

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

AWARDS PROGRAMME
7 JUNE 2018
Culloden Hotel, Hollywood



Royal College
of Nursing
Northern Ireland

A CELEBRATION
OF NURSING



On behalf of the Royal College of Nursing in Northern Ireland, it is my great pleasure to welcome our finalists, their guests, our sponsors, members and distinguished guests to the 2018 Nurse of the Year Awards ceremony.



Fiona Devlin
RCN Northern Ireland Board Chair

As ever, these awards provide the opportunity to highlight excellence within nursing in Northern Ireland and the contribution that nurses make to the health and well-being of the people of Northern Ireland. I am delighted to note that two new awards have been inaugurated this year; the Dementia Nursing Award, sponsored by Runwood Homes and the Inspirational Achievement in Addiction Services Award, sponsored by Addiction NI.

We find ourselves still working within the context of a political vacuum in Northern Ireland. The continuing absence of a Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly is denying our health and social care service the political and strategic leadership that it urgently requires. It also means that the capacity for decision-making, whether on pay, staffing issues, or the reform and modernisation of health and social care, is at best severely constrained and often entirely absent. For the sake of patients and clients, their families and carers, and our dedicated health and social care staff, we need to secure the restoration and full functioning of government as quickly as possible.

Despite the challenging environment, this year's finalists demonstrate how nurses in Northern Ireland are leading the way in delivering high quality, innovative and person-centred care, contributing to the strategic objectives of transformation and co-production.

I would like to thank all of our sponsors. You are most welcome here tonight and I hope that you will find the occasion rewarding. I would encourage all our guests to find out more about our sponsors through reading the information in this programme and by talking to the representatives who are here with us tonight.

I am most grateful, as ever, to the judges for the various award categories, who have contributed their time and expertise to ensure that we appropriately reflect the excellence and diversity that exist within nursing in Northern Ireland.

Congratulations to all our finalists and my best wishes for an enjoyable evening.



INVESTORS
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OUR SPONSORS



The Open University

The Open University is once again supporting the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Learning in Practice Award. This award is given in recognition of the excellent teaching and learning that takes place in practice, across a range of acute and community settings, in Northern Ireland. Student nurses gain invaluable learning experience whilst in clinical practice. Mentors, practice supervisors, managers and practice education teams all support their learning, to enable students to achieve Nursing and Midwifery Council requirements and become the nurses of tomorrow. The Open University has been supporting health care assistants to achieve their aspirations and become registered nurses in Northern Ireland since 2004. The support of the Department of Health, and partnership working with all five health and social care trusts and the independent sector, enables The Open University to support student nurses and increase the number of graduates. The ethos of The Open University is to widen participation in higher education and support all those with a desire and commitment to learn. This award reflects The Open University's appreciation of all the teaching carried out across the health and social care sector in Northern Ireland, supporting learning and development for all.



Department of Health

It is the Department's mission to improve the health and social well-being of the people of Northern Ireland. The Department has three main business responsibilities. Health and social care includes policy and legislation for hospitals, family practitioner services and community health and personal social services. Public health encompasses policy, legislation and administrative action to promote and protect the health and well-being of the population. Public safety covers policy and legislation for fire and rescue services.



Public Health Agency and Health and Social Care Board

The Public Health Agency drives the public health and social well-being agenda in Northern Ireland. It provides a sustained focus to achieving key public health goals and reducing health inequalities. The broad functions of the Public Health Agency are health improvement, health protection, reducing inequalities, improving quality, safety and experience of services, and supporting personal and public involvement. This is achieved by working directly with communities, health and social care providers, and through joint commissioning with the Health and Social Care Board. The Health and Social Care Board is accountable for translating a vision for health and social care into a range of services that deliver high quality and safe outcomes for users, good value for the taxpayer and compliance with statutory obligations. The Health and Social Care Board aims to ensure that the voice of the patient and client informs commissioning decisions.



Inspire

Inspire's vision of well-being for all is at the core of our service delivery. We provide a comprehensive range of high quality services focusing on mental health, learning disabilities and addiction. Working with people, families and communities across the island of Ireland, we take a unique 'whole society' approach to our work, incorporating public anti-stigma campaigns, information provision, support in schools and workplaces, crisis intervention and advocacy, a full range of supported independent living services, and counselling, mindfulness and other psychological therapies. Our social enterprise, Inspire Workplaces, is leading the way in reshaping workplace well-being through the development and delivery of our innovative Employee Resilience Programme [ERP]. Aiming to embed a culture of well-being in workplaces, our ERP approach is at the cutting edge of thinking on organisational culture and employee performance and development. Inspire is delighted and proud to be able to support the 2018 RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Inspiring Excellence in Mental Health and Learning Disability Award.



Macmillan Cancer Support

Macmillan Cancer Support in Northern Ireland provides practical and emotional support to people living with cancer, and their family and friends. Cancer nurses are at the heart of the charity's work. Right from the moment an individual is diagnosed and throughout their cancer journey, they should have access to the highest quality care and the support, energy and inspiration they need. That is why Macmillan Cancer Support continues to invest in our local nursing workforce. Macmillan Cancer Support is delighted to be able to celebrate the achievements of the Northern Ireland cancer nursing workforce by sponsoring the 2018 RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Cancer Nurse Award.



Priory Adult Care

The Priory Group of Companies is the leading provider of behavioural care in the UK. Its purpose is to make a real and lasting difference for everyone it supports. To achieve this, it is organised into three divisions; Healthcare, Education and Children's Services, and Adult Care, which together support the needs of more than 30,000 people each year. The group currently treats more than 70 different conditions through a nationwide network of over 400 facilities that support service users' health, care, education and specialised needs. It provides complex care and neuro-rehabilitation facilities, mental health care hospitals and clinics, medium and low secure facilities, specialist schools and colleges, supported residential facilities and homes, supported living services, and care homes for older people. As part of the Priory Group of Companies, Priory Adult Care is the leading provider of specialist adult care in the United Kingdom.



Roberta Brownlee and Silverdale Care Home

Roberta Brownlee is the owner of Silverdale Care Home in Castlederg, County Tyrone. Her innovative and strategic leadership enabled her to progress through a distinguished career to become the chief executive of the largest privately-owned health care group in the UK. For her outstanding leadership ability spanning some forty years, Roberta was awarded the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015. Silverdale Care Home provides extensive care for patients with complex nursing needs and is renowned for the quality of care delivered within innovative evidence-based models. Silverdale has won many quality awards and, in 2013, home manager Geraldine Browne won the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Award for working alongside local general practitioners in Castlederg to develop a model of care that reduced the number of patients experiencing unnecessary transfers to hospital. The management team at Silverdale is committed to continued innovation with a strong emphasis on quality, safety and continuous staff training and development.



