Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winners & finalists

Thursday
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JW Marriott
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Nursing Times Awards 2026

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Welcome



In the following pages, you will be able to find out about the winners and finalists at the 2026 Nursing Times Awards. You will learn about the deserving people, projects and organisations that won or were shortlisted across all 25 categories.

I hope our 36th annual awards go some small way to recognising the effort and skill shown by nursing and midwifery staff across the country in providing high-quality care, whatever your branch, specialty or setting. This special supplement is intended to give you a flavour of what it was that made our winners and finalists stand out from the crowd and impress our judges.

Among them are our top individual honours for Nurse of the Year, the Ann Shuttleworth Rising Star Award and the Chief Nursing Officers' Award for Lifetime Achievement. But equally, we are keeping teams very much in mind with our other awards, for example, for nursing in the community, primary care, mental health and social care. All are designed to promote and celebrate your brilliant work.

Two other standout categories are the Dame Elizabeth Anionwu Award for Inclusivity in Nursing and Midwifery and King's Award for Integrated Approaches to Care. We are grateful to Dame Elizabeth and His Majesty for their continued support.

On a similar note, I would like to thank our judging panels, who gave up their valuable time to choose the winners. Thank you as well to all our sponsors and supporters, without whom we could not put on our awards ceremony each year.

Our sponsors for the 2026 Nursing Times Awards are: Cygnet, HCA Healthcare UK, Ingeus, Nuffield Health, Royal Navy and Unison. And our supporting organisations are: the Association for Continence Professionals, the Infection Prevention Society, and the School and Public Health Nurses Association.

Meanwhile, our charity partner for this year is the Florence Nightingale Foundation, which provides leadership support and training for nurses at every level. You can read more about them towards the back of this supplement.

The trophies themselves were given out on Thursday 29 October at JW Marriott Grosvenor House London on Park Lane. The ceremony was hosted by myself and the comedian and former nurse Angela Barnes, with the help of Jonathan Clays, a voiceover artist best known for his work on *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* and *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*

If you would like to know more about our winners, we will be publishing articles about their projects and innovations over the coming months. Sharing winning ideas with others for the benefit of all is a key aim of the Nursing Times Awards.

If you've been inspired, then please consider entering the awards next year, so we can celebrate what you are doing to improve care. Once again, congratulations to everyone who was shortlisted or won a Nursing Times Award in 2026.

Steve Ford, editor of *Nursing Times*

29 October 2026
JW Marriott Grosvenor House Hotel, London

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Chief Nursing Officers' Award for Lifetime Achievement



KATE STRANWORTH/QNI

Professor Tonks Fawcett

Professor Josephine Fawcett, better known to generations of nursing students as Tonks, is a hugely respected academic and educator, who has been described as "legendry and iconic".

She is a professor of student learning in nursing studies at the University of Edinburgh, a position she has held since 2012 though she has been a fixture at the university since the 1980s.

Professor Fawcett holds key responsibilities in the undergraduate and postgraduate nursing programmes at Edinburgh, teaching both theoretically and clinically.

She has been particularly involved in undergraduate student nurses' clinical placement learning and practice, and has enthusiastically maintained a strong clinically based teaching and learning focus throughout her academic career.

From 2013–17, she was programme director of a new master's degree of nursing in clinical research, and from 2012–15 was senior personal tutor for the School of Health in Social Science. Professor Fawcett is also currently associate dean for academic conduct for the College of Humanities and Social Science.

In addition, she is principal fellow of Advance HE (formerly known as the Higher Education Academy), a charity and professional membership scheme promoting excellence in higher education. Founded in 2003, it advocates evidence-based teaching methods and awards fellowships as professional recognition for university teachers. Professor Fawcett was awarded the role in 2014.

She graduated with a social science degree from the City University London in 1974 and subsequently completed her nursing degree at St Bartholomew's Hospital. Her clinical career ranged from surgical nursing to the hospital-community interface with general practice.

