



People at our Heart Awards

Quarter 3, 2021/22

Individual Winners

Cerys Coyne, Staff Nurse – Ward 35, NCCC, FH

Cerys was one of the nurses who was looking after my father, 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 Staff Bank

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.

Team Winners

Karen Wallace and Ward 13 Staff

Ward 13, FH

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.

Individual Nominations

Amy Bosworth, Nurse Specialist

Palliative Care

Amy was outstanding in the level of care she provided to my father. He had a very difficult passing from his terminal cancer and had moments of delirium which resulted in some instances of trying to escape the hospital or some aggressive behaviour. Amy always managed to speak to my father with respect and compassion. He always brightened up when Amy came to check on him and kept him calm during these moments. She helped when I had a panic attack while speaking to Dr Frew. She should be praised for professionalism and her ability to show so much empathy with all of our family. She was truly a bright star in such a dark time.

Leigh-anne Brooks, Staff Nurse

Ward 21 Cardiothoracic, FH

On Monday 4th October my father underwent heart valve replacement and triple bypass surgery by Mr Shah and the team. The following day his cough became increasingly worse and sadly on Wednesday morning he had developed pneumonia and sepsis which was hampering his recovery and he was potentially going to be prone. Obviously, this was terrifying to us as he went into Carlisle Hospital for a heart dye test a fortnight earlier and had not been allowed home, he then was transferred to you in Newcastle for his surgery. My pops is 76, he has never been in hospital overnight, never had surgery or a GA. He's never spent time away from his family before, he is the centre of our universe. Everyone's Dad is special however, our Dads a diamond not many men raised their kids alone back then until he met our wonderful step mum nearly 40 years ago he did everything, he is our hero. We've spoken to many nurses during his journey and can first hand express how wonderful they have been in their approach to our fathers care however, Leigh-anne offered him and us something more, she was 'extra' in every way. Updating us, proactively taking us step by step through the scariest day of our lives so far. She gave us support whilst caring intently to his needs, we can't think of a better way to thank her than hope you could acknowledge how special she is. Pops is still in your care on Ward 30, we hope he comes home soon as it's been

31 days, he cried earlier, he's scared and lonely the world needs more Leigh-anne's.

Abigail Chapman, Staff Nurse

Ward 11 Paediatric Burns/Plastics, RVI

Abby looked after my daughter for two days, she was outstanding! Abby went up and beyond by making sure my daughter with complex needs had everything that she needed. She learned how to communicate with her, spent time getting to know Jenny, this made out stay so much more pleasant. Abby is hard working and committed and a fantastic role model for students. Abby made out stay valuable and she educated me on aspects of Jenny's care.

Jacqui Clish, Nurse Specialist

Stoma, Community

In March this year 2021, our lives changed forever for my husband and me but when he came out of hospital we were sent and given a guardian angel who came to see us straight away. Life did not seem all doom and gloom. Jacqui put us at ease with her lovely manner and caring ways, always willing to help others. We could not have wished for any better care, always with a big smile on her face. God bless her and a huge thank you.

Janette Dutton, Senior Sister

Reproductive Medicine, Centre for Life

Jan provided excellent care throughout the process of requiring fertility treatment before upcoming chemotherapy. She was extremely knowledgeable about the process and kept me informed throughout. She performed my procedure on the date stated and it was reassuring as I had met her several times before. She spoke with my family while I was recovering to reassure them also. She goes above and beyond her clinical role and showing this human quality is the reason I am nominating her for this award. It seems so insignificant on paper, but it meant the world to me and most likely to many others who have to go through the same.

Kate Franklin, Clinical Technologist

Nuclear Medicine, FH

I was so apprehensive due to claustrophobia of a full body scan I nearly cancelled. I decided I could cope if I did not have my head done. Kate talked me through the equipment and procedure suggesting doing my body only, then, if I wanted, to work it out between us to find the best way to get my head through so I was not frightened. Understanding how I felt cannot be learned on a training course. We 'negotiated' how far my face could go in the machine, inching me in up to my eyes so I could still see the ceiling. Kate put a container on my chest to fool sensors and prevent it coming down so far and held my arm. Then she suggested I see what it would be like right in and promised to get me out immediately if I panicked, I agreed so then she moved me right under. I trusted her enough to say, "Hit the button, go for it". She carried on talking to me where I could see her in my peripheral vision. I had misheard, or maybe it was a ploy on her part, but I thought she said I would only be under 1 minute. I queried the time; she said 2 minutes 40 seconds out of 5. I stuck it out as she stayed right with me talking to me until my head emerged from the machine. I felt Kate was genuinely willing me to get a whole scan because that was important. Kate said part of her job was to assess what approach each patient needed, she certainly judged my mental state correctly. 90% of claustrophobia in a machine is the inability to get myself out. I still wonder "How on EARTH did she get me to do that!"

