



The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust



# People at our Heart Awards

## ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022



We care  
and are kind



We have high  
standards



We are  
inclusive



We are  
innovative



We are  
proud

# About The People at our Heart Awards

The "People at our Heart Awards" is a staff & volunteer recognition scheme that enables patients, relatives, colleagues and the public, to express their gratitude and provide recognition for the outstanding efforts of our staff and volunteers.

It also helps the Trust to identify and celebrate those amongst our people who 'make us proud' and best represent the Trust Values.

As part of our #FlourishatNewcastle Hospitals framework, our goal is to enable all staff to liberate their potential and work in a way which is fair and respectful. Enhancing the staff experience and through these awards, we're able to reinforce how valuable colleagues are who demonstrate kindness and exemplar behaviour.

The Staff & Volunteer awards were first introduced in 2013 as the "The Personal Touch Awards". In 2019 they were renamed "The People at our Heart Awards" and rebranded to bring them in line with our Trust Values. Over these past nine years, thousands of nominations have been received, each crediting staff & volunteers for the amazing work they do to ensure that our patients receive care of the highest standard.

We are grateful to the Newcastle Hospitals NHS Charity for their generous support in providing funding to establish and maintain this award scheme.

Congratulations to all of our winners and thank you very much for your continued dedication to our patients through the provision of excellent services - We are very proud of you!



# **People at our Heart Awards**

**Winners 2020/21**

# Catherine Burn, Staff Nurse, Ward 9, Freeman Hospital

## Individual Winner – Quarter 1

I would like to nominate Catherine Burn for a Personal Touch award. My mother in law spent 8 weeks in the Newcastle Hospital Trust as an inpatient before she sadly died. She was moved several times throughout her stay between the RVI and Freeman hospitals as her condition either improved or deteriorated and whether she was suspected of having covid 19 or not. I know for many this was a difficult time but it was for her especially as she was of sound mind just elderly and frail and alone. Due to covid 19 understandably she wasn't allowed any visitors and this was particularly difficult for her husband of 65 years. They struggled with modern technology and they weren't always able to communicate via mobile telephones with my mother in law needing assistance to manage her device which wasn't always given. Ipads were purchased for use on wards but this was no use to my father in law as he doesn't even have broadband access. Catherine on ward 17 at the Freeman allowed my mother in law to use her mobile to call my father in law via WhatsApp and they were able to not only see each other but to have a conversation. Little did anyone know that that would be the last time they would speak to each other. My father-in-law was heartbroken to say the least, but Catherine enabled him to have a memory of her last few days which has been a source of peace to him. Her small act of kindness has made an old man happy and for that we, as a family, thank her. The care and compassion she showed is second to none and for that we are grateful. I would also like to point out that my mother-in-law did not die of covid 19.



# Sue Bentley, Senior Sister, Ward 7, Freeman Hospital

## Individual Winner – Quarter 1

My father spent his last few months at the Freeman hospital. He received amazing care in wards 5, 6 and 7 over the past couple of years however, there is one nurse who truly stood out, both to us and to him. She is Senior Sister Sue Bentley. Sue's level of care, compassion and commitment to each patient, and their loved ones, is a credit to the nursing profession. She truly is the epitome of what it means to describe nursing as a vocation as opposed to simply a job. The one example I think truly shows this is how she helped Dad the day before he died. Having been increasingly weaker in the previous weeks, he rallied that day, managing to get out of bed, shower and change, ready for the arrival of his family. Sue personally helped him to shave and smarten himself up for me, my mum and my brother. He was so very pleased with himself that he'd managed this and insisted on her coming to meet with us later that day. Despite how busy she was, she readily came in and chatted. Small touches like this make a world of difference to all involved. The extra level of care Sue brings to her patients and their families seems to be the very encompassment of 'the personal touch'. Dad didn't feel like 'just another patient' in her care and we felt he was in safe hands knowing how she was looking out for him.



# Pauline Morgan, Marie KAPLANIS & Yasmin Laidler

## Ward 48, RVI

### Team Winners – Quarter 1

For the excellent standard of care provided by the staff on this ward, which includes the domestic, healthcare, nursing and doctor/ consultants. Each and every individual deserves an acknowledgement of their commitment, care and professionalism as they frequently go above and beyond to ensure the physical and psychological wellbeing of their patients. As a patient with complex physical and psychological needs, I have never before received such an excellent standard of care as I have from the staff on this ward, particularly the ward sisters Marie, Pauline, Nathalie, Yasmin and junior nurse Crystal. Since my arrival, staff have not only endeavoured to familiarise themselves with my specific physical and psychological needs using my hospital passport and dialogue with myself and my family but made every effort to ensure my wellbeing on every level. While they are not specifically trained in mental health, they have inspired within my feelings of self-efficiency, competency and dignity that are often overlooked within general and mental health nursing and as such, I have made significant progress on the ward on every level. While they cannot address all my needs, in times of anxiety caused by my ASC, they have taken the time to ensure my wellbeing remains uncompromised by the difficulties I face as a patient with a complex psychological condition in a busy and unpredictable environment. Furthermore, they not only go above and beyond their pay grade to ensure patient safety and wellbeing but frequently remain working well after their designated shifts have finished. Each and every individual I have encountered on this ward regardless of age or personal circumstance shows a genuine commitment to their role, their patients and their colleagues which, as a patient, is very reassuring to witness. They are true paragons of the NHS and demonstrate a standard of excellence that deserves recognition not just within this hospital but within the NHS as a whole.