38 (Irish) Brigade

Defence Medical Services

The uniformed and civilian medical and dental personnel from all three services are known collectively as the Defence Medical Services [DMS]. The primary role of the DMS is to promote, protect and restore the health of service personnel to ensure that they are ready and medically fit to go where they are required in the UK and throughout the world. The DMS encompasses the entire medical, nursing, dental, allied health professional, paramedic and support personnel. Nurses make up the largest cadre of personnel within the DMS. In addition to the generalist nurse, the DMS recruits nurses from specialities including (but not limited to) emergency nursing, critical care, primary care, burns and plastics, perioperative practice, paediatrics and mental health. These nurses are trained to the highest level and are prepared to deploy anywhere in the world and in any environment as part of a military exercise or humanitarian mission. In Northern Ireland, the four reserve units that employ nurses are: from the Army Reserve, 204 (North Irish) Field Hospital and 253 (North Irish) Medical Regiment; from the Royal Navy Reserve, HMS Hibernia; and, from the Royal Auxiliary Airforce, 502 (Ulster) Squadron.

OUR SPONSORS



Runwood Homes

Runwood Senior Living provides person-centred care in a range of modern purpose-built facilities across the UK to assist and enable those living with us to enjoy an active life with purpose. As a company, Runwood Senior Living strives to deliver the best in person-centred nursing and residential care whilst upholding the fundamental principles of choice, dignity and respect for all.



Addiction NI

Part of the Inspire group, Addiction NI is celebrating 40 years as Northern Ireland's leading addiction charity. We provide tailor-made treatment programmes for people with drug or alcohol problems, as well as confidential support for people affected by someone else's drinking or drug use. Our Drink Wise Age Well programme offers specialist support for people over 50 and our Drink Work and Me initiative is providing alcohol awareness programmes in workplaces across Northern Ireland. In this special anniversary year for Addiction NI, we are proud to sponsor the inaugural RCN Northern Ireland Inspirational Achievement in Addiction Services Award, recognising those inspiring nurses who are changing the lives of people living with addictions, as well as those of their families.



Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery

The Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery [NIPEC] is delighted to sponsor once again the prestigious Outstanding Achievement Award. NIPEC aims to improve standards of practice, education and professional development for nurses and midwives in order to facilitate their delivery of safe, effective and person-centred care. NIPEC also provides advice and information on matters relating to nursing and midwifery. NIPEC is committed to effective positive partnership working and establishing, forming and maintaining collaboration and strategic alliances with a wide range of stakeholders, partners, agencies and sectors in order to meet its aims.



Ulster University

Ulster University's School of Nursing has been leading graduate nurse education for over 40 years and has a strong culture of scholarship and high quality teaching. In 2017, it was placed 33rd in the QS World Rankings for nursing and 5th in the UK. It is widely recognised for its pioneering nursing research which improves the care of patients, their families and communities, as well as producing inspirational nursing graduates who become major leaders in their profession. The Institute of Nursing and Health Research at Ulster University, which forms a key component of the School of Nursing, is involved in world-leading research and development that enhances the knowledge, expertise and engaged scholarship of nursing, midwifery, public health and the allied health professions. The RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Nursing Research Award, which is proudly sponsored by the School of Nursing at Ulster University, celebrates the achievements of nurses who have undertaken high quality research that has a positive impact on the nursing care provided.



Patient and Client Council

The Patient and Client Council provides a powerful independent voice for the public. Its work is based on speaking directly to people and listening to their opinions, experiences and hopes about health and social care. This information is used by decision-makers to help make changes to the way that services are provided.



The Queen's University of Belfast

The School of Nursing and Midwifery at the Queen's University of Belfast is a progressive and dynamic educational environment that offers full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in all the disciplines of nursing and midwifery. The school prides itself on offering programmes that integrate theory and clinical practice, preparing students to lead and deliver high quality health care, both locally and internationally, in often the most challenging of circumstances. Programme partners include internationally-recognised clinical institutions, and ambulatory and community care services. The school is honoured to celebrate the achievements of exceptional students once again, through sponsorship of the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Student Award.



Liverpool Victoria

LV=, the UK's largest friendly society with over five million members and customers, is proud to support the work of the RCN in Northern Ireland and delighted to sponsor the 2018 RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Health Care Support Worker Award. RCN members have been enjoying exclusive discounts on LV= car and home insurance for many years. Both our car and home insurance have been given a five star rating - its highest level of rating - by independent financial information business Defaqto.



HSC Clinical Education Centre

The HSC Clinical Education Centre exists to provide high quality in-service education to nurses, midwives and allied health professionals employed in the five HSC trusts. It also provides consultancy to a variety of other organisations from the statutory, voluntary, community and independent sectors. The centre's key aim is to be responsive to the needs of its clients, delivering programmes that are informed by the best available evidence, maximise the use of modern educational approaches, and are delivered by highly-skilled professionally-registered teaching staff.



BLM

BLM is a leading provider of health care legal services, with over 20 years' experience in providing services to both the private and public sectors. We have an efficient service delivery model that maximises our skills, training and intelligence to help make our customers' lives better and more successful. It is for this reason that we are described in customer surveys and legal directories as a firm with "its finger on the pulse of the market" and as "a technical powerhouse". We represent the best interests of health care providers and professionals requiring legal assistance during disciplinary, regulatory or criminal investigations, inquiries, inquests and clinical negligence/medical malpractice claims. We also provide proactive advice on matters such as defamation, cyber, data security and the duty of candour. Our team provides services across the UK and Ireland, offering a strong mix of specialist expertise across the health care industry. With members of the team located across England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, we have a strong national presence, together with invaluable local knowledge of coroners and health care bodies.



Belfast Health and Social Care Trust



Northern Health and Social Care Trust



Southern Health and Social Care Trust



South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust



Western Health and Social Care Trust

The five health and social care trusts provide integrated health and social care services across Northern Ireland. Health and social care trusts manage and administer hospitals, health centres, residential homes, day centres and other health and social care facilities. They provide a wide range of health and social care services to the communities they serve. The executive director of nursing of each trust is responsible and accountable for the delivery of nursing care and the RCN is grateful to them for their support.

STUDENT AWARD

Sponsored by the Queen's University of Belfast

Judges - Professor Donna Fitzsimons, The Queen's University of Belfast; David Ferran, RCN Northern Ireland Board; Elish MacDougall, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust



William Hanna

The Queen's University of Belfast

William is a second year pre-registration student at the Queen's University of Belfast and is undertaking the mental health branch programme. His nominator refers to William's commitment to excellence in theory and practice, his advanced learning in low intensity and psychosocial skills, together with his capacity to put service users at the heart of nursing in a collaborative and empathetic way. Whilst undertaking a practice placement with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, a senior manager praised the ways in which William, through excellent interpersonal communication, behavioural modelling and patience, was able to engage a service user who, "paralysed with fear" and unable to eat or drink, had previously been unable to communicate with trust staff. The manager documents the profound positive impact that William's interaction had upon both the service user's journey and the professional practice of trust staff, describing it as a model for others to follow. William's nominator concludes: "One can only imagine how this young man will contribute in the years to come". The judging panel commended William's ability to identify and address unspoken needs, his courage and compassion, and his determination to look behind the label of service user to see the person and engage with them as an individual.



