Co-founder & Managing Director Barry Sweetbaum added: "This is an exceptional achievement and cements our position as one of the best performing home care providers in the UK."

## Proud to be 'Outstanding'

Our Care Quality Commission 'Outstanding' ranking places us in the top two per cent of UK home care providers.

The CQC praised our hard-working staff and described our service as "a fine example of quality care." The Inspectors highlighted our commitment to developing our team of 500 carers and support workers through our Training Academy, which provides accredited training tailored to clients' needs.

SweetTree's Senior Leadership team was recognised for its innovation in improving care quality and understanding of clients' needs. Clients and their families all spoke highly of the staff who support them.

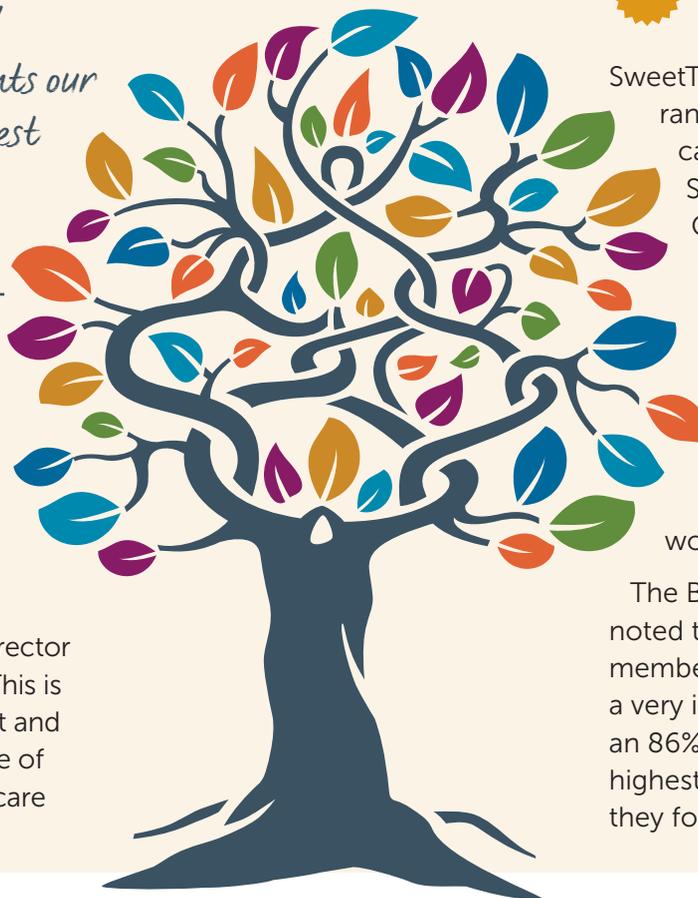
Barry Sweetbaum, Founder & Managing Director of SweetTree, said: "We pride ourselves on delivering the very highest quality care and our focus will remain very much on having a positive impact on our clients' ability to live active, vibrant and full lives."

## One of the UK's top companies to work for

SweetTree was the highest-ranked health and social care provider at 35th in the Sunday Times Top 100 Best Companies to work for.

The ranking takes account of eight key factors including leadership, personal growth, management support, wellbeing, and whether employees feel pride in working for their company.

The Best Companies report noted that SweetTree team members said they felt work was a very important part of their life, an 86% positive score (fourth highest on the Top 100 list), and they found the exceptional in-





SweetTree staff celebrate a hat-trick of awards

house training to be personally beneficial, an 83% positive score (third on the Top 100 list).

Managing Director Barry Sweetbaum said: "This is the third time SweetTree has been ranked in the UK's Top 100 companies to work for. We are committed to continuous improvement and pride ourselves on providing training and support to enable our team members to make a positive difference to people's lives by delivering the highest standards of person-centred care."

 **Gold standard**

Only 16% of businesses achieve the Investors in People Gold Award, the international standard for people management. IIP defines what it takes to lead, support and manage people

effectively to achieve sustainable results.