# Barbara Hall, Sister, Ward 2a, GNCH, RVI

## Individual Winner – Quarter 2

Barbara works on ward 2a as a Sister. Recently, due to Covid, our respiratory nurses were moved to a newly set up Covid ward along with Barbara. This was a stressful and worrying time for all of the staff, including other nurses from different specialities, who were seconded to our ward to fill the gap. This was a huge organisational task and the whole team worked very well on both wards with all the challenges this entails. Through this whole process, Barbara, as usual, put her patients at the heart of everything with empathy, kindness and professional care, especially supporting patients whose fears she allayed with the prospect of a Covid diagnosis. During all of this frightening time, Barbara has been a lifeline of support to her staff. Not only professionally dealing with an unprecedented Pandemic and all that entails for the staff involved, but also emotionally. She has guided and helped the staff who were working on the Covid ward through their own personal stress and worries. She is an inspirational nurse; she not only helps staff in a professional way but also supports them personally. Barbara does this with a perfect balance of Line Manager and friend and due to this, she is respected and loved by her staff, who are willing to support her in every way. She truly is what this award is about.



# Brian Quinn, Maintenance Craftsperson, Estates, RVI

## Individual Winner – Quarter 2

Brian has supported the Pharmacy Production Unit for a number of years and has always been seen as the man that can fix anything. No job has been refused by Brian and he will always try his best to accommodate our always urgent requests. Recently, we have had a problem with a major piece of equipment and Brian initially followed out a diagnostic inspection to see what the problem might be. Due to the age of the equipment, parts are now obsolete so if it was anything major, a repair was going to be unlikely. An external company was contacted who are the main contractors for this equipment - they also confirmed that any equipment older than 10 years (which ours is) would not have the parts available. After two visits by the external contractor, they suggested that the fault could be a couple of things and re-iterated that the parts needed would no longer be available. The need for this equipment is vital for our procedures so Brian continued to work on the machine himself trying various fixes until he finally came up with a fix. Brian went way over and above to assist us with getting this machine back up and running and in the process has saved the trust an estimated £60 - £100k in the interim. Brian has shown his dedication to the Pharmacy production unit in many ways over the years and is aware of the impact essential equipment breakdowns can have on our service to our patients. If we don't have essential equipment available for use, then we cannot provide the vital services required by our Trust. Brian has a vast knowledge of all of the equipment within the Pharmacy production unit and he always attends to the urgent and sometimes obscure requests like to manufacture something without any question. Brian definitely deserves this award and we as a team appreciate everything he does and has done for us over the years, he is a valuable asset to the Trust team.





# Jenny Hunt Specialist O.T, (Neuro) RVI

## Individual Winner – Quarter 2

Jenny has been working with a patient with a new diagnosis of a high-grade multifocal brain tumour, for several months. The patient was previously independent. This life changing diagnosis has left the patient with very complex physical and cognitive needs. This has been a very challenging situation for all involved. Jenny provided significant support to both the patient's spouse and young child; helping them to adjust and adapt to the patient's personality and cognitive changes, understanding a new baseline (full hoist transfer), as well as carrying out comprehensive OT assessment/intervention and supported some major adaptations, which enabled the patient to return home. Jenny is a credit to our team. I'm very proud of Jenny's involvement with this patient, demonstrating resilience, and going the extra mile to ensure the patient's child could spend quality time with their parent before they die. She consistently provides high quality care for patients with a brain tumour diagnosis. Feedback received from the spouse: 'I have had the opportunity during my life to have visited every country in the world at least twice. During this time, I have met many people from all walks of life and have had the opportunity to rub shoulders with some of the rich and famous, however I have never met anyone as beautiful, caring and considerate as yourself, you are an absolute credit to the uniform that you so proudly wear. You were able to make [patient] smile when you entered the room and to see this was an absolute pleasure and a joy to see. Thankyou from the bottom of my heart for all of the work you have done with [patient] and I do hope that all your dreams and aspirations are fulfilled as you are truly a very special person whom we will never forget. Thank You.