Andrew Turner

The Queen's University of Belfast

Andrew's nomination focuses upon the exemplary nature of his practice, skill, knowledge and attitudes. He is a third year pre-registration student at the Queen's University of Belfast and is undertaking the learning disability branch programme. Andrew's nominator, a practice education facilitator with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, describes how, in his first year of study, Andrew helped to organise and perform in a variety show for service users and their families, an event judged to be a huge success. Trust staff have commended Andrew's involvement with a community resettlement programme, working with service users to develop their own social stories that were individualised, unique in conception, and providing evidence of the close bond that Andrew is able to form with service users, carers and families. In particular, his nominator commends the exceptional support and reassurance that Andrew provided to a service user who was about to undergo surgery and was understandably anxious about the procedure. The judging panel recognised Andrew's passion and commitment to person-centred care, his exceptional communication skills, and his willingness to go the extra mile to support service users.

NURSING RESEARCH AWARD

Sponsored by Ulster University

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS PROGRAMME



Judges - Professor Sonja McIlpatrick, Ulster University; Molly Kane, RCN Northern Ireland Board; Dr Bob Brown, Western Health and Social Care Trust



Helen Noble

The Queen's University of Belfast

Chronic kidney disease is a growing health concern and accounts for over one million deaths per year worldwide. It particularly affects people aged over 65 with co-morbidities. Renal replacement therapy is offered when treatment is required but the one year mortality rate for patients aged over 75 after beginning haemodialysis can be as high as 40%. Conservative kidney management provides an alternative approach, addressing symptom control as well as the physical, spiritual and psychological needs of patients and carers. Funded through a post-doctoral fellowship from the National Institute of Health Research, Helen's study examined the experiences of patients and carers who chose conservative kidney management across ten renal centres in the UK. The research highlighted a lack of knowledge as to how practitioners assist patients in their decision-making, particularly those for whom dialysis may provide little benefit. Helen also demonstrated the value of encouraging patients to be more actively involved in decisions about their care. Perhaps most importantly, her research showed that the quality of life for frail patients with reduced performance who choose not to undertake dialysis, compared with those who do, remained constant after twelve months. The judging panel commended Helen for undertaking such a complex and multi-faceted research project, particularly in an often-neglected area of practice.



Donna McConnell

Ulster University

Media coverage has often highlighted poor quality care experiences in emergency departments, characterised by overcrowding, lengthy waiting times, medical errors and delays in treatment. Donna's research explored person-centred practice within the emergency department environment. Whilst staff generally reported that they practised in a person-centred way, the research revealed poor care experiences for both patients and staff. She discovered that patients, while experiencing what she refers to as "person-centred moments", more generally reported being cared for in a harsh, overcrowded and chaotic environment in which their basic needs were often not met. Meanwhile, some staff described distress at the level of care they were able to provide at times, and symptoms of burnout. Donna found a prioritisation of medical-technical care over fundamental nursing care, poor inter-departmental relationships, high use of bank, agency and locum staff, inconsistent skill mix, a lack of access to senior staff after 5.00pm, and what she describes as care designed around achieving "unrelenting targets". Donna also identified a range of contributory factors within the wider health care system, such as the rationalisation of services, generic recruitment policies, lack of direct admissions, and targets which impacted greatly on the emergency department environment and determined how care was directed and organised. She highlighted the need to manage, or lessen, this powerful compromising influence of the wider health care system on the emergency department care environment, Donna also emphasised that staff need to be supported in undertaking practice development to enable them to manage the care setting and create an environment in which person-centred practice can flourish. This would also include facilitating staff to identify their own personal values and beliefs and how these affect patient care. The judging panel was impressed by Donna's passion and enthusiasm for her research, as well as her capacity to deliver a high quality analysis that embraced the perspective of both the practitioner and the patient.

CHIEF NURSING OFFICER'S AWARD

Sponsored by the Department of Health

Judges - Professor Charlotte McArdle, Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health; Robert Sowney, RCN Foundation; Siobhan Donald, RCN Northern Ireland Board



Conor McDowell

Charge nurse
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Conor is a charge nurse in cardiothoracic surgery at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast. His nomination focuses upon his leadership of an initiative to reduce the number of patient falls recorded within the unit. Conor believed that the key to acceptance and success of this nurse-led project was the inclusion of all sections of the workforce. He therefore recruited a core group to champion the initiative within the unit, including a consultant surgeon, ward sister, staff nurses, health care support workers, allied health professionals and clerical staff. Conor organised workshops and ensured that training was also incorporated within clinical supervision. He facilitated regular group discussions to share ideas for further improvements. Conor audits compliance with the initiative and maintains a dedicated noticeboard to promote best practice. He also introduced a system of red lanyards to promote and reinforce the initiative and yellow armbands to identify patients judged to be at risk of falling, also sourcing appropriate footwear for patients. Over a ten month period, a 74% reduction in falls was recorded within the unit and the need for night sedation has been eliminated. Length of stay has shortened and the consequent freeing of bed days has increased capacity to perform open heart surgery. Conor has introduced a system of telephone follow-up to maintain contact with patients who experienced a fall and are recovering at home. The judging panel commended the demonstrable improvement in patient safety that Conor has helped to inspire.



Tracey Steenson

Rapid response co-ordinator
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Tracey's nomination exemplifies how nurses are taking the lead in delivering health service transformation in Northern Ireland, avoiding unnecessary hospital admission, bringing the service closer to the patient and, most importantly, promoting improved outcomes. The iron deficiency anaemia clinic established by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust rapid response nursing service provides a new care pathway in which patients are treated in community clinics closer to home, therefore avoiding repetitive blood transfusions which can take up to five hours each. Following discussions with medical, nursing and pharmacist colleagues, the service was piloted in the Down locality clinic. Suitable patients now receive intravenous iron infusions rather than blood transfusions, resulting in an overall reduction in treatment time from 980 hours to 49 (in relation to 64 patients treated, 98 iron infusions were administered instead of blood transfusions). This has reduced the need for emergency department admission and created additional team capacity to treat more patients. The risk to patients is reduced, iron levels are more stable under the new care pathway, valuable blood resources can be targeted where they are urgently required, and significant financial savings have been made. The judging panel recognised the innovative and patient-centred approach adopted by Tracey and was impressed with the ways in which she has demonstrated how early intervention and a proactive approach to meeting patient need can produce improved outcomes and a more effective service.

HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER AWARD

Sponsored by Liverpool Victoria

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS PROGRAMME



Judges - Helen McNeilly, RCN Northern Ireland Board; Kathryn Gault, RCN Northern Ireland Board; Dennis Greer, RCN UK Health Practitioner Committee



Philip Martin

Health care assistant
Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Philip works in a busy acute elderly ward at Craigavon Area Hospital. His nomination focuses upon his commitment to his own personal development and his capacity to provide care that is patient-centred, individualised and respectful. Philip studied in his own time in order to pass his A-levels and subsequently obtained a diploma in health and social care. He then undertook an HNC in health and social care before applying to The Open University for pre-registration nursing education. Philip has exceptional communication skills, engaging effectively and appropriately with patients, their families and colleagues. He demonstrates a high level of emotional intelligence, recognising and anticipating anxieties and concerns before addressing and allaying them. Despite the pressurised ward environment, Philip takes the time to speak to patients in a compassionate and non-judgmental manner. His nominator describes Philip as the essence of a caring professional and a role model for other health care assistants. The judging panel noted Philip's commitment to his own development, his awareness of dietary and infection control issues, and his ability to advocate on behalf of patients.



Craig Chambers

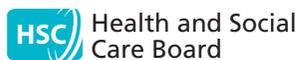
Assistant falls practitioner
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Craig has been nominated on the basis of his exceptional contribution to the care of older people who have experienced a fall at home but do not require emergency care. Based at Antrim Area Hospital, Craig works within a team that, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, provides screening and relevant health promotion advice, as well as devising an action plan to help patients recover from a fall. He has developed his own knowledge and awareness of the causes of falls, including osteoporosis. Craig has also obtained relevant qualifications and undertaken training to improve his knowledge and awareness. His nominator cites numerous examples of Craig's caring nature and his willingness to go the extra mile to provide care and reassurance to patients. She also speaks highly of Craig's compassionate and non-judgmental nature, qualities that led him successfully to apply to study for a nursing degree with The Open University. The judging panel commended Craig for his caring qualities, his commitment to his own development and his focus upon infection control and patient safety.

PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD

Sponsored by the Public Health Agency and the Health and Social Care Board

Judges - Valerie Watts, Health and Social Care Board; Angela Reed, Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery (NIPEC); Helen McNeilly, RCN Northern Ireland Board



Bronagh Mulholland

Health visitor
Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Bronagh has been nominated for her outstanding work in supporting Syrian families who have moved to Northern Ireland under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. A health visitor based at Portadown Health Centre, Bronagh initially volunteered to join a working group to consider how the trust health visiting and school nursing service could support families coming to Northern Ireland from a war-torn country. She subsequently developed a pivotal role in creating effective support for refugees. This encompasses meeting families when they first arrive, undertaking an initial family health assessment, and then liaising with health visiting and school nursing colleagues to ensure that identified health needs are met. Bronagh has developed strong partnership working with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, the Red Cross, Bryson House, Barnardos and Extern in order to enhance this initial support. Through her work with families, Bronagh has improved understanding within the service of their experiences and the impact upon their health and well-being. She provides support and advocacy for Syrian families in their new communities, as well as acting as a resource for other health visitors and school nurses in the care they provide. Bronagh's nominator pays tribute to the ways in which she "has made a significant contribution to raising our awareness of how we can work more effectively with the Syrian refugees and other services to promote positive outcomes for this vulnerable group". The judging panel commended Bronagh's enthusiasm for her role and her successful promotion of a public health approach to the well-being of Syrian families.



Bernie Carlin

Family nurse
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Bernie works as part of the trust's family nurse partnership team, based in Ballymena. This is a licensed early intervention programme for teenage mothers undergoing a first pregnancy. It involves intensive home visiting from early pregnancy until the age of two, promoting improved pregnancy outcomes, enhanced child health and development, and stronger parental well-being and independence. It also emphasises the importance of mental health, bonding and attachment. Bernie was appointed to her current post after many years in public health nursing, completing an intensive and demanding training programme. Her nominator pays tribute to the development of the young parents under her guidance and care. Some have a history of social services involvement from their own childhood. In many cases, their children were placed on the child protection register at birth, yet all but one has now been removed from the register as a consequence of Bernie's care and support. Many of the children are exceeding their anticipated milestones and some of the young mothers are returning to education and employment. The family nurse partnership model is dependent upon a multi-agency approach to care. Bernie has forged strong relationships with, for example, housing organisations, Women's Aid, social services, food banks and education providers. Bernie's nominator concludes: "The positive feedback I have received, not only from her clients but also their partners and extended family networks, is unprecedented. She carries out her work in a modest, unassuming manner. She is non-judgmental and down to earth." The judging panel was impressed with Bernie's passion, enthusiasm and commitment, as well as the demonstrable benefits she has facilitated in the lives of potentially vulnerable young children and their families.

LEARNING DISABILITY AWARD

Sponsored by Priory Adult Care

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS PROGRAMME



Royal College
of Nursing
Northern Ireland

Judges - Roberta Wilson, Priory Adult Care; Professor Michael Brown, the Queen's University of Belfast; Anne Campbell, RCN Northern Ireland Board



Jillian Scott

Health facilitator
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Jillian practises as a health facilitator with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, caring for adults with a learning disability who have type 2 diabetes. Prevalence of this condition among people with a learning disability is increasing. As the only learning disability nurse in Northern Ireland who also holds a specialist diabetes nursing qualification, Jillian is passionate about promoting self-management. She secured funding from the Public Health Agency to develop a comprehensive and accessible information booklet, providing education and advice in a pictorial format. Jillian co-designed and co-produced the booklet through consultation with people with a learning disability, carers and other health professionals. It is now available regionally. Jillian is also involved in various initiatives to improve professional practice and has provided specialist input to the development of an NHS England care pathway for people with a learning disability who have type 2 diabetes. She is involved internationally in promoting this area of practice. Jillian's nominator describes her as "a true inspiration to her colleagues, embracing person-centred values in her everyday practice and seeing everyone as individuals". The judging panel commended Jillian's collaboration with service users and her determination to help improve the quality of life for people with a learning disability.



Joanne McConnell

Deputy sister
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Joanne has been nominated for her outstanding work on behalf of people with autistic spectrum disorder [ASD] who attend the emergency department at the Ulster Hospital. She recognised that attending an emergency department could be a traumatic experience for this client group, with the sensory overload deriving from the noise and volume of people causing some to become distressed and frightened. Focusing upon improving the patient journey, Joanne took the lead in determining what could be done. She initially consulted colleagues with ASD and then designed a questionnaire to evaluate staff awareness of the issue. Realising that such knowledge was limited, Joanne designed and delivered teaching sessions to help staff address the needs of people with ASD. She also, most importantly, consulted autism support groups, service users and carers to gain their perspective and input. This led to the development of an emergency department passport that is made available on arrival. It enables patients to document what can trigger distress and incorporates a map of the patient journey to promote an understanding of what attendance at the department might involve. Perhaps most significantly, she developed an ASD room in which patients can wait following triage. This provides a quiet space with foam mat flooring and distraction aids. Access is offered to patients at triage and the facility is publicised by support groups. Many compliments have been received, praising the impact of Joanne's leadership on service users, their carers and families. The judging panel commended Joanne's initiative in detecting a problem and then setting out proactively to address it, in partnership with colleagues and service users, in order to enhance the patient journey and experience.

