



# THE RESULTS

ADVANCING HEALTHCARE AWARDS UK 2026

Celebrating all the entries, presented on 19 June 2026  
at Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington

## OVERALL WINNER



### **Leeds Community Healthcare Research Secondment Initiative**

Dr Jill Halstead-Rastrick, Clinical Research Lead, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust and the Leeds Community NHS Research Team

## The NHS England Chief Scientific Officer's award for the outstanding healthcare science service of the year

### WINNER

**Integrated Toxicology, System-Wide Impact: Providing real-time toxicology insight that strengthens frontline decision-making, improves patient outcomes, and underpins system-wide safety**

Toxicology Department, University Hospitals Birmingham

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**'A Breath of Fresh Care'. –**

**Transforming access to early respiratory diagnostics**

The Early Respiratory Diagnostic Service, Armagh & Dungannon GP Federation

### FINALISTS

**Every patient matters – addressing the burden of variants of uncertain clinical significance to improve the diagnostic pathway**

Sheffield Diagnostic Genetics Service, North East Yorkshire Genomic Medicine Service

**New Pathway of care for Adult Patients with Congenital Heart Disease: Clinical Scientist-Led Clinic**

The Adult Congenital Heart Disease (ACHD), Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital NHS Foundation Trust



## **My inspiration: The AHCS Award for the most inspiring leader**

*Sponsored by the Academy for Healthcare Science*

### **WINNER**

**Professor Catherine Ross**

Chief Scientific Officer for Scotland, Scottish Government

### **FINALISTS**

**Dr Rachel Humphriss**

Head of Audiology, Principal Clinical Scientist, Oxford University Hospitals

**Dr Sofia Michopoulou**

Consultant Clinical Scientist and Head of Nuclear Medicine Physics,  
University Hospital Southampton

## The Northern Ireland Government award for excellence in community partnership to improve population health

### WINNER

**'No Show, Know Why'- DNA as a signal for action**

Ashling McElvanna, Principal Podiatrist and Jennifer Madden, Consultant Podiatrist, and the Podiatry Team at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

### FINALISTS

**Connect With Me: Build my brain, build my future, build our society!**

Seána Kerr, Lead Speech and Language Therapist for SureStart, Michelle Maguire and Rebecca Carey, SureStart Speech and Language Therapists (Belfast Health and Social Care Trust), and Tracey Ripley-McElvogue, Co-ordinator, East Belfast SureStart

**Bringing Care Closer to Home**

Meghan White, Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist and Amy Gilsean, Occupational Therapist, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

## Award for excellence in cancer care

*Sponsored by Macmillan Cancer Support*

### WINNER

**One Voice: coproducing a laryngectomy pathway in the community**

**Rhiannon Haag**, Clinical Lead Speech & Language Therapist and **Michelle Coleman**, Highly Specialist Speech & Language Therapist, North East London NHS Foundation Trust

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Greater Manchester Prehab4Cancer and Recovery Programme**

**Zoe Merchant**, AHP Clinical Lead, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

### FINALIST

**Development of a nationally endorsed advanced practice framework for non-surgical oncology**

**Melanie Clarkson**, Senior Lecturer and Therapeutic Radiographer, Sheffield Hallam University

## Rising star award

*Sponsored by Chamberlain Dunn*

## WINNERS

### **Kyle Kennedy**

Dietitian, NHS Lanarkshire

### **Freddie James Wright**

Scientist Training Programme Clinical Engineering,  
United Lincolnshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

### **Stephanie Quinn**

Clinical Scientist, Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

### **Saraaz Khalil**

Allied Health Professional, Nursing & Midwifery Practice Educator,  
Specialist Radiographer & Research Academic, Yorkshire & Northern

### **Eimear Shannon**

Physiotherapist, Southern Health and Social Care Trust

### **Carl Wong**

Team Lead Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist,  
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

### **Max Thomas**

Clinical Scientist and Site Lead for Respiratory and Sleep Physiology,  
University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust

## Welsh Government's award for creative and innovative practice

### WINNER

**Lymphaticovenous anastomosis collaboration: improving clinical and patient outcomes for people with lymphoedema in Wales**

**Dr Melanie Thomas**, Clinical Director and **Dr Cheryl Pike**, National Macmillan Innovations Lymphoedema Specialist, Lymphoedema Wales Clinical Network, Swansea Bay University Health Board

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Transforming strabismus services through advanced orthoptist led care**

**Ciara McAtamney**, Paediatric Lead for Orthoptics and **Pamela Anketell**, Orthoptic Service Manager, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust on behalf of the Paediatric and Adult Strabismus Team

### FINALISTS

**Embedding speech and language therapists in schools to improve early intervention, equity and child outcomes**

Children's Speech and Language Therapy, NHS Forth Valley

**Project WILSON**

**Justyna Zielska-Mikita**, Stock Holding Unit Senior Supervisor, Welsh Blood Service

## Award for developing the AHP and healthcare science workforce

### WINNER

#### Rad Chat

**Jo McNamara** and **Naman Julka Anderson**, Therapeutic Radiographers, Founders and Hosts of Rad Chat

### FINALISTS

#### Rethinking the role of speech and language therapy assistants (SLTAs) in early language support

**Georgia Roskin & Marie England**, Speech and Language Therapists, Whittington Health NHS Trust, with the collaborative Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) team across Barnet and Islington

#### RCI Assist: a digital decision-support tool advancing confidence, consistency and capability across transfusion laboratory services

