

A dedicated care practitioner from Luton was rewarded for reaching the highest of standards and achieving excellence at the Hertfordshire Care Awards.

Keri Jones, from Verulam House in St Albans, won the Made a Difference Award, sponsored by Home Spirit, at the glittering gala bash on Friday evening.

Keri picked up the prize in front of a packed 360-strong audience at the ceremony hosted by the Hertfordshire Care Providers Association at Knebworth Barns.

She, along with her fellow award winners, received special praise from VIP guest and The X Factor star Andy Abraham.

And the guests were enthralled by dance troop Total TXS, as seen on ITV's Britain's Got Talent.

Keri has made a difference to residents at the end of life and their families, her dedication to care and knowledge of individual needs led her to help families think about end of life choices in a safe environment. Keri's focus and inspiration has motivated other staff, improving the quality and efficiency of their work and seeing a positive change in individual service user's care.

Keri said: "The award was a very big shock. It was a total surprise and had an absolutely amazing night."

HCPA fundraised for The Silver Line on the night. Silver Line is a free helpline for older people across the UK, where trained staff offer information, friendship and advice 24/7.

Singing star Abraham, who wowed the crowd by performing several songs, spoke of his admiration for care practitioners who go the extra mile to provide exceptional service for the people they support.

Through the Hertfordshire Care Awards 2016, the HCPA celebrates and rewards the successes of care providers within the county and showcases why care in the private, voluntary and independent sectors in the county is outstanding.

HCPA chief executive Sharon Davies branded the night a storming success and was delighted to celebrate the achievements of hard-working and devoted care practitioners and teams in the county.

She said: "Nominations and letters of support have come flooding in this year, and I want to pass on the heartfelt thanks from all the families and people who use the services to the fantastic care providers in Hertfordshire."

HCPA work in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and the NHS to ensure people receiving care in Hertfordshire get the best possible support.

The Hertfordshire Care Awards are part of Good Care Hertfordshire, an innovative campaign launched by the HCPA and Hertfordshire County Council to attract more people to the wide range of rewarding careers available in paid care. If you would like to find out how to begin a career in care in Hertfordshire visit www.hertsgoodcare.com

Colette Wyatt-Lowe Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Health at Hertfordshire County Council, said: "Congratulations to all of the winners and nominees. It is fantastic that we have an event like this to celebrate the contribution and achievements of the thousands of people working in care across the county.

“There’s no doubt that working in care can be challenging but it is a truly rewarding career, where you can make a real difference to the lives of some of our most vulnerable people. If you are compassionate, kind and looking for work or a new challenge, have a look at the Good Care website.”

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