National Continence Care Awards 2015/16
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Celebrating excellence in continence care, across six categories:

- Commissioning for high quality continence care
- Improving patient information about continence
- Promoting continence in primary and community care
- Continence care leader (Continence Care Team)
- Continence care leader (Healthcare professional)
- Continence patient champion

Kindly hosted by Glyn Davies MP (Conservative, Montgomeryshire), with support from Madeleine Moon MP (Labour, Bridgend)

House of Commons, 13 April 2016
On behalf of the Expert Group on Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS), I would like to congratulate all of the winners of this year’s Continence Care Awards. It is fantastic to be able to once again recognise all those who do their utmost to provide the highest quality continence care – efforts which all too often are not celebrated as they should be in an area of care which remains an enduring taboo.

Going to the toilet is a part of daily life. However, all too often people who live with incontinence do not seek help due to embarrassment; preferring to keep it secret from those closest to them1. As a result, incontinence remains undiagnosed and under treated2. Poor bladder and bowel control can have a devastating impact on a person’s quality of life, affecting their dignity and independence3. However, if addressed in a timely manner, continence problems can be effectively managed or even cured4.

Evidence gathered by the Care Quality Commission5, the National Audit of Continence Care6, and the appalling failures uncovered during the Francis Inquiry7 shows that, nationally, management of continence and toilet support falls far short of expectations.

However, we also know that, up and down the country, individuals and teams are quietly leading the charge to improve the quality of continence care in their area. This is why the Expert Group initiated these Awards in 2014 – to celebrate best practice in an area of care which is often forgotten. As a community, we need to build on this momentum and help spread some of the approaches acknowledged by these Awards.

We hope that winners will take a lead in delivering NHS England’s guidance, Excellence in Continence Care, in their area, which we know can deliver a nationwide improvement in the care of bladder and bowel problems. It is one of the aims of the Expert Group to ensure that incontinence is recognised as a long term condition.

The Expert Group is grateful to Madeleine Moon MP and Glyn Davies MP for hosting the event, and to Sarah Elliott for attending on behalf of NHS England. The Expert Group would also like to thank all the organisations that supported the Awards, whose support in raising awareness of the Awards and judging the submissions was instrumental.

Finally, we thank the winners for their commitment and offer our congratulations once again—and look forward to working with the continence community to ensure that people living with continence problems receive the care they deserve. You are positively changing a lot of tomorrows.

Hilary Shields JP
Patient representative, Expert Group on LUTS
I was delighted to attend the National Continence Care Awards organised by the Expert Group on LUTS, a group of primary and secondary healthcare professionals and patient representatives. It is not often that a light is shone on bladder and bowel problems, but this is something we are working to change.

A wide range of people can be affected by continence problems – children, pregnant women and women who have had children, those with neuropathological problems or musculoskeletal problems and men who have had a prostatectomy, to name just a few – and there can be considerable psychological impact.

At the latter end of last year, NHS England published Excellence in Continence Care: guidance for commissioners, providers and people living with continence issues on what good looks like. We brought together existing excellent research and guidelines for best practice in continence care and translated these into a clear commissioning plan.

Walking into the room at the Awards, I had the opportunity to hear more about the work that is taking place across England to make care and experience of using services better for patients.

What struck me was the buzz of conversation between clinicians, patients and MPs – all with a common interest of making a difference to continence services. I was also struck by the sense of collaboration – everyone playing their part in the interest of excellent continence care – with clinicians and patients sharing expertise and personal experience as equal partners.

The National Continence Care Award categories are closely aligned to the areas we address in Excellence in Continence Care, including recognition for commissioning high quality continence care.

I look forward to seeing the best practice achieved by all those who were nominated and successful in winning an award spread across the country so that all those living with bladder and bowel problems can benefit from excellent care.

Sarah Elliott
Regional Chief Nurse, NHS England South
Incontinence is a very common condition, affecting people of all ages, with around 14 million people in the UK living with a bladder problem and around 6.5 million with a bowel problem.

However, it is a hidden condition and a ‘taboo’ subject not much discussed. I hope my involvement as an MP will counteract this and raise awareness. More people are discussing problems around continence care today but much more needs to be done.

I offer my congratulations to all those who received an award, and all their efforts to provide high quality continence care. The Awards continue to bring this issue into the light, but it is vital that others, across health and care settings, learn from these examples of best practice.

High quality continence care must be viewed as a fundamental principle of patient centred, dignified and responsive care. People with incontinence deserve nothing less.

