

Áras nomination ‘a tribute to staff efforts’

KATIE Uí Chuláin, the activities co-ordinator at Áras Chois Fharráige nursing home in An Spidéál, has been named as a finalist in the prestigious NHI Care Awards.

Finalists for the awards, which are the leading healthcare awards in the country and recognise those who demonstrate outstanding excellence and dedication in the care of older people, were chosen from more than 300 entries from nursing homes around Ireland.

Katie told the *Journal*: ‘I didn’t know we had been nominated, so to be chosen as one of the three finalists was really a wonderful surprise.

‘It’s a real tribute to all the wonderful members of the local community who so generously give of their time to come to the Áras to enrich the lives of our residents through performing music or taking part in our activities schedule.’



Katie Uí Chuláin with Áras resident Nora Folan on a day trip to the seaside

Katie has been the activities co-ordinator at Áras Chois Fharráige since 2010. Prior to that she worked for Údarás na Gaeltachta and as a community officer in An Spidéál. She oversees a packed activities schedule in the Áras, thanks in no small part to local people who take part in weekly ceol sessions,

card and bingo tournaments and a range of other activities.

Katie has also put pet therapy at the heart of the activities in the care home. As well as weekly dog therapy sessions, the Áras has a chicken coop and keeps two pygmy goats.

The Irish language is at the heart of life at the Áras. An Stíl Mar a Bhí, a group of local traditional musicians, singers, and dancers, put on a celebration of all things Gaelic three

times a year.

Katie also established the Gradam Áras Chois Fharráige, which offers financial support to young Irish speakers who want to study nursing.

Winners will be announced at a black-tie awards hosted by Gráinne Seoige at the Hilton Hotel, Dublin, on November 12.