# Tracy Leck, Nurse Specialist, Plastic Surgery, RVI

## Individual Winner – Quarter 2

Tracy always let us know when she was coming and even fitted in with the Helping Hands care visitors. She was understanding, kind and gentle and knowledgeable. She gave clear and explicit advice in a friendly manner. She took extra care over dressings. When I said I could not get a pineapple, she remembered and brought one on her next visit. She came to be with us for our consultation with Mr Saleh and expanded on his advice. I have the utmost confidence in Tracy, she is now a family friend than just being a nurse. Thank you, Tracy, for your many kindnesses.



# Northeast Children's Transport & Retrieval – CAV

## Team Winners – Quarter 2

I would like to nominate NECTAR who during the pandemic stepped out of their comfort zones and moved adult critical care patients as well as paediatric patients. As a service we are dedicated children's transport team for the region, during covid we volunteered to help our adult colleagues by relieving hospitals who were at capacity and moving their ITU patients to somewhere where there was space. Our staff quickly stepped up the challenge, undertaking extra training and stepping out of their comfort zones. This allowed flow of patients around the region and no hospitals to get overwhelmed. Our staff found this experience difficult but have dedicated their skills to ensure adult patients were moved with the same care and dignity as our give our paediatric patients.



# Dr Hilary TEDD and Team

## The Northeast Assisted Ventilation Service, RVI

### Team Winners – Quarter 2

I would like to Nominate Dr Hilary Tedd and the Northeast Assisted Ventilation Team (NEAVS) for the outstanding, holistic healthcare and support that they have provided for my older brother who has incredibly complex needs. Not only have Dr Tedd and the team given outstanding care to my brother over the last couple of years since they have been involved, but it is abundantly clear that they care and have a great deal of compassion for his family too. As a sibling I can genuinely say this is not something I have ever experienced, health professionals being interested in my views and experiences as a family member too. It's been incredibly difficult to see the deterioration in my brother's health in recent years. We had hit many brick walls before NEAVS – we are acutely aware that without their support he probably wouldn't be with us. Dr Tedd and the NEAVs team, including Steph Grant, have helped us enormously as we fight to ensure that my brother receives the best care at home that he can. We genuinely feel that they walk alongside us as we strive to ensure my brother can live at home and enjoy the things that he loves. Even in this challenging time, we feel really looked after and secure in the knowledge that if my brother needs anything, NEAVs will do their utmost to help and care for him. The gladness I felt in knowing that Dr Tedd had phoned and spoken to my mum about my brother's care even when she was working on a Covid ward – there are not words to describe this. This level of genuine care and compassion is not something that we as a family have experienced much at all.



# Ward 23 Paediatric Cardiology, Freeman Hospital

## Team Winners – Quarter 2

Ward 23 is my hero's they have changed me as a person, they have made me realise what is important in life and changed my way of thinking, inspiration from the team has made me re-evaluate my choice of career. The support love care and time they have supported us as a family. Operating on my daughter taking a sick baby into theatre giving me a pink healthy one back. Dedicated team that we were lucky to have. Heart surgery was a great experience due to the time and effort the whole team gave my family. Honesty was the key. They are over worked and under pressure like all services, but they are truly the best team who work as a team saving lives helping families. Dr Hasan is my hero he has helped so many families like mine he is without a doubt the most dedicated inspirational person I have met. So, thanks to ward 23 every single person has made an impact on my life without even knowing it. 300 words is not enough!



# Bobby Love, Clerical Officer, Team Leader, Newcastle Diabetes Centre, Campus for Ageing Vitality

## Individual Winner – Quarter 3

I have frequented the diabetes centre for many years. Things were often slow, and communication was poor. Bobby Love has made my experience so much easier and an absolute pleasure. Bobby has exceptional interpersonal skills in person and through email. His communication skills have installed trust and confidence in my health care that I never really had. I identify as nonbinary and cannot change my name legally. Bobby was absolutely brilliant and had knowledge and understanding of how I would like to be treated as a nonbinary patient. Nothing is ever a chore to Bobby, and he ensures the best course of communication to the patient is adhered to. He has sorted numerous issues caused by others for me and they have been dealt with swiftly and apologetically. He has a warmth that comes through in all forms of communication and empathy that radiates through even through email. Having this staff member is truly a blessing for the diabetes centre. He provides an all-round role model to the centre and is the backbone to the service and its communication with patients. What an absolute breathe of fresh air this person is and must be truly recognised and commended. Thank you for respecting identity and providing first class care!