Glyn Davies MP
Member for Montgomeryshire
Co-host of the National Continence Care Awards

I am delighted to once again co-host the National Continence Care Awards and celebrate work which makes a fundamental difference to the lives of those with bladder and bowel problems.

Incontinence is an aspect of many illnesses and conditions and it will require a particular focus to defeat the taboo surrounding it.

These Awards are crucial in helping to highlight best practice in incontinence assessment, management and treatment by recognising some of the excellent work that already takes place across health and social care services — efforts which can often be overlooked.

I am delighted to be able to support these Awards again, and support efforts to ensure that people across health and social care follow in the footsteps of these worthy continence champions.

Madeleine Moon MP
Member for Bridgend
Co-host of the National Continence Care Awards
COMMISSIONING FOR HIGH QUALITY CONTINENCE CARE

This award recognises a clinical commissioning group (CCG) that has demonstrated how its approach to commissioning has made a demonstrable improvement in the delivery of continence care locally, and how it plans to deliver NHS England’s Excellence in Continence Care in the year ahead.

Activity
Somerset CCG and Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust were faced with the ongoing challenge of providing patient centred care, with limited resources, and the knowledge that demand on services is set to increase. To tackle this, they set up locality based Ambulatory Care treatment clinics, in order to reduce community nurse visits and provide care locally.

These clinics provide ongoing support for catheterised patients, from regular appointments for routine catheter changes to emergency catheter care within clinic hours.

Given the rural nature of the area covered, time involved in traveling was a significant factor both for the community nursing service and patients, and there were obvious benefits for both staff and patients by providing locality based clinics.

Outcomes
The service is continuing to develop and grow but has already shown significant benefits for patients and their care.

Over 6 months, the clinics have provided at least 250 hours of catheter related care that would otherwise have needed to be provided in either the patient’s own home or by a secondary care provider. This includes approximately 240 emergency catheter changes, which otherwise may have had to be provided by A&E services. In addition to this, 100 per cent of patients who fed back on the service indicated that they would recommend the service.

The Ambulatory Care initiative has proven how joint working can improve the catheterised patient’s journey in both planned and emergency care.

Winner
Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Catherine Weller, Liz Berry
PROMOTING CONTINENCE IN PRIMARY AND COMMUNITY CARE

This award recognises a GP practice, community continence service, pharmacy, third sector or social care provider that has taken demonstrable steps to promote independence, improve quality of life and dignity and reduce reliance on containment strategies in the local area.

Activity
The care provided for children’s enuresis service at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board was inconsistent and inequitable, with some children waiting over a year to be seen. Concerned about this, a team of school nurses at the Board established a multidisciplinary working group to examine the service.

The working group found that enuresis was not adequately prioritised and had issues with the referral pathway. As a result, the group conducted a service redesign to improve and promote continence in the primary care setting.

Nurse led clinics were introduced, with a standardised approach to referral, documentation and clinical input. Individual, tailored treatments plans were devised for all patients, and the specialist nurses responsible for delivering and leading the services were trained to achieve a level of knowledge and competence that ensured the delivery of best practice and implementation of guidelines.

Outcomes
Since the introduction of the new clinics, waiting times have been reduced, with children now waiting only 2-4 months to be seen, and the standard of care throughout the area is now equitable.

The clinics have also contributed toward a reduction in paediatric consultant appointments, with evidence showing that nurse led services are considerably cheaper than medical led enuresis services.

Finally, service user feedback has reported an improvement in quality of life, self-esteem, dignity and independence, and reduced reliance on incontinence pads.

Winner
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board School Health Nursing Service – Enuresis Team
ORGANISATIONAL AWARDS

IMPROVING PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT CONTINENCE

This award recognises a provider of NHS or care services that has an engaging and detailed patient information scheme, with evidence that information is given at the right time and used to support patients to have informed conversations about their care.

Activity
Pelvic floor muscle exercises are still often poorly understood, incorrectly performed and frequently forgotten, despite being a first line, NICE recommended treatment for female stress urinary incontinence.

Realising this, Myra, a practicing physiotherapist at Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust, worked alongside the technology company Propagator to produce an evidence based, peer reviewed smartphone app designed to advise, educate and support users with their pelvic floor muscle exercise programme.

The app includes an exercise plan that can be personalised to an individual’s needs, as recommended by a physiotherapist, and supplies additional information on how and when to seek further treatment.