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING DISABILITY AWARD

Sponsored by Inspire

Judges - Margaret Cameron, Inspire Wellbeing Group; Rodney Morton, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health; Briege Quinn, RCN Northern Ireland Board



Liam Dunne

Crisis services manager
Western Health and Social Care Trust

Liam is the crisis services manager for adult acute mental health services in the northern sector of the Western Health and Social Care Trust, based at Gransha Park. His nomination focuses upon his integral role in promoting innovation and changes in practice that have improved safety, effectiveness and the patient experience. Liam has helped reduce the length of stay by maximising the potential of the community crisis resolution and home treatment service, and acute day care, as safe and effective alternatives to hospital admission. He developed planning systems to provide intensive support for people experiencing a mental health crisis, as well as person-centred therapeutic programming and interventions for people using acute day care services. Liam has also successfully promoted the physical health of those using the crisis services by introducing screening and monitoring for people using psychotropic medication. He is currently involved in a quality improvement initiative aimed at enhancing safety planning for those presenting with thoughts of suicide during a mental health crisis. Liam's nominator concludes: "He gives inspiration to people facing the challenges and loneliness of mental ill health by inspiring his team to deliver collaborative, evidence-based interventions with human compassion, instilling hope in people who use mental health crisis services on their journey to recovery". The judging panel recognised Liam's strong leadership and his achievement in integrating three different services within a common purpose in order to promote continuity of care and a responsiveness to the needs of a vulnerable client group.



Julie McCormick

Early intervention team leader
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Julie's nomination focuses upon her leadership of a team providing community-based care and treatment for young people aged between 18 and 30 with a first episode of psychosis. Individuals with serious mental ill health have a reduced life expectancy and higher rates of coronary heart disease, diabetes, obesity and associated conditions. They are less likely to engage with primary health care providers such as GPs, dentists and screening services. Julie's team has worked tirelessly and within existing resources to promote and improve the physical health of service users, sourcing their own equipment and arranging the logistics of delivering the service across Belfast. A system of weekly mobile health clinics has been established and the team is now able to offer initial health screening and annual health monitoring to patients. The service includes blood screening, clinical observations, and advice on screening for breast, cervical and testicular cancer. The team provides health promotion information and conducts screening for the side-effects of prescribed anti-psychotropic medication. Success has been achieved in the early detection of conditions such as diabetes, cardiac disease and endocrine problems. The judging panel commended Julie and her team for their commitment to the development of new ways of working that demonstrably improve the physical health of service users.

LEARNING IN PRACTICE AWARD

Sponsored by The Open University

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR
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Royal College
of Nursing
Northern Ireland

Judges - Donna Gallagher, The Open University; Frances Cannon, Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery [NIPPEC];
Anne Marie Marley, RCN Northern Ireland Board



Claire Black

Nurse manager
Park Manor Care Home

Claire's nomination focuses upon her achievement in translating a personal commitment to developing staff, enabling them to reach their potential and promoting learning, into what is referred to as "an embedded culture" within Park Manor Care Home. Claire has introduced systems of mentorship and preceptorship, as well as new training programmes, including one that supports care assistants who wish to undertake pre-registration nursing education programmes. Her nominator cites Claire's capacity to support staff in building upon their skills and contributing to the development of higher standards of care. He refers to her motivational qualities, calming influence, and ability to challenge staff to move beyond their comfort zone in order to continue their own development. The nomination concludes with reference to Claire's immense knowledge and skills, the inspiration that she provides to colleagues and her exceptional nursing qualities. The judging panel recognised Claire's determination to invest in and support staff, her role in enabling and promoting education, and her unrelenting focus upon the promotion of person-centred care and patient safety.



Joleen McKee

Staff nurse
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Joleen practises in the regional cardiothoracic surgery unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast, having qualified in 2016. Her nomination focuses upon the support she provides to student nurses working in the unit during practice placements. She has established a student nurse education zone, which includes a library, and developed ice-breaker sessions to help orient and support students when they begin their practice placements. This is designed to promote a safe learning culture and enable students to realise their potential. She also produces welcome leaflets and advice bulletins for students. Joleen has, in consultation with students themselves, adapted the orientation programme and promoted interdisciplinary working with medical and allied health professional colleagues. She arranges for students to observe theatre sessions in order to enhance their knowledge. Joleen is currently undertaking a mentorship programme in order to consolidate her skills and enthusiasm for developing others. Her nominator praises Joleen's passion for the development of nurses and nursing, observing how she thrives upon teaching and supporting colleagues. The judging panel commended Joleen's innovative qualities, particularly within a nurse who is, herself, still in the early stages of her career. It also noted how Joleen seeks to support and guide students, not just because it is the right thing to do but also because, ultimately, this helps to enhance patient care.

PATIENT'S CHOICE AWARD

Sponsored by the Patient and Client Council

Judges - Maeve Hully, Patient and Client Council; Dr Caroline Shuldhham, RCNi; Maura Devlin, Nursing and Midwifery Council

Patient and Client Council
Your voice in health and social care



Anne Phillips

Community psychiatric nurse
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Anne has been nominated by a patient who, in her own words, suffers from borderline personality disorder, depression and anxiety. Every day is a challenge and, eight years ago, the patient tried to end her life. At that point, Anne became her community psychiatric nurse and has since transformed her life. The patient describes how Anne goes above and beyond the confines of her role in order to help her lead a normal life, something that she thought she would never be able to do. She outlines how Anne is always open, honest and non-judgmental, her warmth, sincerity and empathy instantly building a bond of trust with the patient. Anne acted as the patient's advocate, helping her with paperwork when she was off work on sick leave. The patient has now been discharged from Anne's care but she is still able to call her when she feels depressed or anxious. She says: "I just have to pick up the phone and Anne is there for me. She'll call with me day or night and usually one visit gets me on the right path again. She's literally been my life saver and I can never thank her enough." The judging panel commended Anne's passion for mental health, her willingness to go beyond the call of duty, and her capacity to build a strong and enduring therapeutic relationship with patients.



Mary Kane

Stoma care and inflammatory bowel disease nurse specialist
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Based at Causeway Hospital in Coleraine, Mary's nominator is a young woman who, in 2017, was required to use a colostomy bag as a consequence of Crohn's disease and colitis. The patient describes how, in the period leading up to surgery, Mary continually checked in with her, providing great support both to her and her family. She recognised that the patient was concerned about the impact of the procedure on her studies, with A-levels scheduled just two months after the surgery. Mary made sure that everything was in place to enable the patient to return to school and sit her exams without detriment. Inspired by Mary, the patient is now determined to become a stoma care and inflammatory bowel disease nurse, currently preparing for university with Mary's support, guidance and mentorship. The patient adds: "Mary is more than a nurse; she is a friend. If it weren't for her, I don't know how things would have turned out. I would not have come out the other side without her support. If I can serve sick patients anywhere near as incredibly as Mary has treated me, I will be very happy." The judging panel recognised Mary's determination to treat the patient as an individual and was particularly impressed with her ability to recognise and address the specific concerns and challenges faced by a young patient.