She subsequently went on to complete a master's in nursing education at the University of Edinburgh in 1984 before embarking on a long career in nurse education.

Her research interests include cancer care and survivorship, pain management, clinical decision making, clinical support of learner nurses and stress in nursing. She has also successfully supervised students towards their doctorate degrees.

Her stated aim has always been to equip students with the critical and compassionate ability to understand, work and lead in 21st century systems of health and nursing care provision.

Professor Fawcett has also spent time in Malawi supporting nursing education in Africa, particularly examining how undergraduate nursing students learn in low-resource hospital and other clinical settings.

She has published widely as co-editor of the first three editions of *Nursing Practice: Hospital and Home – The Adult* and co-author of *Altschul's Psychology for Nurses*. She also is a co-author of *Pathophysiology, Homeostasis and Nursing* and co-editor of *Perspectives on Cancer Care*.

Professor Aisha Holloway, chief nursing officer for Scotland, nominated her for the 2026 Chief Nursing Officers' Lifetime Achievement Award.

Announcing Professor Fawcett as the winner, she said: "The one word I think that describes this person, and we've started to see a lot of this in our contemporary thinking around our workforce, and that's the word stewardship.

"How do we create the conditions for nurses to thrive, how do we create the conditions where nurses can actually do the job and the role that they so much desired when they come into their education and training? And this individual has played a very important part in those formative years.

"The research evidence, which obviously we talk about, tells us that our identity forms in nursing over several years. It's not just during the time that we are having our education, but further on probably five years post-registration.

"And this person has had a very important part to play in the journey of many of our current nurses and those who are students, so they have impacted on not just one generation or one cohort, but several. And in Scotland, this person is actually legendary and iconic.

"I was thinking about some other words other than the stewardship part. I would say wise, steady, definitely a national treasure, but sustained and consistent commitment. She's known across clinical practice, across education, and across nursing in Scotland, but wider," she said.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Continence Promotion and Care

Supported by ACP



King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: From Retention to Recovery: A nurse-led continence pathway transforming post-operative spinal care

Post-operative urinary retention is a common complication after spinal surgery. The team developed a continence escalation pathway, supported by education and training, to standardise early bladder assessment and intervention. The pathway includes routine post-operative bladder scanning, clear escalation thresholds, non-invasive strategies and nurse-led initiation of intermittent self-catheterisation (ISC), with referral to specialist services. Outcomes have been significant. Indwelling catheter use reduced, while ISC adoption increased, demonstrating a clear shift towards safer, patient-centred management.

Finalists

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: Supporting continence and preventing deconditioning in hospital settings

Deconditioning and incontinence are interrelated concerns that affect hospitalised and older adult populations. Nurses play a pivotal role in early identification of both issues. This project aimed to improve continence care for adults in hospital by reducing deconditioning, promoting independence, and enhancing patient experience through effective continence-promotion practices. By focusing on mobility, dignity, toileting routines and personalised interventions, it supports people to maintain independence, participate in decision making and receive care that reflects what matters most to them.

HCA Healthcare: How to Train My Bladder

Urinary continence problems in children are common yet underestimated. The urology lead nurse developed an innovative nurse-led bladder and bowel service at the Portland Hospital. It focuses on early intervention, holistic assessment, behavioural management and family centred education. Structured bladder and bowel assessment clinics were introduced alongside the How to Train My Bladder programme, paediatric pelvic floor exercises and integrated bowel management pathways. The service empowers children and families with tools, education and support to promote long-term self-management.

DL Health: Core to Floor: Pelvic health programme

DL Health established a nurse-led community pelvic health pathway to address a gap in continence care, where many patients with bladder dysfunction experience ongoing symptoms despite first-line advice. The service was developed and delivered by advanced nurse practitioners and independent prescribers. It combines assessment, treatment planning, education and lifestyle advice with evidence-informed interventions. These include pelvic floor rehabilitation, appropriate prescribing of topical vaginal therapies and integration with physiotherapy, yoga and core strengthening. Outcomes include reduced urgency and frequency, increased number of dry days, improved sleep and reduced pad use.

Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Bladder and Bowel: Washable incontinence products

The local bladder and bowel service identified heavy reliance on single-use disposable pads created large volumes of non-recyclable clinical waste, high carbon emissions, rising costs, and, for many patients, reduced dignity and confidence. The team recognised the need for a more sustainable, patient-centred approach. It piloted reusable, washable continence products as an alternative to disposable pads. So far this has diverted 468 pads from landfill daily, equating to 170,820 pads annually. Washable products also reduced annual costs from £249.99–£589.53 per patient to £73.81–£84.29, delivering vast savings.

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust and Centre for Sustainable Healthcare: Trial Without Catheter: A structured approach

Evidence suggests the longer an indwelling urinary catheter remains in place, the higher infection risk. Lack of protocol may result in prolonged catheter use, unnecessary district nurse visits, ambulance callouts and avoidable hospital stays. The team aimed to optimise the success rate of trial without catheter (TWOC), ensuring that catheter removal took place as soon as appropriate, reducing overuse and time left in situ. The team created a structured approach to the TWOC process, initiating a classification system for suitability. Catheter-related ambulance callouts reduced by 25%, hospital admissions by 12.5% and bed-days by 32%. Net savings were calculated at £36,800 per month.

NHS Orkney: Creating a continence service for children and young people

Orkney, as a group of remote and rural islands, has no paediatric continence support. Therefore, the school health team decided it would address this gap, despite this sitting outside the school nursing priority areas and pathway. The team attended training to gain appropriate skills and knowledge to provide this service, and also created policies and procedures to go along with it. After overcoming an initial influx of referrals, the team has a healthy referral list and is planning ways to adapt the service to ensure it is providing the highest standard of care possible.

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Theatre and Surgical Nursing

Winner

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Enhanced recovery after surgery for neurosurgery

The perioperative journey is often fragmented for patients undergoing spinal surgery. The trust has developed the UK's first nurse-led enhanced recovery after surgery pathway in neurosurgery – an end-to-end model spanning pre-operative optimisation through to recovery at home. Specialist nurses redesigned the pathway around clarity, continuity and confidence, embedding nurse-led assessment, structured education, multi-modal analgesia, early mobilisation and real-time discharge criteria. Across 1,024 procedures, the pathway released over 100 bed days annually. Performance has continued to improve – the proportion of patients discharged within expected length of stay increased from 64% in 2023 to 71% in 2025, while extended stays reduced from 36% to 29%.



Finalists

Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Distance Dots

Patients in single rooms had described an 'invisible barrier' at the door, meaning they did not know they were allowed outside. To encourage patients to mobilise, coloured lines were placed on the floor with different distances and explanatory posters. The idea evolved into equally spaced dots on the corridor floor that patients could use to identify daily goals for mobilisation. Starting with eight beds, it has now been installed on all surgical wards and critical care.

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust: High-risk airway clinic

A pre-formulated airway strategy is fundamental to safe airway management. The trust established the UK's first dedicated high-risk airway clinic. Patients are either screened for potential difficult airways or referred to this innovative service when there is concern that airway management may be difficult. Referrals are made using triggers of difficult airways such as complex head and neck pathology, morbid obesity or significant anxiety arising from previous airway experiences.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: Peyton's Principles – enhancing ERCP competency in the endoscopy nursing workforce

Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) is a complex gastrointestinal procedure that depends heavily on skilled nursing practice. But ERCP-specific education for endoscopy nurses has traditionally been inconsistent. To address this, a structured ERCP training initiative was developed. The programme combined clear demonstration of ERCP workflow, stepwise deconstruction of equipment and procedural tasks, learner verbalisation to cement understanding, and supervised hands-on practice using simulation.

Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust: High-volume Super Weeks

King George Hospital operating theatres introduced the High-volume Super Weeks initiative to address increasing elective waiting lists and the impact of prolonged delays on patients awaiting surgery. Staff implemented a focused, data-led approach using concentrated periods of enhanced theatre activity. The initiative achieved measurable improvements in theatre productivity, increased completed procedures, reduced cancellations, improved utilisation and shorter waiting times without compromising on safety.

National Neonatal Surgical Interest Group: Education and best practice standards for neonatal nurses nationally

The National Neonatal Surgical Interest Group (NNSIG) is a voluntary team of nurses and allied health professionals committed to advancing neonatal surgical care nationally and raising the profile of the needs of staff, families and services. NNSIG has been a trailblazer in producing co-produced, neonatal surgical best practice standards and frameworks, providing education on neonatal surgery and promoting neonatal surgical patients at a national level.

Newmedica: Reducing avoidable cancellations in cataract surgery

Cancellations on the day of surgery were a recurring safety and quality issue in the ophthalmology service. The team wanted to cut avoidable cancellations and took a structured, nurse-led approach, using incident review, data analysis and multidisciplinary governance to understand their causes. Avoidable and unavoidable cancellations were subsequently clearly classified, discussed and reviewed. Practical changes followed, including enhanced pre-assessment and ways to help patients to understand what to expect.

South East London Acute Provider Collaborative: Pre-operative assessment nursing forum

The Anaesthetic and Perioperative Medicine (APOM) network aims to bridge the professional gap between pre-assessment nurses across the three acute trusts in its region. Pre-operative assessment is a cornerstone of surgical safety, yet practitioners often worked in institutional silos. To resolve this and other issues, the initiative launched a centralised, face-to-face meeting to foster networking, collaboration and standardised excellence. It continues to evolve and the forum aims to secure the long-term professional growth of pre-assessment nurses.

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Winner

Critical and Emergency Care Nursing



East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust: The Eco Bed-Space

Two senior critical care nurses, Jennifer Moon and Charlotte Blanchard, set up the Eco Bed-Space and Eco Med-Space initiatives to pioneer sustainability-driven processes within healthcare and create a mindful attitude towards current practice, in line with national NHS England goals on net zero. Among their aims were to reduce single-use items via multi-drug giving sets and a 'gloves are off' campaign, promote recycling and switch from intravenous to enteral routes of medication. The initiative has been established throughout critical care units across the trust and plans are underway to promote the approach in all clinical areas.

Finalists

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: Together in Practice – Building a learning culture in the emergency department

The emergency nurse educator faculty identified significant challenges following the opening of a new hospital and rapid workforce expansion. To address this, the team implemented a comprehensive, nurse-led strategy to embed a sustainable learning culture. Central to this was a structured two-year induction and education programme, mapped to national frameworks.

Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Beyond Goodbye

Alexandra Ghica recognised that end-of-life care could be inconsistent in the emergency department due to time pressures, unpredictability and a focus on acute treatment. To address this, she led the introduction of a compassionate, person-centred initiative combining memory tokens for bereaved families with clear guidance to support staff in delivering dignified, sensitive care.

Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: The Mental Health Link Team

An audit identified significant gaps in mental health risk recognition and management in the emergency department (ED). Solutions included establishing an ED mental health link team, implementing a structured mental health triage risk assessment, relocating liaison psychiatry services into ED for parallel assessment and developing a purpose-built mental health hub.

Barts Health NHS Trust: Flourishing in emergency medicine – an integrated model for resident wellbeing and clinical excellence

Facing chronic teaching cancellations and rising burnout, the ED identified that resident doctors lacked the structured clinical upskilling and psychological support necessary to thrive in a high-acuity environment. As a result, the team launched a nurse-led quality improvement initiative to bridge the gap between service demands and clinical excellence.

Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Quality improvement project to improve bereavement services in critical care

Nurses in the critical care unit wanted to improve bereavement services. An additional form was created to aid nurse-led follow up, senior nurses attended and completed communication training, all healthcare assistants undertook training on performing care after death and a memorial service for bereaved families was embedded.