Outcome
The app has frequently featured in the top 10 paid for medical apps in the UK, being bought over 20,000 times, and feedback from over 460 users showed that 98 per cent would recommend the app to a friend. When asked for overall user experience on a scale of 1-10 (with 10 being top), 86 per cent of respondents scored 8-10, with 40 per cent giving the top score of 10.

The app has proven to be successful in facilitating users to perform pelvic floor muscle exercises regularly and there is clear evidence that it is spreading the word that continence issues should be discussed, treated and promoted.

Winner
Myra Robson (Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust) and Wyc Slingsby (Propagator)
CONTINENCE CARE LEADER: CONTINENCE CARE TEAM

This award recognises a team based in a provider of NHS or care services, whose personal commitments and actions have been instrumental in raising the profile of continence care in their area, and have led to improvements in local services which improve outcomes and experiences for patients as well as delivering financial and organisational benefits.

Activity
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde were faced with growing cost pressures on the caring services, with containment costs and the older population increasing. In response, the team used evidence from a previous cluster, randomised controlled trial which compared the effectiveness of three experimental continence promotion interventions. The findings from this study provided the basis for a pilot to be conducted, delivering modification and behavioural interventions to all women referred to a continence service. Pre and post outcome measures, along with service indicators such as waiting times, attendance rates, reduced containment costs and patient satisfaction, were assessed in order to implement the evidence into practice.

This resulted in a service redesign, creating the ‘SPHERE’ (supporting pelvic health through empowerment, rehabilitation and education) Bladder and Bowel Service, which refocused its efforts on exploring more treatment options and approaches to reduce the need for containment.

Outcomes
This treatment approach to continence care has shown improved patient clinical outcomes, reducing the need for containment use and thus has reduced the deficit spend in this area of care in the health board reducing the deficit from £800,000 to £120,000 in two years.

Waiting times have fallen to 4-6 weeks, having been in excess of 18 weeks, ‘did not attend’ rates have fallen from 77 per cent to less than 25 per cent with a positive impact on uptake to the behavioural intervention groups, demonstrated by a 99 per cent satisfaction score in the patient satisfaction survey.
CONTINENCE CARE LEADER: HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

This award recognises an individual whose personal commitments and actions have been instrumental in raising the profile of continence care in their area, and have led to improvements in local services which improve outcomes and experiences for patients as well as delivering financial and organisational benefits.

Activity
Diane has adopted a fresh, innovative approach to working within and managing the continence team service within Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust. She has strived to make the service cost effective without compromising patient care, and continually works to encourage and develop her team and others around her.

Diane was involved with merging three continence services that were providing completely different services, within primary and secondary care. She fought to drive the service forward, with all the staff members from admin to clinical on board, ensuring that patient care would be improved and not compromised.

Outcomes
From a service that originally received 250 referrals a month to now 700 a month, Diane has encouraged every team member to work towards developing and changing the service to meet the demands of the increased referrals. Whilst doing this, she has also ensured that staff and colleagues had the support they needed in place, and that patient care would be a priority.

Waiting times for the CCG have been reduced, as has the mileage covered by staff, allowing the team to make better use of their time.
CONTINENCE PATIENT CHAMPION

This award recognises a patient that is taking an active and voluntary role to work with other patients and health and/or care professionals to improve continence care in their area and beyond, for the benefit of other people living with incontinence.

Activity
Jacqueline (Jacq) started volunteering to speak about continence in 2014. Since then she has become a champion of the It’s Personal campaign, becoming a voice calling for everyone with a bladder and bowel problem to be listened to and have access to the right care, treatment and support.

In December 2014, Jacq was invited, as a patient advocate, to join NHS England’s Excellence in Continence Care Programme Board. Over Christmas 2015, she was interviewed on television and radio about NHS England’s recently published guidance, Excellence in Continence Care.

In the last six months alone, Jacq has spoken at several events, to highlight continence issues on behalf of those with bladder and bowel issues. This has included conferences in Scotland, Leeds, London, Reading and Germany – attended by over 350 delegates from 50 countries.

Outcomes
The impact of her work on the Excellence in Continence Care guidance and It’s Personal campaign can be seen by the overwhelmingly positive twitter feed in months following events associated with the initiatives.

Feedback and comments she receives following her speeches at conferences are hugely encouraging. In particular, through speaking publicly about her experiences Jacq has encouraged individuals who have been suffering with incontinence in silence to make contact with the charities that she supports.