# Laura Telford, Ward 3, GNCH, RVI

## Individual Winner – Quarter 3

My daughter came to Newcastle in 2019 for a bone marrow transplant. My son also came for a bone marrow transplant in August 2020. The staff on Ward 3 were amazing! I can't thank them all enough for all the hard work they put into taking care of my children on the ward. Laura Telford in particular really made my daughters time on the ward more bearable. Laura brought fun, magic and imaginations at a time where it was most needed. Her bubbly, infectious personality brought so many smiles, laughter and so many smiles to my daughter's face, even on the worst days. My daughter left Newcastle saying she had a new best friend (Laura). She still talks of how they used to make all the Doctors and Nurses join in and do the Macarena around the cubicle. Every memory my daughter has from going through chemo and a BMT is a good one thanks to Laura. My son came up for his transplant in August 2020. He has additional needs and doesn't really enjoy the company of others. Again, Laura managed to bring smiles and laughter to his face (which is a challenge for anyone he doesn't know). Laura recognised instantly what made my son stressed. She helped put things in place to help him feel safe, secure and happy. She made all staff aware that he struggles when there are too many people and made sure staff didn't overcrowd him. Laura also made him care plans, so he continued to be treated in a way that he felt safe throughout his time in Newcastle. Every parent that I have met in my two long stays on Ward 3 all rave about what an amazing person Laura is. Laura is a hero to all of the children on Ward 3. She makes them laugh when they are sad. She makes them feel safe when they are scared. Laura brought so much happiness, laughter and fun to both of my children. She went above and beyond to keep them both smiling throughout a time when there wasn't much to smile about. So, on behalf of my two amazingly brave children, I would like to nominate Laura Telford to be recognised for all of her hard work and for being a superhero to all the amazingly brave children on Ward 3. Me and my children are forever grateful to her for making such a hard time fun.



# All staff, Corporate Laboratory Blood Sciences, Integrated Lab Medicine

## Team Winners – Quarter 3

All the staff at Blood Sciences Laboratory across Biochemistry, Haematology, Transfusion and Immunology disciplines have worked really hard to continue provision of excellent service in the time of great turmoil brought on by the pandemic. While we are so proud to read of all the great achievements of our Trust's front-line staff who are in the public eye by the virtue of their duties, not much is known about the work we do. Well, we process and produce a great deal of test results, quite often urgent ones while working extended shift patterns, dealing with various challenges at work and at home, from childcare issues to being carers for family members and many others. The workflow was adjusted as the pandemic progressed; private lives altered to fit demands of the new work patterns. While a great number of the Trust employees got to work from home during the worst of the pandemic, we couldn't for the obvious reasons. So, if you appreciate humour along the lines of; "What have the labs ever done for us..." the answer lies in the Lord Carter's 2016 Review Report. It stated that 70%-80% of all healthcare decisions affecting diagnosis or treatment are influenced by Laboratory Medicine results. I know this is not a heart tugging little story, as most of these things are, but we by and large have no direct contact with a patient as an individual. We actually work for the benefit of them all, every single one. So, please take a moment to think, pause and appreciate the hard work, dedication and upbeat attitude of my colleagues from Blood Sciences, they certainly deserve it.





# Adrian Douglas, Nurse Specialist

## Outpatients Eye Clinic

### Individual Winner – Quarter 4

I accompanied my 91yr old mother-in-law Mavis Lee on the above day. It was getting very close to closing time when she was informed, she required another injection for her Macular degeneration. Adrian was responsible for viewing her images and then informing us that due to the dept being refurbished she'd have to come back the following week. This would have been difficult to get someone to accompany her but also that getting in and out of cars isn't as easy as it used to be. Adrian without any hesitation decided that he was going to deal with the injection the same day. Despite the time of day and his shift potentially coming to an end he went what we felt above and beyond what anyone would expect. Adrian arranged a wheelchair and took Mavis himself to ward 39 where she received the injection. I was allowed to accompany her to the ward and was kindly asked to sit in an appropriate waiting area for her. Mavis despite being 91 is a very switched-on lady - she described her experience as "I felt like the queen". As I now work within the NHS and spent 30 yrs. in the police force, I believe in professionalism and quality of service to the public. Adrian was not only this but pleasant and made our visit extremely memorable because of his personal attention. I believe Adrian stood out from the crowd and he should be acknowledged for this by means of 'a people at our hearts award' He is a credit to the RVI.



