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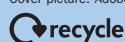
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Nurses and awards

Ian Peate FRCN OBE, Editor in Chief, *British Journal of Nursing*



Very often, too often, nurses rarely consciously acknowledge the profound impact that the care they offer has on both patients and their families. The *BJN* sees this. The *BJN* Awards see and recognise this.

Each year, the *BJN* Awards honour outstanding care and innovation. Our esteemed annual event, held this year on 24 March, was at the illustrious Banking Hall in London and was a wonderful success. The evening was dedicated to recognising and applauding the hard work and unwavering commitment of nursing teams and acknowledging the significant impact they have made on the lives of patients, on all of us. The Awards acknowledge what it means to be responsive to the highly changing needs of those who are very often vulnerable and distressed.

The experiences of talented nurses across the UK are shared and celebrated, depicting creative, dynamic and innovative nurse-led activity in different fields. Our Awards showcase nurses and nursing practice, enabling us to share with everyone the amazing achievements of nurse colleagues who practise in diverse care settings, working with diverse patient groups, across the life span.

Award winners are commended with acclaim to wider audiences, enabling even more people to gain an insight into what nurses are doing in their practice. Award winners inspire others and set a professional standard, inspiring other nurses to excel in what they do and acknowledge what is exceptional in what they often think is ordinary.

Highlighting what it is that nurses do, what it is that causes patients and their families to feel so completely safe in their care, is at the heart of the *BJN* Awards as we celebrate the extraordinary and compassionate care that nurses provide. It is the skill and proficiency of nurses that make the patient

experience an extraordinary and positive one.

This year, the Awards highlighted innovation, determination and the outstanding contribution nurses make to the health of the nation. This year we had 17 categories that showcased a wide range of nursing fields. Individuals and teams were recognised and acclaimed for being exceptional in what and how they practise. In addition to the 17 categories, a Nurse of the Year Award and a Lifetime Achievement Award are also made. Despite these two awards being made to individuals, it is constantly the case that recipients of these awards say that their achievement could not have been possible without the support of other colleagues (nursing and non-nursing), often accepting the award on behalf of their team.

For the first time this year we included a new category – Public Health Nurse of the Year. The introduction of this new category shines a light on the role of the nurse in public health. Every nurse, not only those working in specialist public health roles, are health-promoting practitioners. They use their knowledge and skills to make a personal and professional impact and to improve the health and wellbeing of the public. Every contact counts, from a healthy start right through to the end of life.

The Awards are open to entries from individual nurses and teams who deserve recognition. When the entries close, a panel reviews the submissions and then makes a shortlist of three finalists for each of the categories. As happens every year, the judges were faced with the arduous task of having to select winners from a plethora of exceptional entries this year. We were amazed by the outstanding quality of the submissions that we received.

Although the *BJN* Awards recognise those who have gone above and beyond what is expected of them in their day-to-day practice, we want to say a well-deserved thank you to all nurses for all that you do in spite of the many challenges that you face as you strive to provide the highest and safest quality of care. Your dedication and persistence, your commitment to service, very often in the face of adversity, saves countless lives on a daily basis. You ease the distress of those in need, and you continually challenge inequality and discrimination in all forms. Our nation cannot achieve real health equality without you. You really do make a difference and you are all remarkable. **BJN**