



ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING WALES
NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS

Awards
PROGRAMME

THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2025



Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol
Cymru
Royal College of Nursing
Wales



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ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING WALES NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS



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Llywodraeth Cymru
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ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING WALES
NURSE OF THE YEAR
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A SPECIAL THANKS FROM RCN WALES

Without our sponsors this evening's event would not have been possible. The Royal College of Nursing Wales would like to say a huge thank you to each and every one of our sponsors for helping us to celebrate the very best of nursing in Wales.

Through the success of these Awards, RCN Wales officially launched the RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Alumni Network in 2017. The Alumni Network offers a clear pathway of personal and career development opportunities and exposure for award finalists. It creates a highly engaged group of innovative leaders who promote nursing within Wales and externally – both nationally and internationally.

For further information please email RCNWalesAlumni@rcn.org.uk



If you are interested in becoming a sponsor of the 2026 RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Awards, please contact us via email at nurseoftheyearawards@rcn.org.uk

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FOREWORD



Good evening, and welcome to this year's celebration of exemplary and exceptional nursing skills – the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Wales Nurse of the Year Awards 2025.

On behalf of the RCN, it is my great honour to extend a warm Welsh welcome to our extraordinary finalists, members, sponsors, distinguished guests and RCN colleagues. Tonight, we come together to recognise not only individual excellence but the collective strength of our nursing profession across Wales.

Nursing forms the backbone of health care – the steady hands, sharp minds, and compassionate hearts holding up our health system. From emergency departments to care homes, community clinics to classrooms, nurses are there for people in their most vulnerable moments. They lead research, influence policy, innovate in practice, and drive improvements in patient care every single day. Quite simply, without registered nurses, the NHS and independent health and social care sectors could not function.

Whilst this event is about celebration, it's also a moment to reflect honestly on the challenges facing our profession. The workforce continues to work under immense pressure – tackling staff shortages, unsafe workloads, and pay that too often fails to reflect their skill and dedication. RCN Wales continues to campaign relentlessly for fair pay, safe staffing, and the respect our nursing profession deserves.

Earlier this year, we stood firm against Cardiff University's proposed closure of its Nursing School – a decision that would have undermined the future supply of nurses in Wales. Thanks to persistent

pressure from RCN Wales and others, that plan was overturned, safeguarding Wales's proud tradition of nurturing the next generation of nurses.

Our fight for safe, dignified care also continues through the corridor care campaign. Thanks to incredible public and professional support, our petition to get a Senedd debate exceeded 10,000 signatures. RCN Wales will continue to present evidence and demand change, ensuring no patient or nurse is left to endure unsafe and unacceptable conditions.

2025 also marks a major milestone – 60 years of RCN Wales. To celebrate, we've created a film showcasing the faces, places, and moments that have shaped our story. It's a moving tribute to the generations of nursing professionals who have built the profession we celebrate tonight.

This year, we have sadly lost some remarkable nurses – including Tina Donnelly CBE FRCN, founder of these awards and former Director of RCN Wales. Her passion, leadership, and legacy inspires every story we celebrate tonight.

Tonight's finalists represent the very best of nursing in Wales – professionals who lead with integrity, compassion, and courage, often in the most challenging circumstances. They are role models, innovators, and champions for their patients and colleagues alike.

We extend heartfelt thanks to our sponsors and judging panel for their invaluable support and commitment to recognising nursing excellence.

To every nominee: no matter how far you got in our awards process you are already a winner. Your daily work – often unseen, always vital – changes lives and strengthens communities. Wales is healthier, safer, and kinder because of you.

Please enjoy this evening's celebration of everything that makes nursing remarkable.



Jackie Davies

Chair of the
RCN Wales Board

RCN Wales Headquarters:
Tŷ Maeth, King George V Drive East, Cardiff CF14 4XZ

RCN North Wales Office:
Plas Eirias Business Centre, Abergele Road,
Colwyn Bay LL29 8BF



CELEBRATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF Tŷ MAETH

This year marks a remarkable milestone in the history of nursing in Wales – the 60th anniversary of Tŷ Maeth, the headquarters of the Royal College of Nursing Wales. More than a building, Tŷ Maeth has become a symbol of determination, unity, and unwavering commitment to the nursing profession.

The story began in 1959, a turning point for Welsh nursing. Despite having 1,000 RCN members at the time, Wales remained the only country in the UK without its own Board. RCN Council agreed in principle that Wales could establish one – but only if every penny required was raised by Wales.

In 1964 Welsh Entertainer Harry Secombe worked with nurses to launch an appeal to raise money for a building for RCN Wales. Nurses held bookfairs, cheese and wine evenings, and many activities to raise money.

The nurses who participated in the fundraising campaign ignited a movement that led to the creation of Tŷ Maeth and laid the foundation for a powerful national voice for Welsh nursing. In 1965, Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret officially opened Tŷ Maeth, the new RCN Wales headquarters. She was welcomed by a nursing 'guard of honour' representing all 27 grades and fields of nursing in Wales.

Two decades later, RCN Wales led the way once again, recognising the essential role of nursing research in advancing patient care. Under the leadership of Chairman Alun Islwyn Giles, an ambitious fundraising appeal for the first Chair of Nursing Research in Wales raised an extraordinary £400,000. The appointment of Judith Maguire to the post was a transformative milestone and helped propel nursing education and practice into a new era.

Tŷ Maeth represented far more than a headquarters; it marked the beginning of a new era. Over the course of six decades, the building has stood strong, but its true spirit comes from the people within it – the dedicated members who work tirelessly and the staff that support them. It is the home of a proud movement that continues to shape nursing in Wales.

This enduring influence of progress is woven throughout RCN Wales's history. The organisation has championed key developments – from all-graduate entry into nursing, to achieving safe staffing legislation – consistently leading from the

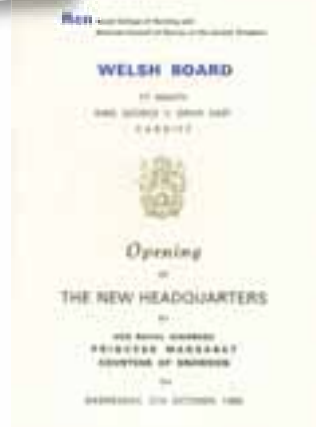


front. Courage and conviction shaped the early leadership of Hettie Hopkins, Anne Pegington OBE, Liz Hewett, and Tina Donnelly CBE FRCN, and today that same spirit continues under the leadership of Executive Director Helen Whyley.

RCN Wales has long spoken up at the heart of government. Since devolution, its voice has become even stronger, advocating powerfully for the nursing profession, patients, and the future of health care in Wales. As both a professional body and a trade union, RCN Wales represents and protects members, offers support and guidance, and provides education and training. It is proud of the diversity of its members and remains dedicated to equality, inclusion, and fairness.

Today, RCN Wales stands as the most influential nursing organisation in the country, representing the needs and concerns of over 32,000 members. Its rich history of campaigning has consistently driven improvements for nursing staff and the people they care for – and that impact is felt nationwide.

Sixty years on, this diamond anniversary shines with the resilience, brilliance, and enduring spirit that have shaped Tŷ Maeth from foundation stone to guiding light. Together, members and staff will carry that legacy forward – ensuring that nursing in Wales remains respected, resourced, and ready for the next generation.



EXPLORE THE STORY
The Journey of
RCN Wales Exhibition



YOUR MASTER OF CEREMONY AND TONIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT

MASTER OF CEREMONY

TV and radio presenter Jason Mohammad is one of the most sought-after hosts in the events world and in advertising. Best known for his role on BBC One's *Final Score* and flagship football show *Match of the Day* and *MOTD2*, Jason's professionalism, warmth and humour makes him a massive hit with live audiences.

Jason is also a very proud member of the BBC Radio 2 family presenting *Good Morning Sunday* on Radio 2 between 6am and 9am every weekend and regularly presents Radio 2's *Early Breakfast Show*, in addition to his show on BBC Radio Wales. He can also be seen on special BBC broadcasts, including hosting a nine-hour Oasis comeback livestream from Cardiff, Eid Live from Bradford and commentating on the 2025 Victory in Europe Day anniversary celebrations.

He has also presented *Saturday Live* on BBC Radio 4, chooses his Pick of the Week often and made *The Ely Estate* documentary for the station.

The Cardiff-born presenter has hosted the 2012, 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games, the 2014, 2018, 2022 Commonwealth Games, FA Cup finals, FIFA World Cup finals and the Six Nations. Jason's also presented for Channel 4 Sport and the Rugby World Cup for S4C. He's a huge football fan and supports Cardiff City FC.



Jason Mohammad

TONIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Sophie Evans is a Welsh performer celebrated for her work across theatre, film, television, and live music. She rose to fame in 2010 as runner-up on BBC's *Over the Rainbow*, selected from over 10,000 hopefuls. At just 17, she was chosen by Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber to play Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* at the London Palladium, later taking on the role full-time and becoming a West End leading lady.

Her stage credits include Glinda in *Wicked* (Apollo Victoria), *You Can't Succeed on Broadway* (The Other Palace), *The Night Before Christmas* (Salisbury Playhouse), *Irving Berlin's Rags to Ritzes* (UK Tour), and *Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance* (Broadway, Las Vegas, UK Tour).

Sophie's screen appearances include *The World's End*, *Pride*, and television and broadcasting such as *Under Milk Wood*, *BBC Proms in the Park*, *The Really Welsh Christmas Show*, *Cariad@iaith*, and *Sunday Morning Live*. A regular with Welsh of the West End, she has performed globally alongside stars like Michael Ball, Katherine Jenkins, and Alfie Boe.

In 2020, Sophie collaborated with Only Boys Aloud on a specially recorded version of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*, commissioned by RCN Wales to mark the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife – an uplifting tribute to all those working in health care across Wales.

Sophie Evans



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2025

Sponsored by **Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board**



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board

This award recognises an exceptional Registered Nurse who has made a career-long contribution to nursing practice, resulting in a legacy of sustainably improved outcomes for individuals, communities, and the wider population.

Nominees for this award will also have made a significant contribution to the development of nursing as a profession that is valued by society.

Criteria for Award: The successful nominee will have made a sustained lifetime contribution towards the significant advancement of nursing on a national and/or international level. The winning nurse is recognised as:

- Able to demonstrate a track record of progressive leadership, and will have inspired advanced nursing practice.
- Being an expert in their field, having delivered measurable improvements in the quality of care.

The 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award will be announced at the award ceremony.

Shortlisted nominees for the 2025 Award are:



ANDREA CROFT

Advanced Nurse Practitioner –
Anticoagulation, Cwm Taf
Morgannwg University
Health Board



JANINE DAILEY

Lead Nurse Bladder, Bowel,
Pelvic Health Advisory Service,
Hywel Dda University
Health Board



ANGELA LODWICK

Assistant Service Director Mental
Health and Learning Disabilities
Clinical Care Group, Hywel Dda
University Health Board



**DR CLAIRE
MCCARTHY**

Consultant Nurse,
Aneurin Bevan University
Health Board



**DR CAROLYN
MIDDLETON MBE**

Programme Lead, Registered
Nursing Associate, Public
Health Wales

PREVIOUS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS

- 2013 Helen Bennett** Clinical Board Nurse, Mental Health, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board
- 2014 Daphne Meredith-Smith** Head of Mental Health Nursing, Cwm Taf University Health Board
- 2015 Brenda Scourfield** School Health Nurse, Hywel Dda University Health Board
- 2016 Karen Logan OBE** Consultant Nurse, Continence, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
- 2017 Tanya Strange MBE** Divisional Nurse, Primary Care and Networks, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
- 2018 Professor Ruth Northway OBE FRCN** Professor of Learning Disability Nursing, University of South Wales
- 2019 Angela Haley** Senior Nurse, Respiratory Services, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
- 2021 Caroline Whittaker RRC OStJ** Quality Lead, Public Health Wales
- 2023 Jill Paterson** Director of Primary Community and Long-Term Care, Hywel Dda University Health Board
- 2024 Claire Hurlin** Head of Community and Chronic Conditions, Hywel Dda University Health Board

OUR AWARD SPONSORS



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Sponsored by **Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board**

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTM) provides primary, community, hospital, and mental health services to over 450,000 people across Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil, and Rhondda Cynon Taf, including specialist child and adolescent mental health services for South Wales.

With nearly 12,000 staff, our workforce is the lifeblood of both CTM and the communities we serve. As one of the region's largest employers, we are deeply committed to partnership working, corporate social responsibility, and nurturing strong relationships with our staff and communities.

We believe in innovation to improve clinical care, and in 2025, we are proud to launch the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery Education as part of our new Clinical Learning Academy. This marks a significant step in developing our future nursing and midwifery workforce and strengthening professional education across CTM.



REGISTERED NURSE – CHILD AWARD

Sponsored by **Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board**

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) is the largest health organisation in Wales, with a budget of £1.87 billion and a workforce of over 19,000. The Health Board is responsible for the delivery of health care services to more than 700,000 people across the six counties of North Wales (Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham).

The Health Board coordinates the work of 96 GP practices, and NHS services provided by 78 dental and orthodontic practices, 70 optometry practices and opticians and 145 pharmacies in North Wales.



COMMUNITY AND PRIMARY CARE NURSING AWARD

Sponsored by **Hywel Dda University Health Board**

Hywel Dda University Health Board provides health care to a population of around 384,000 in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. It provides acute, primary, community, mental health and learning disabilities services in a variety of settings including general and community hospitals, health centres, community health care facilities and within patients' own homes.

Registered nursing and midwifery staff account for nearly a third of the Health Board's workforce and are integral to positively influencing the health care experience of patients at all levels – from the impact they have on national policy and education, to the care they provide at the bedside and, increasingly, within patients' own homes.

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IMPROVING INDIVIDUAL AND POPULATION HEALTH AWARD

Sponsored by **Public Health Wales**

We are the national public health organisation for Wales. We exist to help all people in Wales live longer, healthier lives. With our partners, we aim to increase healthy life expectancy, improve health and wellbeing, and reduce inequalities for everyone in Wales, now and for future generations.

Together, our teams work to prevent disease, protect health, provide system leadership, specialist services and public health expertise.

We are the primary source of public health information, research and innovation, to help everyone in Wales live healthier lives.

Our six strategic priorities:

- Influencing the wider determinants of health
- Promoting mental and social wellbeing
- Promoting healthy behaviours
- Supporting the development of a sustainable health and care system focused on prevention and early intervention
- Delivering excellent public health services to maximise population health and health equity
- Tackling the public health effects of climate change.



RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DIGITALISATION IN NURSING AWARD

Sponsored by **Digital Health and Care Wales**

Digital Health and Care Wales is an expert national body and part of NHS Wales. We work in partnership with NHS Wales colleagues and other key stakeholders to provide digital and data services which support the delivery of health and social care in Wales.

Modern health and care services depend on good digital tools, data and information. We work with more than 100 services and deliver national digital transformation programmes to support this.

We give frontline staff digital tools which help provide safer and more efficient care. This includes the Welsh Nursing Care Record, which is now available in all eligible inpatient wards across Wales. The WNCR replaces paper-based records, enhancing care and efficiency by enabling nurses to record and access patient information at the bedside using a tablet, laptop or mobile computer. This reduces duplication, improves consistency and communication and frees up time for patient care.