Natalie Lee, Staff Nurse

Ward 11 Paediatric Burns/Plastics, RVI

I have made this admission a memorable one – Natalie made sure every medicine/feed was on time and she is very hardworking and dedicated to the job. This style of nursing was very regimented, prompt and caring for my complex child which was outstanding. Natalie made me feel welcome and she went up and beyond her role as a nurse, she was very respectful. Outstanding care!

Natalie Lee, Staff Nurse

Ward 11 Paediatric Burns/Plastics, RVI

I have made this admission a memorable one – Natalie made sure every medicine/feed was on time and she is very hardworking and dedicated to the job. This style of nursing was very regimented, prompt and caring for my complex child which was outstanding. Natalie made me feel welcome and she went up and beyond her role as a nurse, she was very respectful. Outstanding care!

Jeffrey Sidhu, Healthcare Assistant

Outpatients, NCCC, FH

I started my radiotherapy in September after I had an emergency operation to remove what they thought could have been a malignant brain tumour. I was very nervous and tearful as you can imagine. My eyesight is also quite bad after my operation, so I did not have much confidence at all. From day one I met Jeff who immediately made me feel quite comfortable and, over the weeks, confident that I felt cared about. He is certainly a wonderful healthcare professional, and what I would call a natural carer. Jeff does not just take bloods and weight; he is such a lovely guy.

Vicky Tarren, Nurse Specialist

Paediatric Surgery Cleft Lip & Palate, RVI

Vicky is an asset to the cleft lip and palate team at the RVI, the care we have and continue to receive from her is outstanding! After we had received news at our 20-week scan that our little bundle would be born with a cleft lip and likely a cleft palate, I hit rock bottom. When I needed answers to questions you may not have been able to answer, you always found an answer and never overloaded me with information. When I needed a person to talk freely about my baby's cleft diagnosis, you were always there to speak to and never rushed me off a phone call or hurried from a home visit. You were there to support me and my partner at each and every scan and explained medical terminology to me in everyday language. You were a shoulder to cry on when I went through the

darkest of times of handing my son over for his operation at 17 weeks old. We were truly honoured when you and your friend (Lauren) gave up your own time to continue to support us as a family to raise money for the cleft lip and palate association by completing Arthur's Challenge in the Lake District, because you truly care to make a difference. You deserve recognition for your outstanding efforts for making a difference to not only my family but all families you support after finding out difficult news about their unborn baby. Thank you Vicky for being you, continue to do so and never change because you are an exceptional nurse.

Lisa Ternent, Nursery Nurse

Ward 14 Paediatric Oncology Day Unit, RVI

Nothing ever too much to ask! Lisa goes above and beyond not only for the children but for the parents also. Lisa taught my daughter about MRI and scan process then from the minute we arrived on scan day Lisa stayed with us and kept us all calm. If Lisa wasn't there, I don't think my child would have sat through the MRI. Lisa is a huge asset to ward 14 the place just would not be the same without Lisa!

Caitlin Twedde, Healthcare Assistant

Ward 11 Paediatric Burns/Plastics, RVI

Caitlin showed care and compassion way beyond what we could expect. She looked after my 10-year-old daughter, with additional needs, like she was her own. She involved her in every step of her recovery, and nothing was too much hassle for her. When my daughter could not eat, she made adjustments to the food available and did more than we expected to try and help her eat. Caitlin is new to the role yet seems like she was born to fulfil the role and I hope she continues and perhaps goes on to become a Nurse as she is clearly destined to take on a caring profession. Anyone spending time in hospital would be extremely lucky to have her involved in their care.

Natasha Wielogorska, Surgeon TIG Fellow Plastic Surgery General, RVI

Natasha Wielogórska is a part of the MDT that has been involved in my complex surgery & facial reconstruction as treatment for removal of maxillary sinus cancer. My initial post op period wasn't straight forward & Natasha despite being in theatre all day (I was now in my 4th postop day) & She was supposed to start her weekend break but decided to see that I was doing ok hence her weekend break didn't start until the following day. She is one of the most dedicated healthcare professionals I have ever had the privilege to be involved with. Natasha recognised showed appreciation & encouragement with the efforts I was making to aid my own recovery. Her gentle presence & support has aided my recovery. I felt safe under her care.

Team Nominations

All Staff on Ward 11, Paediatric Burns/Plastics, RVI

The staff on Ward 11 spent their time going above and beyond what could be expected of them. All of them were amazing and caring for my daughter and made sure that her anxieties and additional needs weren't making her worried. Each one of them cared for Izzy as if she were their own, checking with her and involving her in every stage of her recovery. Despite the fact the ward was busy, and they were clearly stretched it felt as though everyone was there whenever she needed them. Izzy really benefitted from the consistent support of everyone on the ward and without this her hospital stay would have been a different experience and in fact one which would put her off returning to hospital in the future. For everyone on this ward their jobs aren't jobs, they are a vocation to which they are all immensely suited and phenomenally good at. Without them our family wouldn't have got through the last week in the way that we have. The North East has the most amazing hospitals and staff which

should be and are the envy of the world. Thank you is nowhere near enough as we are forever in debt of the amazing staff on Ward 11.