# **Helen Ritson, Young Adult Care Co-ordinator, Nephrology Specialty – FH**

## **Individual Winner – Quarter 4**

1. Helen is an outstanding member of the Renal Team at the Freeman; she goes above and beyond to look after the Young Adult Kidney Patients. She is always there for her patients and stops at nothing to ensure they are looked after and happy as they can be. Helen has been marvellous with me since I transferred to the Freeman, she visited me in my paediatric appointments and met up with me before transferring to the Freeman to help me settle into Adult Nephrology. She met up with me because she wanted me to know that she would always be there for me no matter what as she is always there to listen to anyone's problems and does whatever she can to help put those problems right. Helen has helped a lot of her patients emotionally as she has been there for them to talk to her. Helen has been there to listen and understand what her patients are going through, she organises wonderful get-togethers for the young adults and makes everyone feel special regardless of their health. Helen ensures that all her patients can live the best possible quality of life and be happy regardless of their health. Being a kidney patient shouldn't stop young adults from leading a good life and Helen makes that point very boldly in her work. Receiving an award would only be the very least she deserves for all her support she has given to her patients. Helen's job is a very personal thing to her, and she explains that to a lot of people how much it means to her. All the support Helen gives comes from her heart because she wants to make a difference.
2. I don't know what to write here really but I probably wouldn't even be alive today if it wasn't for this amazing woman! She is utterly incredible, complete miracle worker and is there for me no matter what. She's picked me up off the floor in pools of tears, she's made me feel better when no one else can. She's fought for me to get my benefits and she's been able to get things out of my head that even I don't understand. Helen Ritson is such a lifeline to me and many other young adults who have renal problems. Helen has recently had a serious accident and is current out of work, but I have heard she is on the mend. How incredible would it be if she stood up and received this award? I know you say it is quantity not quality with these nominations but i have spread the word for all the other fellow young adult kidney patients to also nominate Helen in hope that one of them may win. Helen really does deserve the whole world and more!
3. I would like to nominate Helen for the work she does at the Freeman Hospital. I first met Helen before I transferred from paediatrics to adults in 2017. From the moment I met her, she was so kind and helpful. Through the years she has helped me with various things such as helping me on who to contact when my mental health was bad and helping me with job searches. She also helps organise the kidney residential trips which is where I've met loads of people with the same condition as myself and without Helen organising these things, I would never have met the most amazing people. Helen truly deserves this award for everything she does for everyone, she is an amazing lady!

4. Helen Ritson made my transition to adult care of complete ease. I moved from the RVI aged 17 with two transplants behind me when I turned 23, I was waiting to go on dialysis and for a third transplant. Helen went above and beyond from that time, helping me apply for PIP and UC, whilst being present at all appointments and really being a superstar day and night for me and my family. She has shown me that despite my illness, I can go on to achieve things and have a great life. I have now been transplanted for the third time for three months and i honestly believe that without Helen and her amazing work I wouldn't be here today, she has dealt with my complex mental health with ease, and she is one of your trust's true hero's. For her, this is more than a job and it shows, for that I am so grateful especially in a department that is often not given the recognition it deserves.
5. Helen has been amazing both since starting this role and as a nurse. I have personally known her from having my transplant at 13.5 years old and she goes the extra mile for all her patients with being a friendly voice on the other end of the phone to guiding them to the correct place for they ask for. She has gone through a tough time since December 2020, but she is doing her best to get back to work so she can be there for her patients. A woman with a big heart for all that know her and willing to do as much as she can for them.
6. I have known Helen since a few years after my first kidney transplant, when I was about 19. We met at a young adult residential where Helen was the first adult to understand how I was feeling. She is hilarious, fun, kind, encouraging and knowledgeable. When I had my second transplant in 2019, Helen was there especially on the days my family couldn't visit. She held my hand while I had tubes out and brought a portable DVD player to give me something else to do. It was like having an extra friend visit. Even in there she was fun to be around and relaxing. She talked my boyfriend and I around copying with this without my parents around – nothing is impossible when Helen is on your side. Helen has made me braver and kept me stable through intense emotional experiences – and I am not even a regular Freeman patient! Helen has had an awful time the last few months. Once, she told me that organ rejection is really just a 'blip' something my kidney can get through I think maybe this is Helen's blip and she'll be back being incredible soon.



# TPN Monitoring Team, FH

## Team Winners – Quarter 4

My first introduction to the TPN team from the Freeman Hospital was in April 2019 when Hayley Leyland and Lisa Gemmell visited me in Sunderland Royal where I was a patient. They advised of their speciality in providing the necessary nutrition that would help me put on weight, so they arranged for me to be admitted to the Freeman where they trained me to administer the TPN over a period of two weeks the care and attention to detail was exceptional. When discharged on the 1st May 2019 Hayley called at our house after work to make sure we were comfortable administering our first TPN this was 7pm in the evening Hayley also called the following morning at 7:30am before work to assist us disconnecting the TPN. We feel that the care I received from the whole team including Dr N Thompson was exceptional they helped me recover from a bowel operation where my weight was an alarming 47kg my weight is now is 73kg they monitored everything and Lisa made adjustments to the nutrition whenever required, we kept in touch on average once every two weeks the care eventually resulted in having a full reconstruction of my bowel on 25th September by Mr F Birgin where I no longer need a Stoma Bag and lead a normal life thanks entirely due to the TPN team. Big thank you for going the extra mile.