SweetTree's inspection report stated: "The directors have developed ways of working which encapsulate the best of small business culture – flexibility, agility, responsiveness to client needs, quick decision making, strong personal relationships.

"High professional standards are expected, and there is a comprehensive learning and development offer. They have demonstrated the highest levels of trust and achieved positive outcomes in terms of motivating people and developing leadership capability. There is a real strength that emerges from this assessment of a leadership team embracing change, focused on creating sustainable growth and long-term success.

"People share and understand the values of the business and enjoy both the high professional qualities and supportive personality which are equal parts of the culture at SweetTree Homecare Services."

SweetTree's Operations Director Nikki Bones said: "It is recognised that Investors in People has become far more demanding, so our gold award really is something to be proud of.

"It recognises the incredible amount of work that SweetTree has undertaken to support our staff as they in turn help others."

SweetTree was established 16 years ago and has more than 500 staff serving more than 350 clients.



## Research set to change lives of families affected by brain injury

SweetTree is leading the way in important new research that has industry-wide implications for how support workers interact with the families of the people they care for at home.

Erika Turner, who was until recently the Director of SweetTree's Brain Injury and Neurological Conditions Service, joined Research Assistant Angi Perez-Sanchez and Dr Sonja Soeterik, Consultant Clinical Psychologist from Neurolink Psychology and a SweetTree Advisory Board member in conducting the research, entitled 'How many people in my house?'

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*"We wanted to understand the impact it has had on their own lives, what it's like having a support team in their home, often for 12 hours a day or more, and how they cope with this journey."*

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Erika explained: "We wanted to understand what having intensive support at home, often for 12 hours a day or more, was like for other members of the family, and how they cope with all the new people in their home, because nothing had really been done before to look at the issue.

"Families have already had to cope with having a traumatic event which has turned their lives upside down; sometimes they've even had to move home. Then suddenly, several clinicians and support workers are thrust into their lives, which results in many compromises.

"Interviews with wives and mothers of family members with brain injuries who are now living at home with support were conducted. The women very kindly shared their feelings and thoughts about what it is like to have complete strangers in their midst, who may be of different nationalities and have different cultures and beliefs.

"We wanted to understand the impact it has had on their own lives, what it's like having a support team in their home, often for 12 hours a day or more, and how they cope with this journey.

"Based on the research, we are compiling a list of recommendations for case managers, professionals and clients, which will improve the way in which support packages are put together for our clients and their families."



### Research findings show impact of care on families

Angi explained families have to cope with the brain injured person having intensive support in their most private space, their own home, whilst grappling with the impact of the injury on their own lives, coping with new and unwanted roles, their changed relationship and disrupted plans for life.

Multiple demands left people feeling burdened, overwhelmed and outside their comfort zones: 'You're married, you do it together, but now it seems to be all on me'; 'I'm now in charge of everything – and that's not me.' Plus there was no certainty for the future: 'I don't know if, as time goes on, it will get any easier because it's been nearly two years and it's just the same really.'

One participant described how she was now 'half a widow' and the target of her husband's frustrations: 'It's always my fault that he can't do something or other.'

Interviewees described how their plans for the future had been impacted: 'I no longer work; that's not a great feeling because you start to disappear' and 'We don't go out any more as much as we used to.'



## Having a support team in your home

Sonja added that the research had identified all the participants were personally impacted by having support in their homes: 'You don't feel you can argue particularly. You've always somebody there that's around that can hear if I wanna have a wobbly. You have to make sure you don't run to the bathroom with no clothes on. You don't know who's gonna walk out.'

The women had to balance their own loss of privacy: 'Sometimes your house can feel taken over', with working out how to integrate the support into their new family life: 'From a working point of view, I know one's not supposed to look upon them or let them become too involved ... but I feel that it's like I would treat a daughter.'

However, successful integration of support and sharing in family life meant that support workers needed knowledge not just of the person with a brain injury but the wider family too: 'As far as I'm concerned, they're part of the family, so they've been to [family] weddings.'



