

# Team that “goes the extra mile” scoops prestigious Patient Experience award

- National recognition for an innovative project pioneered by South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust across the region

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An NHS health trust that caters for the mental health, learning disability and community health services needs of 2.5 million people living in Bedfordshire, Essex, Luton and Suffolk has won a prestigious national award at the Patient Experience Network National Awards (PENNA).

Against strong competition from other finalists, **the South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust’s** winning entry in PENNA’s *Access to Information* category demonstrated to judges that staff consistently go “the extra mile” to ensure patients receive the very highest standards of care.

In particular, the entry received most votes because of the way the Trust has built a strong, collaborative relationship with a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson – a specialist healthcare company – to benefit patients suffering from schizophrenia, schizoaffective and bipolar disorder. The aim of the Trust’s work has to help sufferers maintain their levels of treatment so they are capable of looking after themselves in the longer term.

Over 18 months, the initiative reduced the need for patients to use hospital beds by more than 58%.

“This is an excellent example of what delivering a heightened Patient Experience is all about – putting the needs of people at the forefront of your thinking and delivering a service that resonates with them,” she said.

“As a key profession, PENNA believes 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 South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust has achieved this and helped 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:** *Communicating Effectively With Patients and Families and Personalisation of Care Awards*
- **Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust:** *Innovative Use of Technology - Social Media and Setting the Stage - Strengthening the Foundation Awards*
- **NHS Lanarkshire:** *Continuity of Care Award*
- **University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust:** *Environment of Care 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*
- **Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust:** *Staff Engagement - Improving Staff Experience 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 the South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust the norm.”

The Trust operates out of more than 200 locations and provides a comprehensive range of services including: mental health services for adults and older people; Essex wide forensic services; low and medium secure services; specialist children’s services; inpatient adolescent mental health services; learning disability services; and drug and alcohol services.

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