CANCER NURSE AWARD

Sponsored by Macmillan Cancer Support

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS PROGRAMME



Royal College of Nursing
Northern Ireland

Judges - Heather Monteverde, Macmillan Cancer Support; Loretta Gribben, Public Health Agency; Brenda Creaney, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust



Louise Gribben

Haematology clinical nurse specialist
Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Louise's nomination focuses upon her leading role in the development of a nurse-led model of care for patients with haematological cancer. She provides treatment and care for patients and continues to support them to live with, and beyond, their diagnosis. This involves liaising with a range of other health and social care services, as well as accessing other sources of advice and support. Louise was one of the first haematology nurses in Northern Ireland to progress cancer reform within the haematology service. Under her leadership, the trust now runs six nurse-led clinics each week, providing both face-to-face and telephone reviews. In line with the ethos of co-production, Louise works closely with patients to involve them in shaping and developing service provision, also acting as a patient advocate in the development of their management plans. She continuously audits the service in order to identify areas for further improvement and delivers education and training on haematological conditions, including at the Queen's University of Belfast. Louise's nominator highlights her exceptional professionalism and dedication to patients. The judging panel commended Louise for her commitment to partnership working, the leadership she has demonstrated, and the clear evidence of how the re-focused service that she leads has improved outcomes for patients.



Gloria O'Connor

Macmillan colorectal cancer clinical nurse specialist
Western Health and Social Care Trust

Colorectal cancer is the second most common form of the condition in Northern Ireland, with around 1,100 new cases identified each year and over 400 deaths recorded annually. Regular review of patients with colorectal cancer is essential but, within the Western Trust, patients were experiencing increased delays in accessing review appointments, ranging from three to nine months. Gloria identified the need to tackle this by establishing a nurse-led follow-up clinic for patients in order to relieve the pressure on consultant-led clinics. She successfully persuaded managers and medical colleagues to support the new service, prioritising the need for strong inter-professional working and building consensus on the aims and scope of the nurse-led clinic. Once the new model was established in January 2014, Gloria ensured that appointments were of sufficient duration to enable a holistic needs assessment to be completed for each patient, overcoming an initial degree of resistance from medical colleagues. In the words of her nominator, the benefits to patients of the nurse-led clinic cannot be over-estimated. Evaluation has been uniformly positive and audit has demonstrated that delays in awaiting a review appointment have now been eliminated. Of twelve patients who suffered recurrence, seven underwent further curative treatment as a direct consequence of early detection by the nurse-led clinic. Gloria's nominator reflects upon her person-centred approach, her insight, vision, commitment and professionalism. The judging panel recognised how the service established by Gloria constitutes an excellent example of how nursing can contribute to, and lead, service transformation. The panel also noted the strong and inspirational leadership that she has brought to meeting the needs of patients.

DEMENTIA NURSING AWARD

Sponsored by Runwood Homes

Judges - Rosemary Dilworth, Runwood Homes; Heather Trouton, Southern Health and Social Care Trust; Molly Kane, RCN Northern Ireland Board



Maria Magee

Macmillan palliative care facilitator
Western Health and Social Care Trust

Maria has been nominated by Derry Well Woman, an organisation with which she works in partnership in order to enhance the lives of people living with end stage dementia. Namaste care is a structured programme, developed in the USA, integrating compassionate nursing care with individualised activities for people with advanced dementia within a group setting. Maria worked with Derry Well Woman to lead a pilot of the programme, for the first time on the island of Ireland, in order to support twelve women carers who each have a relative with advanced dementia. The holistic programme includes physical, sensory and emotional elements, enabling carers to communicate through the senses when verbal communication has broken down. This is achieved by a range of stimuli, including hand massage, footbaths, food reminiscence, vision and music. Maria successfully applied for funding for the Namaste project and, in the words of her nominator, has subsequently been a model for how to provide emotional support and enable others to provide similar care. Alongside the group support she facilitates and leads, Maria also visits carers at home to provide individual guidance, support and information. Participants in the programme experienced significant improvements in their sleep quality, ability to talk about their concerns, diet, and ability to recover from episodes of distress. Maria's nominator concludes: "She has evidenced her commitment to providing expert care and therapy in the community, accessible to families whose lives are compromised by dementia". The judging panel commended Maria for successfully implementing a truly innovative programme, improving the lives of people with dementia and their carers, and demonstrating the value of co-production in health care service design and delivery.



Jackie Williams

Ward manager
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

As manager of ward A1, a care of older people and stroke unit at Antrim Area Hospital, Jackie has been nominated "in recognition of her exceptional skills in professionally leading nursing and multidisciplinary teams towards person-centred compassionate care for people with dementia and their families". Through Jackie's commitment, the ward became a pilot site to trial and evaluate a tool to identify those at risk of delirium, which included prevention and management strategies. She worked collaboratively with the regional Patient Safety Forum and Dementia NI to secure funding for distraction therapy resources. As a consequence, patients and families reported a much deeper understanding of how to manage dementia that is complicated by delirium, whilst recorded incidences of falls and episodes of distressed behaviour on the ward reduced from 38 to four in just one year. Jackie has also led a project that has enhanced the end of life experiences of patients and families, as well as promoting professional development for her colleagues and making changes to the ward environment in partnership with patients and families. Her nominator describes how Jackie has engaged nurses and multi-professional teams alike in developing a compassionate, patient-centred, shared vision of excellence, promoting an open, respectful and dignified culture of positive and helpful staff. The judging panel was impressed by Jackie's focus upon listening to patients and families in shaping a person-centred ward ethos that has brought demonstrable benefits to standards of care, safety and experience.

INSPIRATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN ADDICTION SERVICES AWARD

Sponsored by Addiction NI

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS PROGRAMME



Royal College of Nursing
Northern Ireland

Judges - *Theлма Abernethy, Addiction NI; Linsey Sheerin, RCN Northern Ireland Emergency Nurses Network; Eileen Dunlop, RCN Northern Ireland Board*



Yvonne McWhirter

Head of primary care and specialist services
Western Health and Social Care Trust

Yvonne's career in addiction nursing began in 1987 and she has played a central role in a number of developments that have improved outcomes and standards of care for service users in the Western Trust area. As chair of the Western drug and alcohol co-ordination team, Yvonne helped develop a home detoxification service and also secured funding to pilot an alcohol liaison nurse role. This led to recurrent funding for two nurses and now forms the basis for a regional model. She initiated a frequent attenders group, which promotes a multi-agency approach to helping people with addiction issues and other complex needs receive person-centred care. Yvonne's nominator describes how she has inspired others, educating and mentoring staff within the trust and partner organisations, working tirelessly to give the addiction population a voice, and promoting a wide range of services to enhance their quality of life. She helped develop an awareness programme on foetal alcohol syndrome, which was then rolled out to community and voluntary organisations. This included specific training for foster carers of children with this condition. Yvonne's outstanding record of achievement also includes establishing the first drug arrest referral team on the island of Ireland and setting up, with lottery funding, a research group to study the incidence of alcohol-related brain injury in the trust area. She has also promoted initiatives to tackle homelessness. The judging panel recognised Yvonne's ability to enthuse and inspire others, as well as her determination to ensure that service users are treated with dignity and respect at all times.



Kathy Goumas

Head of addiction service
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Kathy's nursing career in the field of addictions has spanned more than thirty years, including periods with the former DHSSPS and the Northern Ireland Prison Service. During this period, she has taken a leading role in the development of community and residential services for people who suffer from alcohol and drug dependencies. Kathy joined the Northern Trust in 2009 and her nomination focuses upon her success in improving accessibility, creating a positive experience, and improving outcomes for service users. She was instrumental in the introduction of the choice and partnership approach framework, which helps to support the management of demand and the realignment of clinical capacity in response to need, also applying systematic improvement methodologies to expand treatment choices that increase the likelihood of better outcomes. Kathy has developed strong partnership working with primary care providers, criminal justice agencies, and voluntary and community organisations, to support service users across the entire care pathway. A number of the improvements that Kathy has introduced to improve the service user's journey have now been adopted within a regional model of care. She successfully implemented a recovery coaching programme, whereby service users who are in sustained recovery from alcohol and drug addictions undertake accredited training to coach and support others who are at an earlier stage of their recovery. She has more recently introduced a dual diagnosis infrastructure in the mental health programme that uses the principle of 'no wrong door' to support service users with mental health issues who also misuse alcohol and drugs receive seamless, appropriate and skilled care. Kathy is passionate about developing the health and social care workforce and, as a trainer in psychotherapy motivational interviewing, she supports many organisations in becoming skilful in this evidence-based psychotherapy. The judging panel commended Kathy's passion, her focus on service users and their families, together with her exceptional ability to develop and lead partnership working that brings about improved outcomes for service users.

DEFENCE RESERVIST NURSE AWARD

Sponsored by 38 (Irish) Brigade

Judges - Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Thomas, 38 (Irish) Brigade; Honorary Colonel Martin Bradley; Roisin Devlin, RCN Northern Ireland Board



38 (Irish) Brigade



Corporal Christopher Finnegan

204 (North Irish) Field Hospital (Volunteers)

Christopher's nomination focuses upon what his nominator describes as his phenomenal dedication and commitment, along with his exemplary standards of clinical practice. These qualities were demonstrated during a testing exercise conducted last year in England, in which Christopher worked as part of the field hospital emergency department team. He took on the role of team leader, providing a clear role model of high standards in clinical practice, assuming responsibility for clinical equipment management, and demonstrating exemplary leadership behaviours. Christopher has successfully completed training and development in intermediate life support, paediatric intermediate life support, emergency management of burns, paediatric nursing support, and major incident medical management and support. This professional development has equipped Christopher with the knowledge and skills to provide higher standards of nursing care. He was awarded the commander's medal of excellence for his exceptional contribution to a NATO exercise in Romania, leading trauma teams and displaying consistently high standards of clinical nursing practice. His nominator concludes by describing Christopher as "an ambassador for what skills and opportunities are available within the defence medical services". The judging panel endorsed this recognition of Christopher as a role model and was impressed with the excellence and breadth of his nursing practice.



Captain Nicola Dunlop

Clinical training officer/nursing officer
253 (NI) Medical Regiment

Nicola's role covers key areas of professional development, including promoting defence operational nursing competencies and real life support for over 100 clinical members of the unit. She has established training specifically for nurses and opened access to military-specific clinical courses and study days for the nursing team. Nicola played a leading role in the provision of real life support during military exercises last year in the Netherlands. This involved organising and delivering, over an eight month period, concise training in primary health care and pre-hospital emergency care, culminating in a testing and validation process. Nicola and her team planned and created various training scenarios, delivered simulated casualties, and ensured that all staff were competent and prepared. She developed policy and implemented clinical aides-memoire for staff attending the exercises. Nicola was also responsible for governance, and infection prevention and control, the latter role involving dealing successfully with a norovirus outbreak. Her nominator describes Nicola as "a true inspiration and the epitome of what it takes to be a flexible defence nurse". She adds: "Nicola has displayed exemplary standards of training and education, in addition to clinical practice" and describes her as "a fine example of leadership behaviour". The judging panel recognised Nicola's ability to motivate and inspire her team, alongside her strong commitment to professional development.

BROWNLEE-SILVERDALE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Sponsored by Roberta Brownlee and Silverdale Care Home

2018 NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS PROGRAMME



Royal College
of Nursing
Northern Ireland

Judges - Geraldine Browne, Silverdale Care Home; Lynne Charlton, Public Health Agency; Francis Rice



Roisin Devlin

Lead nurse, emergency care
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

The unrelenting pressures under which emergency care departments frequently operate are well-documented. As the emergency department lead nurse, Roisin's nomination focuses upon her leadership of the three emergency departments within the South Eastern Trust through a period of significant change. At the time of her appointment in June 2016, the challenging environment was reflected in low staff morale, high sickness rates and poor service user experience, evidenced by high levels of complaints. Roisin realised the need to inspire staff in order for them to share her vision for turning round the departments. She introduced a learning culture with weekly training sessions, bespoke preceptorship and mentorship, and the implementation of a framework to ensure the delivery of evidence-based practice. Roisin introduced a new key performance indicator for monitoring pain relief and has prioritised meeting the needs of older people attending emergency departments through a range of practice and educational initiatives. Recognising the importance of service user feedback, Roisin proactively seeks views via a post-discharge telephone call, ensuring that issues are addressed and, equally importantly, that positive feedback is shared with colleagues. Emergency department key performance indicators have all improved significantly as a result of the change management and quality improvement measures that Roisin has introduced. In the words of her nominator: "Roisin is clearly an outstanding leader and a brilliant colleague who is changing the face of emergency department services within the South Eastern Trust". The judging panel commended Roisin's passion and compassion, her advocacy for patients and staff colleagues alike, together with her willingness to undertake courageous conversations in order to promote change.