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust: Pre-ventriculitis nursing care bundle introduction

Data indicated patients who developed ventriculitis – infection and inflammation of the brain's ventricular system – had external ventricular drains (EVD) in situ for a longer than average. In response, the neuro critical care nursing team developed a two-phase ventriculitis nursing care bundle focused on EVD care and maintenance.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust: We're Going to the Zoo

Many critical care patients face fear, trauma and loss of independence, while their families endure anxiety and exhaustion. The trust created a rehabilitation programme featuring supported visits to Whipsnade Zoo for long-term intensive care patients and their families. The outings provided activity, social interaction, peer support and therapeutic nature experiences within a safe framework.

HCA Healthcare: Implementing the CARREE framework to reduce medical device-related pressure ulcers

An audit in the London Bridge Hospital intensive care unit (ICU) identified that medical device-related pressure ulcers accounted for 17.19% of ICU-acquired skin injuries. In response, a nurse-led quality improvement project implemented a standardised, proactive prevention framework – CARREE (Correct size, Assess skin, Reposition device, Reapply padding, Evaluate daily need, Endorse with a two-nurse check).

Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust: Intensive care unit virtual tour

This initiative was a response to the growing number of surgical patients needing planned intensive care, who were arriving with significant anxiety. Nurses created a virtual tour, delivered as a suite of seven videos, designed to offer a clear, accessible introduction to the ICU and reduce anxiety before arrival.

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Winner

Patient Safety Improvement

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust: Improving patient safety through a trust-wide safeguarding duty hub

The trust created a nurse-led safeguarding duty hub to improve patient safety by giving staff one clear route to expert safeguarding advice, supervision and coordination support. It brought together safeguarding nurses from a wide range of clinical backgrounds – including mental health, community, learning disability, perinatal, children's services and physical health pathways – into one accessible trust-wide service. For the first time, the workforce could draw on the full breadth of safeguarding nursing expertise across the organisation to support decision-making in real time, helping clinicians recognise risk earlier, clarify thresholds more confidently and take proportionate action to reduce the likelihood of harm.



Finalists

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust: Outbreak response to prevention – transforming infection prevention and control
A nurse-led framework was developed after a norovirus outbreak. It included education and triage training, single-room optimisation and two tools to aid decision-making. Norovirus outbreaks fell by 76% and bed days lost by 84%.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust: The epilepsy service – reducing waiting times and prioritising patient safety
Specialist nurses set up a new, epilepsy service to cut ongoing delays in treating patients, while also preventing hospital admission and boosting patient safety. They started clinics, set up staff training and obtained data to measure success.

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust: HomeBridge Pathway
HomeBridge Pathway enables selected cardiac surgery patients to safely await their operation at home under remote clinical supervision. Patients managed via HomeBridge had a reduction in average pre-operative waiting time in hospital from 24.3 days to 12.8 days.

Swansea Bay University Health Board: Limb reconstruction and bone infection
Pin site care was inconsistent, outpatient parenteral antimicrobial therapy patients were not having drug-monitoring bloods done, and fragmented bone infection decisions were made in corridors. Sian Francis addressed all of these issues.

Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Enhanced observation – quality and safety review
A review of patients receiving one-to-one observation identified variation in practice, highlighting missed chances to deliver more personalised care. Measures were introduced including stronger risk assessment, enhanced observation prescribers and more accurate data.

University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Basic and advanced male urinary catheterisation
This initiative aimed to reduce traumatic catheterisation. Male catheterisation was reframed as a core, gender-neutral skill, a patient safety programme was introduced, guidance on escalation and limits of competence was embedded, and a set list of equipment was developed.

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust: High-risk nasogastric tube feeding with pH greater than 5.5 in the community
Community children's nurses were presented with children and young people where they could not be assured of safe nasogastric feeding due to high pH readings. A risk management tool was created to facilitate safer feeding.