## Surrendering to support

One of the most important findings was that although the women really wanted to be able to live without the support, there was a sense that they just had to surrender to it because they knew it was necessary, added Sonja. One participant said: 'It's a massive thing to overcome, but once you've overcome it, it's okay.'

Although resigned to the need for support, there are still power struggles about what that support should look like: One said: 'You think, wait a minute, I could do a bit better than that,' while another acknowledged: 'I have to be willing to allow the professional to do their job without always interfering.'

Erika and Sonja presented the research findings at the 10th World Congress for Neurorehabilitation in India last year. Now the focus is on improving services for SweetTree's 92 clients with brain injuries and neurological conditions, two in five of whom have intense support of 12 hours or more a day.

*Erika added: "This research will provide the evidence base for best practice to assist SweetTree's support team with their everyday work. Continual improvement of service delivery is a high priority and multi-faceted. All managers have clinical backgrounds reflecting the level of knowledge and expertise required to deliver quality and consistent care. This, combined with the research, will make a significant difference to the lives of clients – and their families."*

The research was undertaken with the ethical approval from the National Social Care Research Ethics Committee (REC Ref 17/IEC08/0027)



# Meet our award-winning carers



At SweetTree we place the highest value on our passionate and dedicated carers. One such carer, Jairo Medina, was a loved, live-in carer for SweetTree who sadly died in August 2016.

To honour his memory, we launched the Jairo Medina Award, together with Joe Behrens - the client Jairo cared for. It recognises and celebrates the continued efforts of our devoted team.

Our first outstanding care giver to receive the award, in 2017, was Mercedes Fermin. SweetLife spoke to Mercedes about her role at SweetTree.

## Mercedes Fermin

**Q** Tell us about yourself and what you did before you worked in care?

**Mercedes:** As I am from Nigeria, I did not have much in the way of a UK education, but I went to primary and secondary school where I got my GCEs. Then I worked in a bank for nine years. I wanted change, so I travelled to Italy in 1998.

I met a wonderful lady who asked if I was interested in care, I said yes, and have never looked back! She taught me everything I needed to know, how to iron, feed, clean and everything to do with care.

I first looked after a lady for three years and then went on to look after her husband's mother. It was tough but so rewarding and I knew this was my calling in life. In 2005 I moved to England so my brother and I could stick together!

**Q** How did you get into the care industry in the UK?

**M:** After my experience in Italy, I knew I wanted to continue caring in England. For a few months I worked for another agency and then I saw there was a job at SweetTree. In 2006 I joined the SweetTree family.

**Q** What does your job entail?

**M:** My job is so varied, and I work with such a diverse range of clients from individuals who have Parkinson's to elderly and dementia clients. My days can range



*Mercedes with Joe Behrens, the client Jairo cared for who helped SweetTree to launch the award. Sadly Joe died in 2018.*

## Mercedes' nomination

'Mercedes has been looking after my father since 2013 as a live-in carer. She is exceptionally dedicated to her work and to him. Even on her holidays she is in constant touch to know that he is well and looked after by his substitute carers. Her happy personality and knowledge makes her a stand out carer.'

MM

from sitting with a client and keeping them company for a few hours, to cooking their food and bathing them, no day is the same.

**Q** What would you say is your favourite part of the job?

**M:** I like people and making them feel happy, comfortable and really getting to know them. When we first meet each other there are always the initial nerves as neither of us know what to expect. But once we get over that hurdle, get to know each other and build a relationship it is such a great feeling.

**Q** Congratulations on receiving the Jairo Medina Award, how did it feel to be the first winner?

**M:** I was not expecting it at all, I couldn't believe it. I have worked with the family who nominated me for three years and we have such a great friendship. I was very touched to receive the award and shed a few tears – a humbling moment.

**Q** What would you say to someone thinking about a career in care?

**M:** Don't think, just do it! Especially here as SweetTree give you incredible training, support and guidance. You can call them at any time of day to ask anything and it is just so rewarding, if it wasn't I wouldn't still be here!