REGISTERED NURSE – LEARNING DISABILITIES AWARD

Sponsored by **Swansea Bay University Health Board**

Swansea Bay University Health Board provides care for around 390,000 people in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot with a range of tertiary services, employing approximately 13,500 staff. It has three main hospitals – Morriston, Singleton and Neath Port Talbot – along with a community hospital. It provides mental health and learning disabilities services both in hospital and community settings and has responsibility for primary health care including GPs, dentists, pharmacies and ophthalmologists.

Swansea Bay UHB is home to the Welsh Centre for Burns and Plastic Surgery. It also works in partnership with Swansea University and its School of Medicine, the School of Human and Health Sciences and the Institute of Life Science 1 and 2.



OUR AWARD SPONSORS



REGISTERED NURSE – MENTAL HEALTH AWARD

Sponsored by **Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) covers the areas of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. It serves an estimated population of over 639,000, approximately 21% of the total Welsh population.

In recent years, the Health Board has developed and implemented new and effective models of care in partnership with local authorities and third sector organisations to respond to the changing needs of local people. Their ambitious plan is to deliver more care closer to home, create a network of local hospitals providing routine diagnostic and treatment services and centralising specialist and critical care services in one place at The Grange University Hospital, which opened in November 2020.

ABUHB has earned a reputation for being an innovative organisation with strong values of supporting and developing staff. Nurses and midwives at all levels are positively encouraged and supported to showcase good ideas, services, technologies and policies that support practice and improve patient care.



INDEPENDENT SECTOR NURSING AWARD

Sponsored by **involve Care and Support**

involve Care and Support Wales specialise in the care of adults with complex care needs, mental health conditions, learning disabilities, long-term neurological conditions and brain injury.

We provide care across 5 counties, covering South and West Wales. We have grown from one nursing home to become a major provider of care in Wales, supporting more than 410 individuals across 30 plus settings, and employing over 1200 colleagues.

We provide a range of care options, including nursing homes, residential care and supported living services. The people we support are referred from in-patient settings and the community, as well as forensic settings and other care providers.

We are an award-winning, values led organisation; championing kindness, resilience and passion for care, with the people that we support at the heart of everything we do. Our workforce is supported to grow and develop – we are a listening, learning and nurturing employer.



SPECIALIST NURSING AWARD

Sponsored by **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board**

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is one of the largest NHS organisations employing 17,000 staff, 43% of which are nursing and midwives.

Serving a local population of 500,000, the Health Board provides a range of health and wellbeing services from primary, and community care through to acute and highly specialised services. Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is also a provider of tertiary services for the wider population across Wales supporting complex services such as neurosciences, cardiac services, nephrology and transplant, Welsh Gender Service and the Major Trauma Centre. The Health Board also prides itself on innovation in healthcare including hosting the All Wales Medical Genomics Service which integrates cutting-edge technologies with national healthcare delivery to provide globally leading clinical services to the population of Wales, including the revolutionary QuicDNA Max circulating tumour DNA programme, and the All Wales Psychiatric Genomic Service.

OUR AWARD SPONSORS

HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER AWARD

Sponsored by **NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee**

NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee (NWJCC) is pleased to sponsor the Health Care Support Worker Award.

Health Care Support Workers play a vital role in our health services, providing skilled, compassionate care as part of multidisciplinary teams. Their contribution helps ensure patients across Wales receive the support they need, every day.

The NWJCC works with and on behalf of all seven Health Boards in Wales. Our focus is on commissioning services that are sustainable, effective, and responsive to the needs of the population.

As the national commissioner for more than 220 services – including NHS Wales 111, ambulance services, specialist mental health care, and highly specialised treatments – the NWJCC works in partnership with providers to ensure high-quality care is delivered across the country.

Therefore, we are proud to recognise the dedication of Health Care Support Workers at these RCN Wales Awards, whose work makes a meaningful difference to patients and communities throughout Wales.



NURSE EDUCATION AWARD

Sponsored by **University of South Wales**

The University of South Wales (USW) is honoured to sponsor this prestigious award. With a student body of approximately 1,500 across nursing and midwifery programmes, USW plays a vital role in shaping the future of the healthcare workforce. We deeply value the exceptional contributions of clinical partners who support our students in practice settings, and we take pride in the strong collaborative relationships we maintain with healthcare providers. The continued success of our pre- and post-registration programmes is a testament to the dedication and shared commitment of our academic and clinical colleagues in delivering high-quality education to the next generation of nursing and midwifery professionals.



NURSING STUDENT AWARD

Sponsored by **Health Education and Improvement Wales**

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) is the statutory education and workforce body for NHS Wales, dedicated to building a skilled, sustainable workforce through strategic workforce planning, education, training, and transformation.

Nurses are crucial to the NHS, and we take pride in educating and training record numbers to become Registered Nurses in Wales.

In March 2025, HEIW launched the first *Strategic Nursing Workforce Plan for Wales 2025-2030*, which is set to grow, transform, and support the nursing workforce, to address evolving healthcare demands.

We will soon introduce our future-focused Integrated Nursing Career Framework, to support career development from Healthcare Support Worker to Consultant Nurse levels.

Our national nurse retention plan, '*Retaining and Valuing nurses in the NHS in Wales: a national nurse retention plan*', initiated in December 2023, is already positively impacting nursing turnover and resignation rates.



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REGISTERED NURSE – ADULT AWARD

Sponsored by **Powys Teaching Health Board**

Powys Teaching Health Board is delivering an ambitious shared strategy for a “*Healthy, Caring Powys*” to support local people to *Start Well, Live Well and Age Well*.

It is an exciting time for the Health Board as we progress with our transformation programme “*Better Together*” which seeks to transform how we provide services and work in partnership with the population of Powys.

Covering a large rural county, community and primary care is at the forefront of everything they do, working closely with Powys County Council with whom they are coterminous, as well as ensuring vibrant relationships with the third sector and with secondary and tertiary care providers in Wales and England.

This means that working in Powys offers a unique opportunity for creativity, innovation, clinical and professional autonomy to deliver as much integrated care and support as close to home as possible, and to develop pathways of care with neighbouring providers that keep patients at the centre.

Wherever you live in Wales, Powys is within easy reach and we offer you a warm welcome to our friendly team.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

CHIEF NURSING OFFICER FOR WALES AWARD

Sponsored by the **Chief Nursing Officer for Wales, Welsh Government**

The Welsh Government’s Quality and Nursing Directorate, led by the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) Sue Tranka, is dedicated to promoting high standards of healthcare quality, patient safety and professional nursing standards across Wales. Supported by the Deputy CNO, Chief Midwifery Officer, nursing officers and a wider team of civil servants, the directorate provides strategic leadership on quality, nursing and midwifery policy. It offers expert professional advice to Ministers and senior officials, supports workforce development and implements policies that enhance patient care, professional growth, and workforce sustainability. As the head of nursing and midwifery in Wales, the CNO sets the professional agenda and future direction for the professions.



RCN WALES NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARD 2025

Sponsored by **Velindre University NHS Trust**

Velindre University NHS Trust both provides and hosts a range of local, regional and national specialist and support services. We aim to deliver excellent care, inspirational learning and support healthier people. Delivering quality care and excellence to our patients and donors is at the heart of our organisation. The two core services provided by Velindre University NHS Trust are:

- The Welsh Blood Service plays a national role in the delivery of blood and transplantation services in Wales. It works to ensure that voluntary blood and bone marrow donations are transformed into safe and effective blood and blood products to allow NHS Wales to improve or save the lives of many thousands of people in Wales every year. The Welsh Blood Service has a growing research portfolio.
- Velindre Cancer Service provides specialist non-surgical cancer treatments and services to people living in south east Wales at the Velindre Cancer Centre, and from a number of satellite ‘Velindre @ locations’ across south east Wales. Velindre Cancer Service also provides non-surgical oncology education and training for NHS Wales, research, innovation and development.