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust: Safeguarding IBD patients – A digital-first triage model for rapid clinical intervention
The inflammatory bowel disease service had an overloaded advice line that left urgent patients waiting for intervention. Hazel Morris led a digital transformation initiative to boost patient safety, identify high-risk patients, enhance patient experience and restore staff morale.

Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust: From 600 to zero, no child left waiting – a nurse-led transformation of access, safety and care
The children and young people's mental health team led an initiative to address excessive waiting times for first assessments. Improvements, including recruiting triage practitioners and weekly patient-tracking meetings, have reduced the waiting list from over 600 to zero.

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Improving patient safety – innovation in patient monitoring to enhance recognition and response to acute deterioration
The Recognition and Escalation of Deteriorating Patients initiative was launched to address delays in recognition of acutely unwell patients. Interventions included structured observation rounds and a real-time digital dashboard.

University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust: Oranges and Lemons
Many stroke patients need a nasogastric tube, which is inserted 'blind' at the bedside. The team explored a simple intervention to confirm safe placement by applying a small amount of orange or lemon juice to the gums, lips and tongue to stimulate gastric fluid production.

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Winner

Public Health Nursing

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Institute of Health Visiting: Bringing fathers' mental health into focus

Senior health visitor research lead Sharin Baldwin identified missed opportunities to address depression and anxiety among fathers during the perinatal period. As a result, she led the development of Invisible, an evidence-based film that uses powerful storytelling to raise awareness, challenge bias, reduce stigma and support practitioners to better recognise and respond to fathers' mental health needs. The initiative has been implemented across health visiting services and multidisciplinary teams, and been integrated into training, supervision and reflective discussions. It supports practitioners to better engage fathers, recognise signs of distress and adopt more inclusive, whole-family approaches to care.

Finalists

Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust: The specialist community public health nursing workforce

The trust devised a public health fellowship programme to support career development of its band 6 health visitors and school nurses. It involves 20% of time dedicated to working within a 9–12-month programme supervised by a nurse consultant, leading to band 7 progression.

Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust: Health visitor-led smoking cessation service

The trust introduced a health visitor-led smoking cessation service to improve outcomes and cut health inequalities by reducing smoking rates in homes with children under 5 across Derbyshire. The service involves home visits, phone, text and simple referral routes.

Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust: Perinatal vaccination service

The trust has launched a transformation-driven service to improve perinatal vaccination uptake across Dorset. A single, integrated pathway now delivers pertussis, respiratory syncytial virus and flu vaccination during pregnancy.

HCRG Care Group Surrey Child and Family Health: Early Intervention Sleep Campaign

The project recognised that many children experience sleep issues that can lead to long-term consequences. The result was the nurse-led Early Intervention Sleep Campaign. Over 450 children with additional needs have been seen by a sleep nurse for behavioural support and melatonin review.

Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust: Embedding inclusion and equity to improve access, engagement and outcomes for children and families

Children and families within inclusion health groups experience some of the poorest health outcomes. In response, the trust created a specialist community public health nurse for inclusion to boost access, engagement and outcomes for underserved children and families.

Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust: Special educational needs and disabilities workstream and improvements

This nurse-led programme was developed to improve outcomes for babies, children and families with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It includes a pathway, enhanced support, champions network, training, specialist advice and navigation resources.

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust: Between the Navel and the Knees – Intimacy and sexual function after pelvic chemoradiotherapy

Robyn Bowman identified sexual and psychosexual wellbeing as an under-recognised public health issue affecting cancer survivors. She led the development of a digital education initiative focused on improving access to support and normalising conversations on intimacy.

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust: Be Wise, Immunise

Gayle Howarth led a nurse-driven response to poor maternity vaccination uptake. Key was the development of the Be Wise Immunise website, enabling women to book appointments 24/7, get timely, culturally appropriate information and communicate directly with services.

