



# PRESS RELEASE

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## Bank credited with creating ‘carer-friendly culture’ as awards honour businesses across Birmingham

A major high street bank has landed a top award for its commitment to supporting employees across Birmingham who are in a caring role.

Craig Jenkins, Regional Ambassador for the Families and Carers network at NatWest/Royal Bank of Scotland, picked up the inaugural Carer Friendly Business Awards, taking first prize in the Champion Award category.

The awards were launched as part of the Working for Carers programme by Forward Carers, an organisation developed to make a real difference to the lives of people in carer roles across Birmingham.

The Hall Green Health GP Surgery, on Stratford Road, was named the winner of the Community Business Award category and Gateway Family Services in Edgbaston, a not-for-profit agency set up to help people into formal training or employment, picked up the Working for Carers Award.

Judges said all entrants had showcased some impressive initiatives, but the winners had “displayed a genuine interest and support network in supporting their colleagues who were in caring roles at home.”

Craig was recognised for collaborating with the bank’s Human Resources (HR) department ensuring members of staff, who are also in a caring role at home, are able to maintain a good balance of wellbeing and support from their place of work.

He also oversaw new technology put in place to help a work mentor and buddy pilot initiative, as well as working with other Employee Led Networks (ELNs) and Inclusion Teams to host events with a common vision and purpose, developing a truly inclusive culture.

Craig said: “I am truly honoured and humbled to have been named the winner of the Carer Friendly Champion Award.

“I’ve worked hard to improve working conditions for people who are in a caring role. Among some of the initiatives I’ve introduced, I invited Forward Carers into our office during Carers Week so they could build a stronger network within the NatWest community.

“Together, we demonstrated what support is available for members of staff who may have other responsibilities both internally and externally. I’m very passionate about what I do and I’m hopeful that the work I’ve done so far may have made a difference to someone’s life who might have started to feel overwhelmed and isolated in the office.”

The awards were judged by Saqib Bhatti, currently the youngest ever President of the Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Philip Done, Relationship Manager for Ageing Better in Birmingham, a programme that aims to reduce loneliness and social isolation among people over 50 across the city.

Sylvia Johnson-Davis, who has been caring for her mother who has Alzheimer’s disease since 2014, also featured on the judging panel, along with Councillor Mary Locke.

Mary said: “It was clear from the award entry that Craig Jenkins recognises that carers are a part of our community and they are also entitled to having a career too.

“The judges thought Craig has worked hard to develop a support infrastructure for people at NatWest and the Royal Bank of Scotland who also have caring responsibilities. We believe all the winners have helped create a friendly and comfortable environment for staff who may wish to discuss any problems they may be dealing with at home.”

Forward Carers CEO Simon Fenton said: “We were hugely impressed with the high-quality award entries we had and also some of the inspiring work that is being done across Birmingham to help those who are caring for a loved one.

“We believe Craig Jenkins, Gateway and Hall Green Health GP Surgery are excellent examples of work places which are making a real impact and difference to someone in their caring role. A huge congratulations to everyone who participated and a massive thank you to our judges.”

## **Notes to editors**

- For further details, to arrange an interview or more photographs, email [fiona.bailey@ojpr.co.uk](mailto:fiona.bailey@ojpr.co.uk) or call 0781 3988247 or 01604 882342.