**Helen Thom**, Pathology Business Development Manager and **Alexander Hogan**, Consultant Clinical Scientist Trainee, NHS Blood and Transplant

## British Association of Prosthetics and Orthotics award for evidencing impact and excellence in prosthetics and orthotics

*Sponsored by the British Association of Prosthetics and Orthotics*

### WINNER

**British Association of Prosthetics and Orthotics:  
Career outreach and work experience initiative**

The Career Outreach Team, British Association of Prosthetics and Orthotics

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Queen Mary's Hospital Orthotic department,  
pectus carinatum bracing service**

Jack Presnell, Assistant Clinical Lead – Orthotist, **Andy Kelly** and  
**Tom Williams**, Senior Technicians, and **Diana Chau**, Orthotist,  
Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton

### FINALIST

**Active neuro rehabilitation hub - Gateshead amputee service**

**Gemma Stoddart**, Lead Physiotherapist, Rachel Lees, Lead Occupational  
Therapist and **Gail Archer**, Senior Lead Occupational

## AHP Research excellence award

*Sponsored by National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)*

## WINNER & OVERALL WINNER

### Leeds community healthcare research secondment initiative

Dr Jill Halstead-Rastrick, Clinical Research Lead, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust and the Leeds Community NHS Research Team

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### From patient narratives to national impact:

### An AHP-led research programme transforming radiotherapy care

Lisa Ashmore, Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences and Therapeutic Radiographer, Lancaster University and the teams on The GRACE & Gynae Narratives Research Projects

## FINALISTS

### Vision Impairment Screening Assessment – the VISA tool

Professor Fiona Rowe, Professor of Orthoptics, University of Liverpool and the VISION Research Group

### Music Therapy Embedded in the Life of Dementia Inpatient Care (MELODIC)

Annie Heiderscheit, Professor of Music Therapy and Director of Music Therapy Research and Naomi Thompson, Post Doctoral Research Fellow (Faculty of Arts, Humanities, Education & Social Sc), Cambridge Institute for Music Therapy Research, Music therapy Embedded in the Life of Dementia Inpatient Care (MELODIC)

## Award for the best collaboration across clinical, academia and industry

### WINNER

**NeuroRehabilitation OnLine (NROL): A nationally scalable digital rehabilitation model enabled by cross sector collaboration**

**Louise Connell**, Professor of Allied Health Rehabilitation and Physiotherapist, Lancaster University and East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust, and **Adam Partington**, NROL Operational Lead, East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Greater Manchester pre-hospital point of care troponin pilot**

**Philip Jones**, Innovation Consultant, Advanced Practitioner and Paramedic, North West Ambulance Service

### FINALISTS

**The collaborative design and evaluation of a virtual tour of a radiotherapy department**

**Nicky Hutton**, Therapeutic Radiographer, The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre

**The Julia Garnham Centre**

**Duncan Baker**, Clinical Scientist (Genomics), Musculoskeletal and Respiratory Genomics Service Lead, Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust and **Adam Hodgson**, Senior Lecturer in Genomics, University of Sheffield



## Biomedical Scientist of the Year award

*Sponsored by the Institute of Biomedical Science*

### WINNER

**Angela Jean-Francois**

Managing Director and Biomedical Scientist, North West London Pathology

### FINALISTS

**Humaira Hussain**

Biomedical Scientist, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

**Luke Hughes**

Pathology Subject Matter Expert Lead - Academy Development Manager,  
National Pathology Programme, NHS Wales Performance and Improvement

## Echocardiographer of the Year award

*Sponsored by British Society of Echocardiography*

### WINNER

**Dr. Dario Freitas**

Lead Clinical Scientist for Adult Congenital Heart Disease, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Bex Parsons-Simmonds**

Lead Critical Care Echo Specialist, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board

### FINALISTS

**Adam Langley**

Chief Cardiac Physiologist, Mid & South Essex Hospitals Trust

The award for outstanding achievement  
by an apprentice, support worker or  
non-registered technician in an AHP  
or healthcare science service

## WINNER

**Diane March**

Dietetic Assistant, Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

## FINALISTS

**Catherine Woodmore**

Dietetic and Speech and Language Therapy Assistant Practitioner,  
Vale Community Resource Service, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board

**Carla Yarra**

Apprentice Audiologist, Great Western Hospitals Foundation Trust

## The #RightToRehab award for innovation

*Sponsored by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*

### WINNER

#### **Persistent pain programme in prison healthcare**

**Verity Gee**, Clinical Lead HiJ MSK Service, **Michelle Saunders**, Secondary Care Lead CATs and Diagnostics and **Paul New**, Regional Team Lead HiJ MSK service, Physiotherapist, Practice Plus Group

### FINALISTS

#### **From Fragmentation to Function –**

#### **The Hampshire and Isle of Wight functional neurology specialist pathway**

**Louise Baker**, Multi-Professional Consultant Practitioner (Physiotherapist) – Neurorehabilitation, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and **Dr Tom Cox**, Consultant Neurologist, University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

#### **Creative and innovative practice in neurorehabilitation: embedding dramatherapy to support psychological recovery after brain injury**

**Daniel Thomas**, Managing Director and Music Therapist, **Sarah Morris**, Dramatherapist, and **Sally Watson**, Healthcare Accounts Manager, Chroma and **James Lea**, Head of Therapies and **Merrilee Briggs**, Director of Care, British Home