Velindre University NHS Trust also hosts Health Technology Wales, Advanced Therapies Wales and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership.

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RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Awards: Event Flowers

Sponsored by **Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust**

The Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust (WAST) is the national provider of pre-hospital urgent and emergence care to the population of Wales. WAST provides the national 999 and 111 Wales services and has a significant registered nursing workforce working alongside paramedics, emergency medical technicians and other health care support workers. Registered nurses are critical to our workforce, leading a number of specialist areas and fulfilling an integral role in undertaking remote clinical care across 999 and 111 Wales. WAST has been increasing the number of nurses and midwives in green, with specialists and generalists playing an important role in our evolving clinical model to meet the ever more complex needs of patients who often call us while in crisis.



RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Awards: Dinner Drinks

Sponsored by **Cardiff Holland House Hotel and Spa by Sunday**

The Cardiff Holland House Hotel and Spa by Sunday is a modern 4-star hotel situated in the vibrant capital city of Wales. Holland House is perfectly suited to your business and leisure needs, with the biggest conference facility in Cardiff capable of seating up to 700 guests.



RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Awards: Bespoke Awards

In collaboration with **Fablab Cardiff**

Fablab Cardiff, based at Cardiff Metropolitan University's Llandaff Campus, is an open-access digital workshop with over a decade of experience. Known for their motto "We make just about anything!", they collaborate with industry and students across disciplines – from graphic communication to fashion and product design – delivering innovative design and fabrication. RCN Wales is proud to partner with a local team that shares our values of creativity, sustainability, and excellence.



Welsh Nursing Scholarships

Nursing is a career that requires lifelong learning and development. RCN Wales supports the following scholarships to provide professional development opportunities for nursing professionals.

HETTIE C HOPKINS CARE OF THE ELDERLY NURSING SCHOLARSHIP, WALES

The Hettie C Hopkins Care of the Elderly Nursing Scholarship provides scholarships to nurses in Wales to pursue a project/course in elderly care.



ALUN ISLWYN GILES NURSING SCHOLARSHIP, WALES

The Alun Islwyn Giles Nursing Scholarship provides scholarships to nurses in Wales to advance the science and art of nursing.



PLEASE SCAN HERE: TO DONATE. THANK YOU!

Registered Nurse – Child Award



RACHEL EVANS

*National Lead for
Breastfeeding
(Midwife), Public
Health Wales*

Rachel instigated and led an ambitious and successful collaborative project to address health inequalities by shifting social norms and improving the uptake and incidence of breastfeeding.

The health benefits of breastfeeding are well established, but rates in the UK are low, especially in less affluent communities. While peer support is valued by breastfeeding women, on its own it does not increase rates.

Rachel's project initially targeted two communities with low levels of breastfeeding, insufficient existing support, and socio-economic deprivation.

The project recruited volunteers, established new support groups and strengthened those already existing, promoted the National Breastfeeding Helpline, and delivered First Milk Matters courses to non-health staff working with young families.

It succeeded where others had failed, and Rachel was able to increase the prevalence of breastfeeding in communities where formula use had become embedded.

Rachel has presented the project's results and lessons to nursing and midwifery colleagues at Public Health Wales and the Senedd Cross-Party Group on Women's Health, as well as at conferences and other events.

Her work has demonstrated her commitment to driving forward the public health agenda and has made more people aware of the importance of infant feeding.



DR SHEILA SHEPLEY

*Nurse Consultant
in Epilepsy,
working across
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board*

Sheila has devoted most of her 25-year career to epilepsy services in North Wales, showing passion and devotion to delivering high standards of nursing care, notably for young people transitioning to adult services and for pregnant mothers with epilepsy.

Working with neurologists, she has established special clinics for teenagers moving from paediatrics, developed the role of the Epilepsy Specialist Nurse, introduced a first-fit flow chart for use in emergency departments, and held a joint epilepsy and pregnancy clinic in Glan Clwyd Hospital for pregnant women to have a consistent approach to their epilepsy care throughout pregnancy and postnatally.

Her passion for raising awareness is shown through her published work, including two books, publications, a podcast, and conference presentations.

Always family-focused, her PhD research was based on interviewing parents and children in their transition process to adult services.

Sheila has developed the role of the Epilepsy Specialist Nurse significantly over the years, building a strong rapport with patients across North Wales and striving to provide accessible services for epilepsy patients to live a healthy life.

She has shown this through her educator/mentoring role, developing services following national pathways, and working closely with other professionals, as well as patients and families.

Sponsored by **Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board**



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

Community and Primary Care Nursing Award



PAULA HEYCOCK

*Head of Nursing,
Primary, Community and
Therapies, Swansea Bay
University Health Board*

Paula has demonstrated a leadership style that fosters a sense of belonging and shared purpose by implementing an integrated six-step approach to workforce planning – creating sustainable, responsive, high-quality community nursing, modelled on national best practice.

Working with clinical and operational colleagues, Paula led the six-step workforce planning process, aligning staff capacities and skills with the changing needs of patients – ensuring that every team member is deployed where they can have the most direct impact on patient care and early interventions.

She has empowered her staff to extend their roles into areas such as telehealth triage, early intervention home visits, and community-based assessments.

Under her guidance, team members are encouraged to enhance their skills and practise at the top of their professional licences.

Paula believes that supporting staff to grow and diversify their capabilities not only benefits morale and retention, but also improves the experience for patients and reduces unnecessary hospital admissions.

Her compassionate leadership style is informed by insights she gained from completing Health Education and Improvement Wales's Advanced Clinical Leadership Programme: she mentors new nurse managers, organises reflective wellbeing workshops, and models a leadership approach based on respect, empathy, and shared decision-making.



HAYLEY TAYLOR

*Lead Nurse for
Community Cardiology,
Swansea Bay University
Health Board*

Hayley's innovative approach has made a real difference in the lives of people living with heart failure.

She has shown passion and commitment, leading work that not only improves care for patients by promoting a 'living well' ethos, but also supports and inspires the team around her.

Her expert clinical knowledge, combined with a deeply person-centred approach and up-to-date, evidence-based practice, ensures patients are treated with dignity, empathy, and respect.

Hayley has demonstrated an outstanding ability to collaborate and is often the crucial link between primary and secondary care to optimise opportunities – providing continuity, reassurance, and life-saving education to patients and families.

Over the past few years, Hayley has led multiple initiatives that have transformed community heart failure services in the region.

Some of Hayley's most recent work includes quality improvement initiatives, digital advances, and implementing an end-of-life pathway in collaboration with specialist palliative care teams, including advanced and future care planning conversations.

Hayley is also a passionate advocate for education and equity, regularly delivering training sessions for general practices, community nursing, and care home staff to enhance early identification and management of heart failure in the community. Hayley is a cluster lead and embraces the opportunity for inclusion in local cluster collaboration initiatives.

Sponsored by **Hywel Dda University Health Board**



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Hywel Dda
University Health Board

Improving Individual and Population Health Award



CINDY COURTNEY

Head of Nursing, Regional and Specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Cindy demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities in the work she led to redesign services to improve the experience and outcomes of children and young people who access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services at a time of mental health crisis.

She used the voice of children and young people at every stage to design a safer and more effective alternative to admission, which better met their needs.

Her vision for Alternative to Admission (A2A) was to address the challenges children and young people, and parents/carers, experience when they need urgent support during mental health crises – for instance, by avoiding environments like emergency departments, which can further increase levels of distress.

Following a successful proposal to Welsh Government, Cindy was awarded the funds to develop and deliver the proposed community-based crisis hub, so children and young people could access crisis interventions in a more timely, safe, and comfortable space.

Conditions of funding meant it had to be operational within the financial year. Cindy went above and beyond to drive the project forward while ensuring that quality and standards were retained.

The A2A hub went live in late December 2024, and data analysis and feedback have shown the new care pathways are achieving their goals.



RHIANYDD DAVEY

Immunisation Co-ordinator, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

Rhianydd developed a simple yet highly effective innovation – a postcard from a midwife – which has increased take-up of vaccinations in pregnant women.

The idea was spawned in 2023, following an annual maternity ‘point of delivery’ audit, when Rhianydd recognised a concerning fall in rates of vaccinations among mothers-to-be. She first designed a poster for social media use, and then a personalised postcard that midwives could give to pregnant women at their 16-week antenatal appointment.

The bilingual postcard included a message about the value and safety of vaccines in pregnancy, a QR code linking to the Public Health Wales Vaccinations in Pregnancy website, and a place for a signature from a midwife – because this was felt to be a valued and trusted endorsement.

Midwifery teams embraced Rhianydd’s postcard, which was piloted in an area where vaccination uptake had been lower. An initial evaluation indicates increases in pertussis vaccine uptake and a significant increase in flu vaccination.

A survey of midwifery colleagues showed they felt it was a quick and easy way to share evidence-based information and a helpful reminder for a conversation about the benefits of immunisation during pregnancy.

Public Health Wales has now designed a similar postcard for use across Wales.

Sponsored by **Public Health Wales**



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Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Research, Innovation and Digitalisation in Nursing Award



**VICTORIA
HAYMAN-TEAR**

*Senior Nurse,
Cardiff and Vale
University
Health Board*

Vicki has led a digital transformation that has redefined wound care in the Health Board, delivering safer, more efficient, and more person-centred care.

As the clinical lead for the Healthy.io Minuteful for Wound digital app's rollout across Cardiff and the Vale, Vicki led the adoption of AI-powered wound imaging technology – replacing paper-based assessments with consistent, accurate, real-time data.

This has enabled earlier identification of deteriorating wounds, improved care planning, and significantly reduced duplication across services. Linking community nursing and primary care through shared wound data makes it a UK first.

It has directly saved almost 2.5 whole-time equivalents in nursing time, improved wound healing rates, reduced avoidable hospital admissions, and transformed how services are delivered – fully aligned with Welsh Government policies.

Her work has also restored dignity to patients, empowering them with visual tracking of their own healing, and it has the potential to be adapted across nursing disciplines.

Vicki is actively engaged in dissemination, having presented this work to the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the British Journal of Nursing Wound Conference, and to senior leaders including the Deputy Chief Nursing Officer for Wales. Her work is also part of an ongoing ethnographic research study in partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University.



FFION PURSGLOVE

*Specialist Nurse Medicine
Management, Betsi
Cadwaladr University
Health Board*

Ffion drew on her creativity and knowledge to lead the development of an entirely digital platform for medicines management, providing robust governance assurance around the competence and training of independent prescribers – the first of its kind in Wales.

Independent prescribers include nurses, pharmacists, allied health professionals, and health scientists, and they play an essential role in ensuring patients have timely access to medications.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) employs over 700 independent prescribers, and this number is expected to rise significantly with a national shift towards incorporating independent prescribing in undergraduate training. As the number of independent prescribers increases, so does the risk posed by outdated governance and assurance methods.

Ffion's resourcefulness meant that existing systems were used to build the new database, resulting in no additional development cost. She collaborated with a digital expert to develop a bespoke digital solution to replace an outdated, manual system.

Her drive and determination ensured BCUHB has led the way. Now, other health boards and Health Education and Improvement Wales are actively looking at implementing similar solutions. During a recent informal discussion with Welsh Government, the initiative was noted as a significant and welcome development.

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Digidol Cymru
Digital Health
and Care Wales**

Registered Nurse – Learning Disabilities Award



ZOE DOLMAN

*Senior Specialist
Behavioural Nurse,
Betsi Cadwaladr
University
Health Board*

Zoe leads with integrity and innovation in her role supporting people with complex behavioural needs.

Focusing on individuals, not problems, she is transforming services, empowering teams, and enriching lives.

Zoe has bridged community and inpatient services, strengthened collaboration across teams, improved continuity of care, and enhanced outcomes for patients. Her ability to build trust and foster professional relationships is a testament to her leadership and kindness.

Her current work involves pioneering the integration of the Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) model across services – a transformative approach that enhances the quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities.

In one recent case, Zoe's intervention prevented a young man with a history of trauma and complex behavioural challenges from being moved to a more secure care model, thus changing the trajectory of this young man's life. Through the principles of PBS, Zoe led the team in identifying barriers to effective support, addressing staff fears, and fostering a culture of empathy and confidence. Her intuitive kindness, combined with clinical expertise, enabled the team to re-engage the individual in meaningful community-based activities.

Zoe promotes positive risk-taking, supports staff development, and ensures that all interventions are grounded in evidence, safety, and respect.



RICHARD MORGAN

*Community Learning
Disability Nurse,
Hywel Dda University
Health Board*

Richard has shown outstanding dedication and clear leadership skills, making a positive impact on the lives of people with learning disabilities, families, and carers.

Throughout his time on the Carmarthen Learning Disability Nursing Team, he has consistently gone above and beyond what is expected – always flexible in his approach, making time to support his colleagues, and creating a positive and supportive work environment.

Richard is always willing to develop. While working full-time in the team, he is also focused on his professional development through his master's degree in professional practice and uses this knowledge to improve the quality and effectiveness of approaches in practice.

Despite challenges across the health service – with increased demand, staffing shortages, and the complexity of delivering care in rural areas – he ensures and maintains a high quality of care to the people he supports.

This applies equally to staff wellbeing, where his compassionate approach helps boost morale and prevent burnout.

Richard has made a huge impact not only on the people he supports, where there have been numerous positive health outcomes, but also on the wider team, who always know he is present, calm, and approachable.

Sponsored by **Swansea Bay University Health Board**



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Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Registered Nurse – Mental Health Award



LISA PAYNE

*Ward Manager for
Newport Older Adult
Mental Health,
Aneurin Bevan
University
Health Board*

Lisa is a highly visible and supportive leader who has often been described by families as a steadying and compassionate presence during some of the most difficult times of their lives.

As the Ward Manager of Sycamore Ward, an Older Adult Mental Health Unit specialising in dementia assessment and care, her dedication has led to a culture of excellence that not only benefits her patients and staff but has also been recognised by other teams and professionals across the service.

Lisa motivates staff to use creative approaches in providing individualised interactions – such as music, conversation, and sensory stimulation – which make a noticeable difference to patients' wellbeing.

Her care extends equally to her staff: recognising the emotional demands on them, she prioritises staff wellbeing as a core part of her leadership, ensuring everyone has protected time to discuss how they are feeling, identify any support they may need, and reflect in a safe space.

She is known for her lead-by-example approach and always takes time to listen and advocate for what is right for both staff and patients.

Lisa has introduced and maintained consistent standards in medication safety, infection prevention, and falls reduction, with regular audits and continuous improvement built into ward processes.



TANYA THOMAS

*Team Leader for
Child and
Adolescent
Mental Health
Services,
Sanctuary Hwb,
Powys Teaching
Health Board*

Tanya's work in helping to set up and lead the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Crisis Hwb in Powys has seen significant improvements in the care of young people experiencing mental health crises.

She has shown excellent leadership skills, creating a shared vision to support young people to feel heard and to access appropriate services in a timely manner.

Tanya has been instrumental from the start, recruiting staff and working alongside estates to ensure the new Hwb would provide a setting that was as inviting as possible to offer assessments, support, and treatment to young people up to the age of 18.

The data so far speaks for itself, with a 25% reduction in hospital attendances for mental health concerns among Powys young people, and excellent feedback from young people and their families.

Tanya leads by example and is always on hand to offer support and advice. She continues to work with young people and never shies away from getting involved to support those who need help most.

Tanya always has the patients' best interests at heart and will go above and beyond to ensure that not only their mental health needs are met, but that all aspects of their lives are being supported.

Sponsored by **Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**



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Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

Independent Sector Nursing Award



KEVIN JONES

*Registered Manager,
Bryn Marl Nursing
Home and Head of
Governance and
Compliance for
Vshan Care Ltd*

Kevin is an exceptional nurse leader who shows warmth, clinical expertise, and a deep-rooted commitment to residents' dignity and wellbeing.

He ensures residents at Bryn Marl Nursing Home aren't treated as 'cases' or 'service users' but are recognised by name, story, and what matters most to them – whether that means making sure a birthday is celebrated just as it was decades ago or expertly managing complex health needs.

Families often say they feel peace of mind the moment they walk through the door.

Drawing on national best practice, Kevin has implemented systems that raise standards while keeping kindness and meaningful relationships at the centre.

He introduced electronic patient records years before they became the norm, ensuring everyone involved in a resident's care is aligned, informed, and guided by each person's goals and preferences.

Kevin leads vibrant intergenerational projects with local schools, hosts open days, and champions resident forums. His 'You Said, We Did' model ensures people feel heard, respected, and empowered.

His impact at Bryn Marl led to a well-earned appointment overseeing governance and compliance across a second nursing home.

Beyond the home, Kevin is a passionate advocate for the independent sector and overseas nurses.



VICKI TRAVERS

*Registered Manager,
Tan-Yr-Allt House
Nursing Home*

Vicki exemplifies outstanding leadership, compassion, and dedication in every aspect of her role.

She is committed to ensuring that the people supported at Tan-Yr-Allt House – and their families – are actively involved in care planning, and to making the home a true place of comfort and belonging.

She has fostered a collaborative relationship with the local general practice surgery, ensuring weekly reviews with the advanced nurse practitioner and timely referrals to the General Practitioner.

This proactive approach has significantly reduced hospital admissions and enabled early interventions, ensuring the best possible outcomes for those in her care.

Vicki began her career at just 16 as a care assistant before completing her nursing degree. Since then, she has shown adaptability, resilience, and a continuous drive for professional growth.

Over the years, she has embraced numerous changes, developing a wealth of clinical and managerial expertise.

Most recently, she implemented several new systems, including electronic record-keeping, risk management, learning management, rostering, and people management platforms, and she has excelled in embedding them into practice.

Tan-Yr-Allt House consistently ranks at the top of internal scorecards, and she enthusiastically shares her success and best practices with fellow managers of other homes.

Sponsored by **involve Care and Support**



Specialist Nursing Award



TRACY BALE

*Consultant Nurse for
Dermatology,
Aneurin Bevan
University
Health Board*

Tracy is the first Dermatology Consultant Nurse in Wales and has championed her patients' needs and the status of dermatology nursing both nationally and internationally.

Dedicated to her specialty, she is innovative, motivated, and committed to patient advocacy, continuously looking for ways to improve the care and service that her patients receive.

Tracy embodies the highest standards of dermatology nursing through exceptional clinical care, innovative leadership, impactful education, robust research, and strategic advocacy. Her work has significantly improved patient outcomes and advanced dermatology nursing.

Under her leadership, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board has the only nurse-led acne service in Wales, providing training and supervision for junior medical staff and reducing wait times from 58 weeks to 40 weeks in 18 months.

She has raised the profile of the dermatology nursing voice – as an active researcher and principal investigator, she has also contributed to an evidence base for the care of dermatology patients. As a committed educator, she plays a pivotal role in advancing dermatology, including chairing and presenting at influential national forums.

As an outstanding leader, Tracy draws on her experience in senior nurse roles, exemplifying strong leadership in multiple arenas, and she is recognised as a key figure in dermatology at regional and national levels.



ANNIE CLOTHIER

*Vascular Clinical Nurse
Specialist, Aneurin
Bevan University
Health Board*

Annie is dedicated not only to her patients and her craft but also to ensuring that vascular nursing continues to grow and evolve as a specialty.

Her expert clinical practice has had an impact not only within the Health Board but across Wales and at UK level.

Vascular patients are among the most complex, as many live with multiple long-term conditions, addictions, and significant social care needs. Annie meets every one of them with compassion, equity, and an adaptable approach. Her care is always individualised, empathetic, and underpinned by exceptional clinical skill.

She has been instrumental in shaping vascular services across Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), particularly during the transition of acute services to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. Despite a small team, staffing challenges, a large geographical patch, and the complexities of delivering care in a regional service, Annie has improved patient outcomes while leading innovations that push the boundaries of nursing.

Recently, she secured funding from the Welsh Government to lead the first completely nurse-led intellectual property research project into wound care in ABUHB, and she is the current Chair of the Legs Matter national group. Her impact was further recognised when she was invited to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Vascular and Venous Disease.

Sponsored by **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board**



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Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Health Care Support Worker Award

LYNDA JONES AND SHONA LEWIS



*Health Care
Support
Workers,
Hywel Dda
University
Health Board*

Lynda and Shona showed initiative by introducing a moisture prevention trolley – an innovation that has improved patient care and reduced incidents of moisture lesions in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Glangwili Hospital.

Observing that there were increasing cases of moisture damage in ICU patients, they noted that barrier creams were not easily accessible – locked away in a single drawer – and that it was not always clear which creams were most appropriate for each case.

They introduced a moisture trolley and education board, using a traffic light system to identify different levels of severity in moisture lesions – from prevention to mild, moderate, and severe – and explained the most appropriate products and how they should be used.

The project ensured that patients received the right products at the right time, providing a high standard of patient care, while also educating the rest of the multi-disciplinary team.

Within the first four months, incidents fell from 20 to six in the unit, and the new system has received excellent feedback from staff and patients. It has now been implemented throughout the Health Board, with the potential to be rolled out across Wales.

AMANDA STRANGE



*Assistant Practitioner
for Mapping, Education
and Carers Service,
Aneurin Bevan
University
Health Board*

Throughout a 39-year career as a Health Care Support Worker, Amanda has demonstrated dedication, compassion, and a relentless pursuit of excellence, particularly for patients experiencing dementia care.

She embarked on her NHS journey at Pen-Y-Fal Psychiatric Hospital, laying the groundwork for a career defined by unwavering commitment.

One of Amanda's most significant contributions to improving quality for patients was her involvement in setting up and developing the initial Memory Assessment Service in Gwent in the early 2000s.

She continues to embrace new challenges, and in 2023, she became the first Assistant Practitioner Band 4 in Older Adult Mental Health in the Gwent-wide Mapping, Education and Carers Service.

She has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from staff and is a passionate advocate for continuing professional development.

Her role involves class-based learning, essential supervision, and support for staff to complete their competency-based learning.

The judging panel was particularly impressed by her commitment to supporting overseas nurses, advocating for their wellbeing and inclusion.

She also remains fiercely committed to her own professional development and enhancing her skills so she can continue to improve the quality of care she provides for patients.

Sponsored by NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee



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Joint Commissioning
Committee

Nurse Education Award



**CLAIRE
LOVERIDGE**

*Practice Educator,
Cardiff and Vale
University
Health Board*

Claire led an important initiative to establish a structured and standardised approach to training and assessment in Children's Community Nursing across Wales.

It has resulted in improvements in patient outcomes, staff morale, clinical competence and confidence, and clinical governance.

Previously, training was ad hoc, outdated, and inconsistent across health boards, leading to delays in care, varying standards, and communication breakdowns between professionals and families.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, which provides specialist tertiary services for many children and young people across South Wales, needed assurance that parents, carers, and both health and non-health professionals received consistent training and assessment in specific clinical skills.

Claire responded with a visionary improvement plan, which led to a pilot training programme being launched, followed by the creation of a cascade training model.

She coordinated an All-Wales training and assessment day, developed competency pathways for clinical skills, and created a national network of trained cascaders. These cascaders now serve as the first point of contact for training needs in each health board and receive annual updates and assessments to maintain high standards.

Claire has far exceeded the expectations of her role, and her work has created a replicable model for all clinical skills and for other regions.

Sponsored by **University of South Wales**



**CATHERINE
NORRIS**

*Head of Nursing,
Swansea University*

Cath has worked at Swansea University for over 20 years, following a successful career in the National Health Service, and has led innovative and creative projects during a time of challenge for universities.

Previously a burns and critical care nurse, she was inspired to move into nurse education by the desire to help, support, and educate our future nurses. Her leadership qualities were quickly recognised, culminating in her promotion to Head of Nursing in 2021.

Cath has been instrumental in developing several new full-time and part-time pre-registration nursing programmes, and she led the development of part-time and Master of Science programmes to support widening access.

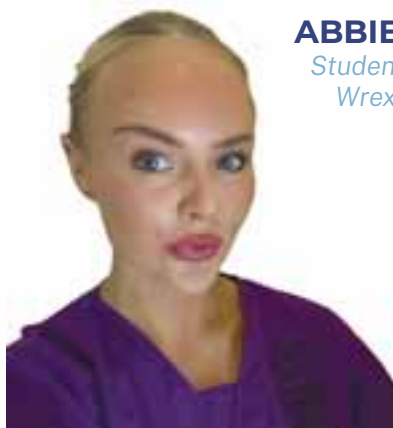
Always aware of the need for practising nurses to continue their education, she has also supported the development of continuous professional development and postgraduate programmes.

Cath displays a range of leadership qualities and has created an inclusive and supportive environment for her colleagues, always keeping the wellbeing of students at heart. She is the School's lead on international education and its Welsh language champion.

Cath is also a long-standing member of the All-Wales Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Group and has made a huge contribution to the implementation of the Nursing and Midwifery Council Future Nurse Standards in Wales.



Nursing Student Award



ABBIE SANDERS

*Student Nurse (Child),
Wrexham University*

Abbie exemplifies the best of paediatric nursing, building strong therapeutic relationships – even in emotionally complex situations – through her kindness, compassion, resilience, determination, and professionalism.

During her course, Abbie has navigated significant personal challenges and has faced all of these with quiet determination to succeed.

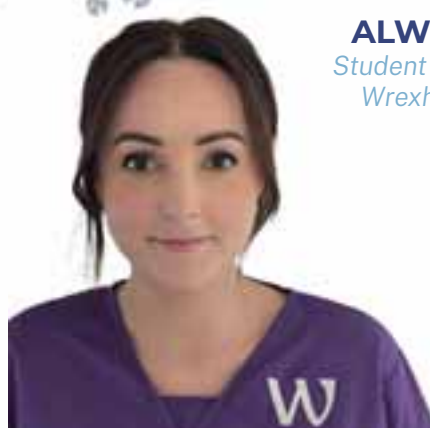
Feedback from her placements has repeatedly praised her strong work ethic, caring nature, and commitment to excellence. Her programme engagement has been exemplary, capturing her thirst for knowledge and commitment to evidence-based practice and care.

She was commended for her competence, professionalism, and composure under pressure when, off duty, she supported a first responder during a medical emergency, performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation at the scene.

Her reassuring presence has brought comfort to many during times of uncertainty and distress. This was particularly well demonstrated during a hospice placement, where she provided end-of-life care to a baby and supported the bereaved family, including a young sibling.

Abbie recognised the importance of accessing debriefing opportunities afterwards, reflecting on the emotional toll of this experience.

Abbie's final literature review explored initiatives for supporting the emotional health of nurses – an impressive, thoughtful, and well-researched piece of work which achieved a mark of 82%.



ALWEN SAYER

*Student Nurse (Adult),
Wrexham University*

Alwen consistently goes above and beyond expectations to ensure patients receive appropriate, safe, and dignified care, and that her student nursing colleagues are supported.

A student on the part-time Bachelor of Nursing course for Health Care Assistants, she is recognised for her integrity, professionalism, and deep passion for nursing.

Patients and families remark on her ability to listen attentively, provide reassurance, and advocate for their needs, incorporating her excellent Welsh language skills when appropriate. Her critical thinking, knowledge, expertise, and respectful clinical advice and influence have also earned praise from doctors as well as nurses.

As a team player and natural role model, her peers value her guidance and support. Academically, Alwen has maintained a high standard of achievement, balancing the demands of clinical placements, academia, and her commitments in her Health Care Assistant role at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

During a recent placement in the Coronary Care Unit, she showed exceptional initiative with her understanding and evidence-based knowledge to prevent a significant patient injury.

She has been a natural role model to fellow student nurses, always willing to offer guidance, share knowledge, and support colleagues under pressure. Furthermore, she actively participates in initiatives to improve nursing practices, such as contributing to student leadership sessions.

Sponsored by **Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)**



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Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Registered Nurse – Adult Award



**ANGHARAD
HANBURY**

*Lead Nurse for
Radiology, Hywel
Dda University
Health Board*

Angharad's enthusiasm, passion, values, and beliefs have been key in setting the high standards across the Health Board's four radiology departments.

Since her appointment in 2023, she has shown leadership and commitment to improving the care of radiology patients and maintaining staff wellbeing.

Angharad has been pivotal in developing the Diagnostic Coronary Angiograms pathway and the Temporary Pacemaker Standard Operating Procedure, introducing audits to monitor quality within the departments, and developing a standardised approach to record-keeping through the radiology nurse record.

She always listens to her team and allows their ideas to help form the vision, goals, and development plans for the future. Inspired by her motivation and their trust in her, the team has fully supported the changes in the department.

Angharad leads by example, is an excellent role model, and has a positive approach that motivates her team. She recognises the importance of professional development and has introduced a training programme and staff competencies.

Through her networking skills, staff attend other Health Board sites to develop their skills, and one of the radiology departments has been assessed as a placement for student nurses.

Angharad is well respected and is always exploring innovative ways of driving practice forward and improving safety and outcomes for patients.



EMMA PHILLIPS

*Quality Improvement
and Service
Transformation
Practitioner,
Hywel Dda University
Health Board*

Emma has shown exceptional commitment to improving the safety and experience of patients through collaboration and leadership.

In her four years in a Quality Improvement Practitioner role, she has shown consistent dedication to preventing hospital-acquired thrombosis, and her team in Bronglais Hospital recently won a national award for lowering the risk of thrombosis in patients in their care.

She is constantly reviewing the evidence base and making improvements to practice to assess and identify Venous Thromboembolism (VTE), and Hywel Dda University Health Board has become the first Health Board to develop and implement robust audits to monitor the VTE agenda, using a fully digital system.

Emma has developed bilingual and accessible leaflets and intranet pages to promote and share knowledge around VTE, and she has taken part in a Welsh Risk Pool review across Wales – showcasing the work in her Health Board and visiting others to learn, collaborate, and share.

She has also shared her expertise in quality improvement by supporting a local community hospital in improving continence management – a project which has been shortlisted for a National Health Service Wales Sustainability Award.

Emma is always responsive and accessible to teams, constantly striving to make positive impacts on patients' outcomes and supporting staff to make a difference.

Sponsored by **Powys Teaching Health Board**



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Bwrdd Iechyd
Addysgu Powys
Powys Teaching
Health Board

Chief Nursing Officer for Wales Award



**ANNETTE
BLACKSTOCK**

*Assistant Director of
Safeguarding,
and*

**LOUISE
MANN**

*Director of
Safeguarding,
Public
Health Wales*

Annette and Louise have jointly developed new guidance around missed NHS appointments, potentially saving many lives.