# **People at our Heart Awards**

**Winners 2021/22**

# Kirstyn Borrowdale, Technical Instructor, Occupational Therapy – Corporate

## Individual Winner – Quarter 1

Kirstyn consistently goes above and beyond to deliver creative, innovative interventions to patients in NCCC. This year she has organised a game of adapted bingo to bring haematology inpatients together during the pandemic. Each patient had their own therapeutic goal that the activity would appropriately challenge (e.g., new visual impairment, reduced hand-eye coordination or low mood) and an array of prizes were on offer. The patients had the best afternoon and commented on how useful the task was in terms of challenging their function. She has also created a dressing pillow with buttons, laces, press-studs and zips for patients to maintain or improve their fine motor skills while in hospital for long periods. Quite often these skills can reduce as a result of cancer or its treatments. These skills are also challenged by a hardware board that Kirstyn has constructed made of items a patient would find at home including a tap, plug, light switch, lock and door handle. Kirstyn develops these projects in her own time and at her own expense, putting patients at the heart of everything she does. She is an asset to the inpatient team and has recently joined the lung cancer occupational therapy outpatient service one day a week, using her vast array of skills in non-pharmacological symptom management to improve quality of life at what is often the end of a person's life. We are in awe of her dedication to patients, our team and the Trust. She is a shining example of excellence.



# Kirsty Chandler, Staff Nurse, Ward 31 Renal Dialysis

## Individual Winner – Quarter 1

Kirsty is one of our Haemodialysis Staff Nurses, working closely with the regular dialysis patients who attend three times per week for their life saving treatment. At the beginning of the programme, it was thought these patients would be expected to attend the GP to have their vaccination; this would mean they would have to attend yet another healthcare appointment when they should be shielding but due to their condition, they have to attend hospital thrice weekly. She recognised that these patients need to be vaccinated against Covid 19 due to their extreme clinical vulnerability and acted as an advocate for this patient group. With the support of Dr Emma Montgomery, Consultant nephrologist, Kirsty was able to organise for the vaccination of the dialysis population, not only those attending ward 31 but also those who attend our Satellite Units, home based therapy, transplant waiting lists and potential donors. She attended meetings with very senior people within the trust to fly the flag for the dialysis patients, ensuring they were not forgotten about. This can be daunting for junior staff, but she handled this with professionalism, with the patient at the heart of everything she was doing. During this time, she was redeployed into the staff vaccination programme which she fully embraced and was a valued member of their team. She has shown dedication, commitment and compassion during a very difficult time and she would be a worthy winner of People at our Heart Award.



# Kerry Puga & Team, District Nursing Newcastle Central, Out of Hospital/Community Services Directorate

## Team Winners – Quarter 1

This nomination is for Kerry and her team of District nurses. They provide support to my 86-year-old stepfather who has Alzheimer's and diabetes. (James). From my initial contact asking for help we have been provided with the most amazing caring and compassionate service. I was truly at a loss and so worried about my stepdad but from the first phone call to Rachel they have been a god send. They arrive morning and night and are as bright and chirpy at the end of the day as they are when they first arrive. My stepdad has a lot of anxiety and can be quite difficult, but the team are amazing with him, and he really appreciates their help (which in itself is praise indeed). They have a calming effect on my stepdad and this in turn impacts on my life. Rachel reassured me from my initial contact to the team, words cannot express how grateful I am and continue to be for the help of this team. It is impossible to single one person out as they all do an amazing job. This nomination of "People at our hearts" could not have a better title for this team. They are passionate, caring and enthusiastic about their role. I know that they must see a lot of people each day, however you would never know this as they make each person feel like an individual with individual needs. I used to be a senior leader in DWP, and I would have been so very proud if my team demonstrated the passion that this team have.





# Christine Spijker - Healthcare Assistant

## Ward 6 Paediatric ED/Assessment Unit, RVI

Individual Winner – Quarter 2

I came to the RVI with my autistic daughter who was very anxious and can be a bit of a handful and very emotional. Christine was excellent with her; she sat with her and took the time to enable my daughter to have treatment and made it a lot less stressful for both myself and my daughter. She is amazing, one of the best members of staff I have met in my many visits to A&E over the years. Christine was kind, compassionate and a true reflection of what nursing is all about but forgotten at times due to staff shortages, workloads etc. I would just like her to have the recognition she deserves.



# Lorna Hope – Midwife, Midwifery Led Unit, RVI

## Individual Winner – Quarter 2

I would like to nominate Lorna for being outstanding in the delivery of our son in January. This was Lorna's first vaginal delivery since graduating as a midwife and she was absolutely amazing. She made sure I was comfortable and settled at all times. She was very chatty which made me feel even more at ease. At some point during labour my sons heart rate dropped and as he was delivered (cord around his neck) she managed to stay calm and keep me calm too. After delivery I lost quite a bit of blood and she again remained completely calm and managed to reassure myself and my partner that I would be ok. She stayed back after her shift had finished to transfer me to the ward. She honestly made my third birthing experience the best yet even with the issues with the heart rate and blood loss. She was outstanding and is a credit to the maternity unit.