All Staff at the Phototherapy Unit, Dermatology, RVI

Members of the team very professional, knowledgeable and friendly. Difficult to nominate only one person.

All Staff at the Phototherapy Unit, Dermatology, RVI

I have just completed my second course of treatment for psoriasis and on both courses Sister Vicky Armstrong and her team were amazing, very professional, and caring. This year, I have unfortunately suffered a lot from depression and Vicky and her team helped me tremendously cope with it. They are all so compassionate and always caring. I felt my dignity was upheld and I cannot thank each and every one enough. To me they are all worth their weight in gold. They are what the NHS is all about!

Dermatology Nurses, RVI

My daughter was very distressed about her skin, and she has been in a lot of pain. The care and the approach of the nurses in the department put her at ease and supported her through her treatment.

Nursing Staff, Ward 15, Neuroscience RVI

I was referred to the Neuroscience Unit Ward 15 of the RVI, Newcastle as an in-patient from Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Scotland on the second week of October 2021. The team of Staff Nurse of the NSSU/Neuroscience unit showed me proper care from the date of my arrival up until my discharge as outpatient. Sequel to the fact that I lost about 20KG of body weight prior to my hospital admission, some of the staff did not hesitate to grant my request for extra food prior to eating time or after dinner/supper. I was made to experience first-hand the impact of patient care during ill health, and I never

felt like I was sick and away from home (Scotland). From their small talk, chat, timely medical observation, food and the likes.

Mr A Irwins Leader Neurosurgeon Team

Ward 16, Neuroscience, RVI

Sequel to my diagnosis at ARI (Aberdeen), I was referred to the RVI, Newcastle for specialist treatment and further clinical diagnosis. The team of Neuroscience consultants lead by Mr Irwin was able to carry out further clinical tests to determine the best treatment option. Mr Irwin's team was able to explain my disease diagnosis using simple language. Also, the prognosis was properly explained to me together with the treatment plans together with the consultant oncologist and the team. This made me optimistic.

Dawn Revill & Catherine McLoughlin

Sexual Health Nursing Staff, Community

I attended the Newcroft Centre today to have my IUD removed and replaced. Both Catherine and Dawn made sure that I was fully aware of the process and talked me through step by step as things were happening also. She was able to answer any questions I had with regards to the procedure itself and after care. Dawn was exceptional at keeping me calm and made me feel well looked after throughout the procedure. Neither of them made me feel 'silly' for the pain I experienced and did their very best to ensure I was ok throughout. Thank you both very much for making me feel comfortable throughout an unpleasant experience.

Megan Roberts & Carla Shield – Staff Nurses

Ward 38, RVI

My dad passed away on 20/10/2021. He was a patient on HDU 10 weeks ago and was cared for by Megan who he spoke highly of. Unfortunately, Dad was readmitted to ITU and spent his final days there. It was such a traumatic time

of our lives. We felt so hopeless and lost and I can't describe the heartbreak that we felt on the evening dad passed away but thanks to Megan and Carla I can look back and have some comfort to know that dad was cared for with such dignity and kindness by the two best nurses-true angels. On that day I came into see dad and we were prepared that the day would be the day that dad would gain his wings. I remember walking into dad's bed space and there was a Teddy tucked in with dad. Megan said it was for my son, Bobby who she knew dad loved so much and knew Bobby loved his Grandad and wanted to give him something to remember him by. They took dad's handprints and gave us keyrings that splits in 2 parts-a heart and the outline, so dad could hold the little hearts in his hand, and we have the outer part to keep. They also gave us a candle and Forget Me Not Seeds to plant and put everything in a beautiful memory box tied with a ribbon. They arranged that dad got moved into a cubicle where we spent dad's final moments with him by his side playing his favourite music. I can't thank the staff on 38 enough for everything they have done but Megan and Carla's genuine kindness will stay with me forever and i will never forget how they helped us.

All Staff at the Fertility Centre – Centre for Life

We have recently been going through IVF treatment at Newcastle's fertility centre at the centre for life. Unfortunately, it wasn't successful, but we could not have asked for anything more from this whole team. Everybody was not only extremely polite & professional they were so kind and caring. Everyone from secretaries, nurses, consultants and embryologists. It was a very daunting, emotional and overwhelming experience and we given so much kindness & time to really make sure we felt happy with the process at every step. The NHS is extremely busy but we have never felt hurried or as if we were just on a conveyor belt, which would be totally understandable for how busy they are, but quite the opposite. They were organised and efficient but never hurried and always made sure you felt you knew exactly what to do and could ask any questions. It has been extremely emotional for us but it would have been very different if everyone at the fertility centre hadn't have been so compassionate. We can't praise them all enough.



The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust