

Birmingham and Walsall NHS teams scoop prestigious Patient Experience awards

- Outstanding commitment of staff at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust gains national recognition

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Two NHS Trusts that cater for the needs of almost two million people every year have won a prestigious award at the Patient Experience Network National Awards (PENNA).

Against strong competition, the winning entries of **University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust** and **Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust** - submitted in the *Environment of Care* and *Staff Engagement - Improving Staff Experience* categories - demonstrated “the extra mile” NHS staff are willing to go to ensure patients benefit from the very highest standards of care.

At the **Birmingham** trust, which treats 700,000 adults annually, significant efforts have been made to ensure patients are able to enjoy a good night’s sleep.

Work has been underway throughout the last 12 months to tackle the problem of a lack of sleep and rest among many patients due to the noise of staff working, which resulted in the Trust receiving low scores in important national surveys over a number of years.

Yet by making changes to the way staff work - including the installation of ‘soft close’ bins, reducing alarm noise on bedside monitors and nurses wearing soft-soled shoes - the Trust has made significant progress, and a recent survey generated the highest-ever recorded patient satisfaction scores.

At **Walsall**, which looks after the needs of 270,000 people, asthmatic children were identified as a priority after patient feedback revealed mounting concerns about a perceived lack of resources and facilities.

In particular, the Trust’s paediatric unit was labelled as “unwelcoming” and “overly clinical” - and some young asthma sufferers complained their fears and anxieties were not quickly addressed.

In response, staff transformed the way they communicated important information to families - and introduced a range of measures designed to empower, engage and motivate colleagues whose morale was low. As a result, the most recent patient survey

revealed 100% of families are “promoters” of Walsall’s asthma service.

“These are excellent examples of what the delivery of a heightened Patient Experience is all about – putting the needs of people at the forefront of your thinking and delivering services that resonate with them,” said Ruth Evans, Managing Director of PENNA.

“As a key profession, we believe Patient Experience leaders need to be better at measuring and reporting the impact of their initiatives to ensure they catch the attention of their leaders and also the general public.

“I am delighted to say that the winning entries of Birmingham and Walsall more than achieved this goal, helping to make this year’s event the most successful in our history.”

The awards ceremony was held at the iconic Birmingham and Midland Institute – a former refuge of the Britain’s greatest writers, Charles Dickens – based in the heart of England’s ‘second city’.

More than 200 Patient Experience professionals, including the Jane Cummings, chief nursing officer of NHS England, gathered on 5 February, to celebrate 12 months of real achievement in the field of Patient Experience throughout the NHS and private healthcare sectors.

Other category winners on the day were:

- **Sally Ryan of Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust:** Patient Experience Professional of the Year
- **Kath Evans of NHS England:** Outstanding Contribution Award
- **Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust:** *Innovative Use of Technology and Personalisation of Care Awards*
- **Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust:** *Innovative Use of Technology – Social Media and Setting the Stage – Strengthening the Foundation Awards*
- **South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust:** *Access to Information Award*
- **Yorkshire Ambulance Service:** *Setting the Stage – Measuring, Reporting and Acting Award*
- **Liverpool Heart and Chest NHS Foundation Trust:** *Setting the Stage – Support for Caregivers Award*
- **Liverpool Heart and Chest NHS Foundation Trust:** Overall Winner

“You cannot underestimate just how much effort, time and goodwill individuals and teams have put into these superb initiatives,” said Ruth Evans.

“But the reality is that patients throughout Britain are the big winners from these initiatives. It means they are experiencing heightened standards of and outcomes and services that are commensurate with their needs and expectations.

“The challenge for all health professionals is making the kind of output and results achieved by NHS Lanarkshire the norm on a daily basis.”

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