Mary Burke

Head of medicine and unscheduled care
Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Mary's role is complex and challenging, with responsibility for around 400 staff and the strategic development of the Southern Trust's emergency departments, minor injuries units and acute medical unit, as well as operational lead for commissioning the trust's ambulatory care service. She also leads on the recruitment, development and retention of nursing staff. Mary has played a key role in the implementation of a wide range of initiatives that have improved patient care, including the introduction of ambulatory care pathways, an emergency department improvement plan, sepsis bundle and safer bundle. She has also made a significant contribution to the Daisy Hill Hospital pathfinder project to shape new models of care. Mary is strongly focused upon the development of nursing staff and has introduced a number of educational opportunities that have contributed to staff development and the promotion of evidence-based care. Mary's nominator describes her ability to remain focused and calm, along with her capacity to lead and inspire staff in delivering safe and patient-centred care. She also praises Mary's communication skills and multidisciplinary approach. The judging panel commented upon Mary's strong patient focus, the key strategic role she is playing in the development of new models of care, and her determination to build, motivate and inspire the nursing workforce she leads.

NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Judges - Professor Charlotte McArdle, Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health; Eileen McEaney, Northern Health and Social Care Trust; Graham Scott, RCNi; Angela McLernon, Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery (NIPEC); Fiona Devlin, RCN Northern Ireland Board Chair



Pauline Curran

IV and subcutaneous lead specialist nurse
Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Pauline recognised an opportunity to enhance the service for patients in hospital requiring intravenous antibiotics at home and who needed a peripherally-inserted central catheter [PICC] line. Previously, the procedure was completed by a consultant radiologist. Pauline researched other models of care and discovered that specialist nurses in England were conducting this procedure with the aid of ultrasound scanners. She undertook a series of interviews with patients to review their experiences and define where improvements could be made. Pauline identified the need for an innovative and patient-focused solution. Following negotiation with a range of stakeholders, a specialist nurse-led pilot was established in 2017. This enabled PICC lines to be inserted by a specialist nurse, in a timely manner, at the bedside across all hospital sites in the Southern Trust. Audit of the patient experience from the nurse-led service has been overwhelmingly positive. Infection and thrombosis rates were recorded as zero. The judging panel commended Pauline for demonstrating clearly how an evidence-based nurse-led service can produce better outcomes for patients and increase capacity within the hospital by providing a service working in partnership with the consultant radiologist. There can be few clearer examples of the contribution that nursing is making to health service transformation in Northern Ireland.



Ann Butler

Recovery College co-ordinator
Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Northern Ireland has a 25% higher prevalence of mental ill health than England and higher levels of depression than the rest of the UK. The Programme for Government includes a commitment to ensure that people with mental health problems can access the same life opportunities as others through recovery-based interventions. Ann has played a leading role in placing recovery principles at the heart of mental health service development within the Southern Trust area. Her approach is to demonstrate how recovery-oriented education should focus upon rebuilding lives, rather than merely addressing symptoms, using a partnership approach with service users. These principles have been put into practice through Ann's establishment and leadership of the Recovery College, which makes courses available throughout the Southern Trust area. All courses are co-produced by people with experience of mental ill-health, in partnership with health and social care professionals. Delivered in settings such as community centres, parish halls and libraries, the courses are based upon the close working relationships that Ann has developed with community and voluntary organisations. In collaboration with a service user forum, Ann launched a recovery resource, featuring inspirational stories, poetry and insights from service users. Since its launch in 2016, over 1000 students have registered with the Recovery College and 97% of evaluations have highlighted its beneficial impact upon the well-being of people with mental health problems. Ann's nominator highlights how she has transformed perceptions of the Recovery College from a marginal addition to mental health services to a central component of recovery-focused practice. The judging panel was impressed with Ann's ability to demonstrate the value of co-production in the development of a service that truly places its users at its heart, particularly in respect of how they are viewed as students at a college equipped with their own portfolio, rather than as patients with a care plan.



Chris Wamsley

Ward manager
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

On moving last year to work in an acute general medical ward at the Mater Hospital in Belfast, Chris became aware of the impact that length of stay can have on patients' health and well-being. He was particularly conscious of how patients who had been living independently at home prior to hospitalisation now required rehabilitation or step-down care before being discharged. Families would report how the needs of the patient increased during admission as they became less mobile and more debilitated. Taking on a management role and leading a ward team that had previously felt demotivated and lacking in direction, he worked with the team to develop a vision of the care they wished to provide to patients. Drawing upon the #EndPJparalysis and The Last 1000 Days work of Professor Brian Dolan, Chris designed the Dress for Success initiative. This focuses upon promoting person-centred care, dignity and independence by encouraging patients to get out of bed, get dressed and remain mobile wherever possible. The target is 75% patient compliance. Chris co-ordinated discussions with colleagues in order to plan the initiative and ensure a collaborative multidisciplinary approach. Dress for Success promotes the increased involvement of relatives with the care of the patient. It also provides protected time for staff to engage in purely social interaction with patients. Evaluation has highlighted how patients' experiences and safety have improved through being in greater control of their own care. It also records how the initiative promotes more accurate assessment and hence safer discharge. Perhaps most importantly, Chris' innovation has reduced reliance upon community care packages by promoting independence and saving valuable hospital bed days that were previously wasted whilst patients awaited treatment. The judging panel recognised Chris' excellent management and leadership skills, commending him for respecting and promoting patient dignity, individuality and choice, as well as his capacity to engage with and support staff in order to improve patient care.



Jackie Kearns

Inflammatory bowel disease nurse specialist
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Jackie's nomination focuses upon her success in improving the patient experience and clinical outcomes through researching, designing and implementing in Antrim Area Hospital a new approach to the care of patients with inflammatory bowel disease. Jackie's starting point was European research demonstrating how a simplification of iron doses for patients with inflammatory bowel disease could help improve the prevalence of iron deficiency anaemia. She audited 63 cases, concluding that the new model of care had promoted an increase in haemoglobin nearly twice that experienced previously. Patient feedback also revealed reduced waiting times and travel costs, along with a reduction in the need to attend clinics. Jackie has further enhanced the service through the establishment of a telephone support line and information leaflet for patients. Her nominator describes Jackie as an ambassador for the nursing profession, referring to how she is passionate about improving patient care and willing to challenge traditional clinical practice. The judging panel was impressed with how Jackie researched, and subsequently audited and evaluated, the initiative in order to provide a clear evidence base for a new approach that has transformed the lives of patients and their families.





OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Sponsored by NIPEC



The Outstanding Achievement Award is aimed at recognising exceptional service to the nursing and midwifery professions in Northern Ireland. The award is sponsored by NIPEC and the previous winners are:

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- 2006 Professor Mary Hanratty CBE
- 2007 Kate O'Hanlon MBE
- 2008 Judith Hill CBE
- 2009 204 (North Irish) Field Hospital (Volunteers)
- 2010 Carmel Hanna
- 2011 Susan Semple MBE
- 2012 Elizabeth Henderson OBE FRCN
- 2013 Professor Hugh McKenna CBE FRCN
- 2014 Margaret Graham
- 2015 Roberta Brownlee
- 2016 Robert Sowney
- 2017 Professor Tanya McCance





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