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## NHS Parliamentary Awards - a tool for powerful communication

Written by Fiona Garth, communications manager at Solent NHS Trust on 24 February 2020

“The NHS Parliamentary Awards acts as a powerful tool for our communications team, helping us focus on the fantastic work that takes place at Solent, share our colleagues’ stories and thank them for their dedication and commitment in the process.

“Ask any NHS Communicator what they love about their job and the majority will say ‘celebrating colleague’s inspirational work’. At Solent, we’ve seen how the Awards have enabled teams and individuals to stand out and be proud of their stories. As a Trust, we have been reminded of the great care that is being delivered across our region on a daily basis, and of the very personal investment that is made by our people.

“As communicators, it’s great to see when our story telling efforts are celebrated wider than just within our Trust. And there is something rather wonderful about local MPs championing a team or individual in the NHS who is making a real difference on the ground.

“In 2019, four local MP’s nominated Solent colleagues. This level of ‘buy-in’ feels extremely personal to our people and is a fantastic boost to morale. It also heightens the spirits of our stakeholders and wider public.

“For two consecutive years, we have celebrated an employee receiving the prestigious Lifetime Achievement award. In both cases, the award winner had dedicated over 40 years of their life to the NHS, leaving a lasting legacy of outstanding care for patients and creating a great place to work for those who will follow in their footsteps.

“The Parliamentary Awards provide us with an important differentiator from other organisations and as a team, we take great pride in giving Solent a voice and ensuring our people are acknowledged for the fantastic work they do and the care they give.

As a communications team, we enter a number of awards every year but the NHS Parliamentary Awards have struck a genuine cord with our people. There are a broad range of categories and this year we will throw everything we have at them!

I would strongly encourage you to:

- tell the compelling stories of your inspirational people
- allow your teams to shout about the work they do to improve patient experience
- strengthen your brand, boost the morale of your people and most of all, celebrate!”

*Fiona Garth is Communications Manager at Solent NHS Trust, a leading community, mental health and learning organisation. With an extensive background in creative communication, Fiona has a passion for sharing people’s stories and creating accessible communications to improve health outcomes. When she isn’t busy using her love of positive Psychology to enhance NHS communications, she can be found with her dog enjoying the Solent, most likely somewhere near a boat!*

Fiona Garth, communications manager at Solent NHS Trust

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