Practice Plus Group: Closing a critical gap – improving sexual health screening in prisons

The initiative was developed by three nurses working in a remand prison who recognised that referral pathways were not meeting womens' needs in custody. In response, a rapid, trauma-informed and nurse-led syphilis screening pathway was embedded into routine processes.

UK Health Security Agency: Student nurse pilot project

This initiative delivered the first formal placement on health protection in the UK Health Security Agency. Piloted in the North East, two students completed an 11-week placement, exposing them to outbreak management, surveillance and public health decision-making.

West London NHS Trust: Improving access to healthcare through universal digital health forms

The aim of the initiative was to transition to digital health forms, alongside text messaging, to provide a more proactive, structured and equitable way of offering universal health reviews to children and young people at key transition periods.

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Clinical Research Nursing

Winner

James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: The Circus Project

Traditional routes to research participation often rely on clinical settings, online portals or prior research literacy, which can create significant barriers for creative, neurodivergent, migrant and informal worker communities. The trust partnered with Oak Circus Centre to embed research access support directly into a trusted, familiar community environment. Across 19 workshops, individuals and families received tailored, practical support to understand what research is, what participation might involve and how to find opportunities relevant to them. Flexible, non-verbal and arts-based approaches were used to build confidence and reduce anxiety, supported by simple, jargon-free explanations, facilitated conversations and one-to-one signposting.



Finalists

Barts Health NHS Trust: Project Octi

This ongoing initiative addresses low and inequitable participation of parents in paediatric clinical research across Tower Hamlets and Newham. The children's clinical research facility is leading a patient-centred engagement strategy to better understand underrepresentation of diverse communities.

Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Clinical research internship programme

Cherry May Sanchez led and coordinated a clinical research internship programme. It was created because internships were limited by fragmented research activity across pre-clinical science, university and NHS services. To address this, she re-designed the clinical research internship programme into a more integrated and structured model.

Clifton Medical Centre: High-capacity primary care research hub

Clinical research is often centralised in large academic hospitals. In Rotherham, this meant the population was excluded from innovations. Clifton transformed itself from a standard GP surgery into a primary care research hub. Led by specialist nurses, it integrated research into the daily fabric of the practice.

Hartlepool and Stockton Health GP Federation: Embedding clinical research in primary care through nurse leadership

Working in an area of significant health inequality, the federation of 31 practices identified low engagement in primary care research. In response, it established a locally embedded clinical research nursing team, supported by an agile mobile research unit, to bring research opportunities closer to communities and underserved populations.

Homerton Healthcare Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Parkinson's disease amongst the Afro-Caribbean community

The trust research team identified low participation in clinical research on Parkinson's disease, alongside under-representation of people from Black communities. A specialist Parkinson's research nurse role was established to act as a consistent, trusted point of contact, initiating research conversations.

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust: Neurosurgery, emergency and trauma team

The neurosurgery, emergency and trauma (NET) research team drive research engagement and high-quality practice. They have captured this within a quality improvement project undertaken to improve awareness of clinical research nursing and high-quality care linked to research outcomes. It aimed to identify how engagement within NET specialties could be improved and measured.

Institute of Health Visiting: Embedding clinical research leadership in health visiting

The institute's ambition was to drive cultural change, enabling health visitors to transition from passive recipients of research to confident leaders. To support this shift, it created a senior health visitor research lead role, providing leadership to champion research engagement, build capacity and embed a sustainable research culture within practice.

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust: M-RIC Youth Voices

M-RIC Youth Voices is a nurse-led public and participant involvement and engagement initiative that creates safe, developmentally appropriate ways for children and young people to shape mental health research and digital innovation. It supports ages 11–25, with tailored activities for younger children.

NIHR Liverpool Clinical Research Facility: Tea trolleys – microlearning platform: the Liverpool model – a nurse-led, co-produced research workforce pathway

Career research nursing workforces have often faced high turnover and limited development. Addressing this required an accessible learning platform and meaningful training. This model includes microlearning – 25 tea-trolley sessions in the clinical space – cross-site shared learning and a structured 18-month band 5–6 progression route.

