Bright Ideas in Health Awards

Category: Excellence in NHS Workforce Development

This category is open to organisations in the North East and North Cumbria

The NHS faces increasing pressure to address workforce shortages with practical, forward-thinking solutions that go beyond conventional methods.

To maintain resilient, responsive and high-performing health and care services, organisations must explore innovative approaches to workforce development, redesign roles, remove longstanding barriers and create new pathways into NHS careers.

Central to this is a long-term commitment to developing a sustainable and adaptable workforce.

This award celebrates outstanding innovation in workforce strategy and development.

Judges will be looking for evidence of creative and effective workforce planning that improves both service quality and productivity.

Successful entries will demonstrate how organisations have reimagined roles, challenged traditional ways of working and built flexible workforce models that support efficiency and high standards of care.

Judges are also keen to see initiatives that not only invest in existing staff and nurture their skills, but also attract new talent into the NHS, particularly in difficult-to-recruit and entry-level positions.

Eligibility:
Open to all NHS organisations, primary care providers and public sector organisations working collaboratively with the NHS to support workforce development, recruitment, retention and workforce transformation.

The entry questions for the **Excellence in NHS Workforce Development Award** are:

1. What workforce challenge does your initiative address?
2. How does the initiative redesign roles, pathways, skills or ways of working?
3. How does it support recruitment, retention, development or workforce productivity?
4. How were staff involved in shaping the initiative?
5. What impact has been achieved for staff, services or patients?
6. How does the initiative support difficult-to-recruit areas, entry-level roles or future workforce needs?
7. How has it improved service resilience or care quality?
8. How could the model be adopted by other teams or organisations?

Specific judging focus:

- Innovation in workforce planning or development
- Impact on recruitment, retention, skills or productivity
- Staff engagement and experience
- Contribution to service quality
- Sustainability of workforce improvements

Entries will be assessed on the following:
Innovation: originality of the idea
Value: impact of the initiative on patient care and/or service effectiveness
Patient focus: evidence that patient/service user need was central to the work
Collaboration: evidence of the involvement of other professionals, services and/or patients in the project
Clinical effectiveness: data demonstrating how this initiative drives clinical enhancements
Leadership: evidence of entrants championing their innovation in their organisation or more widely
Adaptability: ideas that could be adapted for use elsewhere in entrants' organisations or other organisations
Sustainability: initiatives that can be embedded within organisations to operate without the input of the people who developed them

The deadline for entries is 27 November 2026

For further information and to enter please visit: https://brightideasinhealth.org.uk/

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