# The Ophthalmology Specialty Team - RVI

(Including Huw Oliphant, Romeela Rahman, Lucy Clarke, Mags Dayan)

## Team Winner – Quarter 2

I was sent to the RVI because my eye suddenly swelled up with double vision and pain. The entire team, from day one, treated me as a human not a diagnosis. They explained what they could do and kept me fully informed of what was happening. The technicians for the CAT and MRI scans were also supportive and helpful. I felt that I was not just 'another patient' but a real person with anxieties and worries which the entire team (consultants, orthoptist, nursing staff, technicians) all took into account. Having worked for the NHS myself for 20 years I know how easy it is to slip into 'another swollen eye' syndrome and forget the person. None of those involved in my care did that... they listened to me, communicated with me (I even got follow up phone calls and copies of GP letters). I have been supported in an entirely professional but empathetic manner throughout what has been a very worrying, bewildering and frustrating time. I cannot thank the people involved enough for their care and attention.



# Cerys Coyne – Staff Nurse Ward 35, NCCC, Freeman Hospital

## Individual Winner – Quarter 3

Cerys was one of the nurses who was looking after my father, Brian, on ward 35. She was always so friendly, compassionate, and made the room feel less stressful. On the day of my father's death, she was due to finish work but remained on the ward slightly longer as his passing was imminent and hand over was happening. She never made me feel like I was a burden asking her for more pain relief, to check on him or simply to ease some of my worry. When he did pass, she comforted me and reassured me and my family once they arrived. She spoke to my dad with respect once he had gone by just explaining "Brian I'm going to lie you down flat now" which caught me completely off guard but again helped me with his death. Cerys continued to care for us and left once we expressed our gratitude and insisted, she goes home for her rest. Such a generous act will never be forgotten especially as I was there without my mother. Definitely a credit to your hospital.



# Judith Flynn-Thompson – Healthcare Assistant Ward 8, Freeman Hospital

Individual Winner – Quarter 3

I just wanted to feedback appreciation for Judith Thompson on ward 8. Today I visited my grandad, Stanley. He has been in various hospitals since May this year and he was in a bit of a state ... hair overgrown, beard overgrown and feeling really rubbish. Judith stayed after her shift by nearly two hours to shave and pamper my grandad in her own time. Chatting and making him feel special. She then moved on to do another man in the next bed - again in her own time on a Sunday! I really want Judith to know how much we appreciate her care and for seeing him as the person he is and not just another patient in a bed.



# Karen Wallace and Ward 13 Staff, Freeman Hospital

## Team Winner – Quarter 3

The ward 13 team cared for my Dad with compassion and extended this to our family -even to the extent of giving us a card and bottle of wine as my wife and I spent our silver wedding anniversary holding my Dad's hand. We were able to witness staff interactions with other patients and saw their patience and care in the most trying of circumstances. A large part of my career has been around setting and improving quality standards in healthcare and sometimes we get obsessed with measurable metrics. In my view, the most important measure of quality is compassion. It is hard to quantify but it is what makes the difference between good and bad doctors and nurses, good and bad teams, and good and bad wards. If I were to define a scale for compassion, then the Ward 13 team would rank at the very top in every regard. It is this starting point of compassion that leads to a desire for excellence in every other element of healthcare as every patient is treated as if they are the staff members' own relative. To single out Karen Wallace. I have engaged with many wards in my career, good and bad, and there is no question in my mind that a ward follows the ethos of its leader. If the leader cares, is compassionate, and aspires to excellence then the team follows. Karen is the most outstanding leader, and her team follow her example.



# Ruth Douthwaite - Staff Nurse

## Reproductive Medicine, International Centre for Life

### Individual Winner – Quarter 4

I would like to nominate Ruth as she has continuously gone above and beyond every time, I have been lucky enough to have her look after me sporadically over the last 2 years at the Fertility Centre. From supporting right from the get-go to get you into the best position possible before treatment, to emotional support, efficiently taking you through the process to most recently, doing the procedure for me. She got very excited when she found out I was pregnant with my first daughter and made me feel very special and has done since when looking at photos and asking about her on my most recent visits. I had a chemical pregnancy in December, later that week I had to ring to make shipping arrangements and I got Ruth, she was so sympathetic, so genuine in her words and gave me the hope and support I needed at that time, even though she hasn't been dealing with my CP and I had not mentioned it during our conversation, she made it so personal. A few weeks later, when I walked in and saw it was Ruth doing my last iui procedure, I was over the moon and instantly felt relaxed, confident and that it was a good sign for my potential future pregnancy that she was doing it. She is like a rock that you feel you can completely depend upon. She is efficient but so caring and genuine. I immediately feel at ease, given hope and not just a patient. She is an absolute credit to the hospital, and you would be hard pushed finding anybody else who could deliver so exceptionally, supportive care.