*Mila receives the award from Nicki Bones and Helen and Roger Behrens, whose father Joe was Jairo Medina's client*

## Mila Milagrosa

The 2018 Jairo Medina award was presented at SweetTree's Summer BBQ in August to Adriana 'Mila' Milagrosa.

Mila, who joined SweetTree in March 2015, said she felt honoured to receive the award. She said: "This role keeps me humble, to see life from a different perspective and to put myself in another person's shoes. Above all I enjoy having the opportunity to see people being happy and seeing clients achieving their goals."

Mila said she loves the variety of her job and the camaraderie among the SweetTree staff.

## Mila's nomination

'Mila looks after our son two days a week. Since she has become his carer, she has taken him to exceptional heights. Her passion and understanding of his needs and her outstanding commitment to ensuring he reaches his full potential is of the highest quality.

She takes him swimming and instead of just letting him have fun in the water, she pushed him to start swimming lengths of the bath. With her encouragement, his swimming improved beyond all recognition. He started coming home with certificates for his achievements, starting with an award for swimming 200m. Within a few months, he had been awarded a certificate for swimming 1500m. Not bad for a person virtually confined to a wheelchair.

Mila went the extra mile and enrolled him for the 2018 Swimathon. On a Sunday, outside of her working hours, she joined him at Isleworth swimming bath for him to take part in the Swimathon. They swam 42 lengths of the pool taking just over two hours. He was able to achieve this because of her encouragement and dedication. He also raised over £1000 for Marie Curie.

Mila continues to care for him and encourages him to do as much for himself as he possibly can. We feel she truly deserves recognition for her dedication.'

J & PH, Isleworth



## Raising Alzheimer's awareness



Rikki Lorenti

### Recognising 'hidden' carers

SweetTree was proud to support the third annual National Dementia Carers' Day (NDCD) in September.

Strongly promoted on social media, the campaign recognises the efforts of the thousands of 'hidden' carers across the UK who are caring for someone close to them who has dementia, and highlights the support they provide every single day.

NDCD was founded by SweetTree, Alzheimer's Society and Dementia UK. Last year the focus was 'Sharing' with carers invited to share their experiences and tips, while support organisations and members of the public were asked to share information using #NDCD18.

Over 28 days, tweets about NDCD were shown on 20,000 twitter feeds, gaining 118 re-tweets. Facebook posts reached more than 1,600 people.

Jeremy Hughes, Alzheimer's Society Chief Executive, said: "People have told us caring for someone with

dementia can feel like working three eight-hour shifts a day with no break.

"A million people in the UK will be living with dementia by 2021, and without devoted family and friends, many of them would be doing so alone.

"Successive governments have shirked the issue of our broken care system, forcing people affected by dementia to fend for themselves, often at great personal cost – our research found three in five dementia carers say their health has suffered as a result."

Rikki Lorenti, SweetTree Admiral Nurse, said: "Supporting someone with a diagnosis of dementia is not easy and maintaining quality of life for both parties can feel like an impossible task. The most important thing families can do is to keep talking and ensure they have all the support that is available to them."

**For more information, visit:**  
[www.nationaldementiacarersday.co.uk](http://www.nationaldementiacarersday.co.uk)

• Hundreds of visitors to last year's Alzheimer's Show attended talks and practical workshops delivered by specialist SweetTree staff. The two-day event, held at Olympia in June, provided carers, professionals and those diagnosed with the condition with access to the latest strategies and advice.

• The Show, which is partnered and supported by Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's Research UK and Dementia UK, provided visitors with information on managing the condition.

• Nicki Bones, SweetTree CEO said: "We really believe in the Show's purpose and have been the headline sponsor since 2014. It provides people with an opportunity to share their experiences, while having access to advice and new techniques to enable dementia sufferers to live a good quality of life.

• "The show's emphasis is on practical support for families and people with the condition, so our presentations were focused around specialist dementia knowledge and support, and SweetTree's team offered advice."