The guidance reframes 'Did Not Attend' as 'Was Not Brought' or 'No Access Gained'—challenging health professionals to ask what a missed appointment really means and addressing an issue repeatedly identified in safeguarding reviews.

More than 700,000 NHS appointments are missed annually in Wales, and missed contacts are often cited as missed opportunities to protect children and adults at risk, sometimes resulting in tragic outcomes.

By reframing 'Did Not Attend' as a potential safeguarding concern, they have embedded a rights-based, person-centred approach, with a clear, system-wide framework, grounded in ten core principles, which is now shaping policy and practice throughout the NHS in Wales.

The national guidance promotes professional curiosity, risk identification, and timely safeguarding escalation.

They led multi-agency co-production of practical tools, including identifying risks and guidance on addressing barriers to attendance – ensuring their work is not only strategic, but practical and usable for frontline staff.

Together they have also driven organisational change: ensuring the guidance aligns with legal frameworks, regional safeguarding policies, and national improvement programmes.

The change Annette and Louise have instigated ensures no missed contact is dismissed, no vulnerable voice goes unheard, and no risk goes unrecognised.



DONNA BLINSTON

*Hepatology Advanced
Nurse Practitioner,
Hywel Dda University
Health Board*

Donna's important work has shown the impact of health promotion, early detection, and empowering wellbeing in liver patients.

Focusing on delivering the right care, at the right time, in the right place, she has transformed pathways for some of the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach patients.

Donna introduced nurse-led one-stop clinics for liver patients – reducing waiting times, preventing unnecessary hospital visits, and promoting multidisciplinary working while addressing co-occurring conditions and tackling entrenched health inequalities.

She has also started a weekly outreach clinic in homeless charities for people experiencing deprivation and often chaotic lives.

Donna's liver health awareness events enable earlier identification of liver disease, and her monthly rolling audits enable targeted liver health awareness for patients attending hospital.

In addition, Donna delivers regular training to medics and student nurses, and she is part of the junior doctor training programme and buddy mentor for Swansea University. In 2024, Donna and the gastroenterology teams demonstrated that over a six-month period, vitamin E can reduce the oxidative stress caused by fat in the liver of patients with metabolic fatty liver disease. Building on this work, Donna will begin a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme with Aberystwyth University and Innovation Wales, aiming to challenge current practice and potentially reduce the burden on the NHS.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Sponsored by the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales, Welsh Government

RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Award 2025

The RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Award is the ultimate accolade at this evening's ceremony. The award acknowledges excellence in professional practice and outstanding leadership. The winner will have made a considerable and sustained contribution to improving the care of patients in Wales and been instrumental in developing nursing innovations. Through their achievements, the winner will have played a significant role in enhancing the reputation of the nursing profession.

Sponsored by Velindre University NHS Trust



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WALES

Ymddiriedolaeth GIG
Prifysgol Felindre
Velindre University
NHS Trust

Criteria for Award:

- The Wales Nurse of the Year must have demonstrated excellence in their field.
- Their contribution to the nursing community and the nation's health care will have been judged as significant.
- The winner must be an inspirational role model for the nursing and health care community.

The 2025 RCN Wales Nurse of the Year will be announced at the awards ceremony.

RCN WALES NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS

2012 WINNER: LOUISE POLEY Consultant Nurse for Substance Misuse, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

2013 WINNER: RUTH OWENS Ward Sister, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

2014 WINNER: VERONICA JARMAN Day Hospital Sister, Powys Teaching Health Board

2015 WINNER: CLAIRE HARRIS Ward Sister, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

2016 WINNER: SIAN THOMAS Consultant Nurse (Child Health), Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

2017 WINNER: LOUISE WALBY Respiratory Nurse Facilitator, Cwm Taf University Health Board

2018 WINNER: EVE LIGHTFOOT Community Infection Prevention Nurse, Hywel Dda University Health Board

2019 WINNER: JEAN SAUNDERS MBE Asylum Seeker Lead Nurse, Swansea Bay University Health Board

2021 WINNER: KIRSTY JOHN Charge Nurse, HMP Cardiff, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

2023 WINNER: TARA REES Lead Nurse Practitioner, Hepatology Service, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

2024 WINNER: MADELAINE WATKINS

Clinical Nurse Specialist for Psychosis in Older Adults, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

"Since becoming RCN Wales Nurse of the Year 2024, I've used the platform to champion greater awareness of the health inequalities faced by older people experiencing distressing voices, visions and unshared beliefs – sometimes described as 'psychosis'. I've had the privilege of attending major events such as RCN Congress and the International Council of Nurses (ICN) Congress in Helsinki, and I've proudly fronted RCN campaigns including International Nurses Day and Care Home Open Week. I still remember speaking live on the radio the day after the awards – a moment that marked the beginning of a growing drive and confidence to use these new networks and opportunities for change. I'm passionate about inspiring more nurses to work with people in extreme distress using trauma informed approaches, and supporting students and newly qualified nurses to explore careers in mental health nursing with older people."



CONGRATULATIONS

ROLL CALL FOR ALL THE SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES FOR THE RCN WALES NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2025

TRACY BALE Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

DAWN BIRCHALL Wrexham University

ANNETTE BLACKSTOCK and **LOUISE MANN** Public Health Wales

DONNA BLINSTON Hywel Dda University Health Board

KATIE BRYAN Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

ANNIE CLOTHIER Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

CINDY COURTNEY Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

NICOLA COWAN Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

ANDREA CROFT Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

JANINE DAILEY Hywel Dda University Health Board

AMANDA DANIEL Public Health Wales

RHIANYDD DAVEY Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

CATHERINE ELLEN DAVIES Swansea Bay University Health Board

ZOE DOLMAN Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

EMMA DREW Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

GRACE ELMS Hywel Dda University Health Board

EMILY EVANS Hywel Dda University Health Board

RACHEL EVANS Public Health Wales

KELLY GODWIN FRANCIS Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

ANGHARAD HANBURY Hywel Dda University Health Board

VICTORIA HAYMAN-TEEAR Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

KAREN HAZEL Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

PAULA HEYCOCK Swansea Bay University Health Board

JOANNE HOOK Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

AYESHA JONES and **KERI THOMAS** Aberystwyth University

KEVIN JONES Independent Health and Social Care Sector

LYNDA JONES and **SHONA LEWIS** Hywel Dda University Health Board

VICTORIA KIERNAN Swansea Bay University Health Board

ALISON KIRTON Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

LLONGYFARCHIADAU

ENWAU'R HOLL YMGEISWYR AR RESTRAU BYR AR GYFER GWOBRAU NYRS Y FLWYDDYN RCN CYMRU 2025

CHERI LEWIS Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

BRIALL LLEWELLYN Swansea University

VICKY LLOYD Swansea Bay University Health Board

ANGELA LODWICK Hywel Dda University Health Board

CLAIRE LOVERIDGE Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

LOUISE MANN Public Health Wales

CLAIRE MCCARTHY Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

DR CAROLYN MIDDLETON MBE Public Health Wales

RICHARD MORGAN Hywel Dda University Health Board

KATE MORGAN Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

MEGAN MUSTON Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

CATHERINE NORRIS Swansea University

LISA PAYNE Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

EMMA PHILLIPS Hywel Dda University Health Board

FFION PURSGLOVE Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

LAURA REYNOLDS Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

NATHAN RIDDLE Swansea Bay University Health Board

ABBIE SANDERS Wrexham University

ALWEN SAYER Wrexham University

DR SHEILA SHEPLEY Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

AMANDA STRANGE Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

HAYLEY TAYLOR Swansea Bay University Health Board

HELEN TENCH Hywel Dda University Health Board

TANYA THOMAS Powys Teaching Health Board

VICKI TRAVERS Independent Health and Social Care Sector

WILLIAM TURNER Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

HAYLEY VALENTINE Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

DR TESSA WATTS Cardiff University

EMMA WILLIAMS Velindre University NHS Trust

KATY WORTH Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board