# Kyle Rutherford

## Multi-skilled Engineering Apprentice Estates Freeman Hospital

### Individual Winner – Quarter 4

I suffer badly with MS and as such struggle to use the nurse call button in Hospital. Kyle has on 3 occasions manufactured a more suitable buzzer to help with this situation. Kyles willingness and helpfulness are both a credit to himself and the hospital. Kyle is still persevering in finding a solution. Kyle on all occasions has been a pleasant and helpful young man.





# Emma Ness & Alyson Carrick

## Trainee Specialist Nurses

### Sexual Health, New Croft House

Team Winner – Quarter 4

Emma Ness and Alyson Carrick both started working in our department in August 2020. They are both in training posts and despite COVID-19, staff isolating, short staffing and sickness, they have both “come aboard” and stopped us sinking. Considering they have only had a few months of specialist training they have both shown true enthusiasm and excellent skills by assessing, diagnosing and treating patients, which are occasionally very complex and in situations where their needs are highly confidential and of a sensitive nature, this is all within a few months of starting their training post. The knowledge they have already retained is first class as well as working to national and local guidelines. As a duty nurse and having to manage the clinics daily, considering last minute short staffing, isolating, staff having to go off shift at last minute, sickness, these two nurses have “stepped up”, had to put their little training into practice and think for themselves. They have taken intense pressure off the daily running of the clinic and have kept the clinic running on time by seeing patients (often very complicated) when asked. They often look to see what needs to be done and don’t need to be asked. They are both dynamic and never complain about the complexity of the patient when they are asked to see one. They are both an asset to New Croft Centre and Newcastle upon Tyne hospitals Trust. We are so pleased to have them both as part of our dynamic team.



# Pod Management Team

Team Winner – Quarter 4

<b>Julie Mulroy</b>	– <b>Sen Sister, Ward 20, RVI</b>
<b>Lisa Huddleston</b>	– <b>Waiting List Officer, Ophthalmology</b>
<b>Carole Third</b>	– <b>Waiting List Officer, Ophthalmology</b>
<b>Elizabeth Angus</b>	– <b>Staff Nurse, Ward 21, RVI</b>
<b>Matthew Rowley</b>	– <b>Lead Practitioner, Safeguarding Team</b>
<b>Claire Pinder</b>	– <b>EPOD Directorate Manager</b>

We have just held our first family video call with my Aunt since her surgery last week and its impact has been transformative - for her and for her older siblings scattered across the globe from Newcastle to Australia. Living, also, with learning disabilities and increasing co-morbidities, the impact of her worsening vision on her quality of life and her engagement with her wider family cannot be understated. Pandemic restrictions, her own tendency to become unsettled in unfamiliar settings and the need for a higher risk GA all contributed to a potentially fraught situation; it is because of this that I feel I must write to commend the team for their support for her and their communication with me, even though the inevitable COVID-related delays to listing. I know that there would have been a large group of people involved in her care but Julie Mulroy, Lisa Huddleston, Carole Third, Elizabeth Angus & Claire Pinder all had direct contact with me, often during times when they were actually off-duty; their dedication - and that of Matthew Rowley, the Trust MCA lead - in looking after her best interests was nothing short of superlative. Her sisters and brother have been delighted to see my Aunt - the baby of their generation - spark back to life. This has also been something of a secret shopper experience by proxy - our Dad worked in Ophthalmology at the General and, latterly, at the RVI and am sure would have been proud to see what the department is doing, today.



# **Patient Discharge Follow Up Service (Pathway 0) Volunteers**

Volunteer Team Winner – Quarter 4

**Steve Dale, Grace Cooke, Claudia Baptista,  
Julie Crumbly, and Elmira Alimohammadzadeh**

All the volunteers listed above have worked remarkably to help me set up a new service within the trust and without their dedication and support I would not have been able to set up a fantastic service for our patients within the trust once they have been discharged home with a telephone call to check all is well. This service helps to identify patients that may need support once home and to prevent re-admissions to hospital. They all show empathy and dedication to their role, showing excellent communication skills of which has been reflected with excellent feedback from patients. They all have overcome lots of challenges along the way with setting up a new service. I would like this opportunity to thank them and hope to continue working with them all in the future whilst the service grows. Patients have felt that it was nice to have a phone call after discharge to show that someone cares when you have gone home, and you are not left on their own to get on with it. I feel if the Volunteers did not show their support within the team, a truly valued service after discharge would not be able to be implemented. They've all shown enthusiasm towards the Project even when there were only a few referrals at the start when the project was cascaded to a few wards and when they have received high volumes of referral's when the Project has been implemented throughout the trust.

The People at our Heart Awards are funded by Newcastle Hospitals NHS Charity.