• **To find out more about The Alzheimer's Show, see:**  
[alzheimersshow.co.uk](http://alzheimersshow.co.uk).



To request a sign-up pack or for more information:  
Please call 020 7594 8886  
Email: [dementia.prevention@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dementia.prevention@imperial.ac.uk)  
or visit [www.chariotregister.org](http://www.chariotregister.org)

Dementia affects over 850,000 people in the UK and the numbers are rising.

Would you like to know more about ongoing research in dementia prevention?

The CHARIOT Register has been organised by the School of Public Health at Imperial College London to help study and better understand dementia; the risks of developing the disease and what factors might protect against it.

Are you between 50 - 85 years old and have not been diagnosed with dementia or memory problems, the CHARIOT Team wants to hear from you!



# Cultivating Confidence at SweetTree Fields Farm

It's probably not a sight you would expect to see in Mill Hill – newborn lambs making their entrance into the world!

But at SweetTree Fields Farm, hidden away from view down a quiet track, excitement is building for the new lambing season. The farm is run by SweetTree Farming for All, a not-for-profit Community Interest Company, which provides therapeutic activities for people who have learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries, autism, mental health needs or dementia. Clients range from 11 to 96 years old.

Farm Director Jude Allen explained: "We have a paddock with about 30 sheep and lambing season is one of the most eagerly awaited times of the year.

"The farm, which also has donkeys, goats, ducks and chickens, as well as produce, helps our clients build their confidence and self-esteem, encouraging them to achieve things they didn't feel possible. Our motto is 'Cultivating Confidence.'



Jude Allen

"Every weekday, we have a number of sessions for individuals and school groups which revolve around looking after the animals and the land, preparing lunch using our home-grown produce and enjoying crafts in the yurt," said Jude.

"These activities encourage people to work together as a team, while helping them to develop their decision-making or physical skills. It also encourages them to make new

friends. At the same time, we are caring for the environment."

Patricia, 62, visits the farm twice a week and loves being surrounded by people and animals. She said: "Before I came to the farm, I didn't have anything to do and I don't go out anywhere else, it's become my life. I've got a lot of friends and it makes me really happy to come here."

Paul, 38, added: "It's such a great place to be and I'm so grateful for all the support I've received, particularly as we are encouraged to use our own initiative. It really is all about cultivating confidence, being around people and learning how to care for the animals, while

being out in the fresh air and working on the land.

"If I'm not feeling great or I've had a bad week, I come here and immediately feel different and I see people gain in confidence and become more sociable and ultimately lead a much happier life."

SweetTree Farming for All is seeking planning permission from Barnet Council to formalise use of the farm as agricultural land for care farming, retaining the current buildings, structures and pathways needed to support its clients. This is effectively a restatement of the permissions originally granted by planners when the farm began in 2013.

Site owner Barry Sweetbaum, Managing Director of SweetTree Home Care Services, said: "There's a lack of support for people with disabilities. We feel this site makes a positive, environmentally-focused social impact."



Paul looks after the lambs

*"It encourages them to make new friends. At the same time, we are caring for the environment."*

For more information see: [www.sweettreefarmingforall.org.uk](http://www.sweettreefarmingforall.org.uk)



**SweetTree**  
Home Care Services

# Celebrating 17 years of excellence



**2002**  
**0 clients**

**2018**  
**10,000 clients**

## Building long lasting relationships



**567 CARERS**

delivering exceptional care since 2002



**OVER 25%**

of our care team have been with us for 5 years or more.



**11 YEARS**

of support by SweetTree for our longest standing client.



Our team is made up of a **diverse range of skills, experience, clinical experts and specialists** – but above all, good people!

Since being established in 2002 our vision has never faltered, and everything we do remains true to our original values.



Quality of life



Respect



Individuality



Evolve



Self-fulfilment



Dignity



Independence



Freedom



Self-esteem



Wellbeing

## SERVICES

- Older persons care
- Specialist dementia care
- Learning disabilities
- Complex care
- Brain injury
- Neurological conditions
- End-of-life care

## AWARDS