University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust: Research Links programme

The trust's research training team developed the Research Links initiative to close the gap between clinical services and research. It introduced a trust-wide link role, which supports staff to become local research champions.

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Winner

Nursing in Social Care



NeuroResponse: Personalised UTI digital care pathway

Urinary tract infection (UTI) is the most diagnosed infection in care homes, 20% of admissions among dementia patients are due to avoidable causes and fragmented care leaves them feeling like second-class citizens. Bernadette Porter established NeuroResponse, a community interest company, to co-design new care pathways for managing UTIs within a person's care community using anticipatory care plans, e-prescribing and links to a remote vital signs system, 24/7 clinical triage team and laboratory microbiology services. A six-month pilot demonstrated positive results for 115 residents with dementia or Parkinson's disease. Future plans include improving integration capabilities and becoming a commissioned neighbourhood service.

Finalists

Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board: Positive Directions – Trauma-informed vanguard project

Clinical consultant Lyn Ranson shaped the trauma-informed vanguard initiative in Coventry to support families in crisis and complex circumstances across health, education, social care and the voluntary sector. To tackle a fragmented system where children experiencing trauma were often met with risk-led responses and escalation to specialist services, she developed an integrated model bringing together, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, education, police and other partners. Creative engagement, social prescribing, and co-production were central, with trauma-informed workforce upskilling and reflective practice. Between 2023–2026, the programme engaged over 400 children and young people, embedding formulation-led relationship-based practice as the response to distress.

Filipinos in Care: Project CHARM

Project CHARM was created to address a problem that social care has lived with for too long – capable nurses are often expected to step into highly accountable leadership roles without a clear, structured route into management. Project CHARM is a free, nurse-led leadership programme for aspiring registered managers in care homes. It was designed as a practical workforce intervention, not a generic training offer. Delivered across four face-to-face days over five months, with post-module assignments and light mentoring, the programme focused on the areas that most often determine whether someone can lead safely and effectively in social care: role and accountability, people leadership, governance and risk, and finance with change. It is a practical model for strengthening leadership in social care, improving succession planning, and supporting safer care through better-prepared nurse leaders.

Gorsey Clough Nursing Home: SWAN model of care for end of life and bereavement

The Swan model of care for end of life and bereavement was introduced to address variability in how care home residents and families experienced end-of-life care, particularly in care home settings. A dedicated end-of-life care lead nurse was appointed at the home who embedded Swan principles, including the introduction of a Swan door sign to alert staff and visitors, staff education focused on 'permission to care', and personalised care planning that prioritises individual wishes. This has included enabling residents to have favourite drinks, pets, or personal rituals at the end of life. Since rollout, the home has achieved 100% of end-of-life care wishes being met and 100% positive feedback from families, which has been rewarding for both staff and relatives.

Lewisham Council and Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust: Patient safe discharges

This initiative aimed to facilitate safe, efficient, and person-centred discharges, reduce length of stay, and improve patient flow across the health and social care system. Care home liaison lead Victor Awuja approached these aims by closing up communication gaps across services, enhancing cross-organisational collaboration, improving staff awareness and knowledge of care home capabilities, and introducing consistent discharge processes and governance structures. This included implementing a ward education programme to increase staff understanding of the differences between hospital and care home environments, and ongoing training sessions for care home staff on discharge procedures and support services available post-discharge.

St Martins Care: Development of social care nursing career pathway

Nurse recruitment in adult social care is challenging and St Martins wanted to find a solution that was proactive and forward thinking, and that enabled the development of clinical services and supported workforce development. It wanted to utilise the apprenticeship framework but also wanted to maximise opportunities for its workforce that did not solely focus on the registered nurse degree pathway. Accessing the registered nursing associate programme provided this solution. It secured levy transfers for placements, enabling it to support more student nursing associate opportunities. This has resulted in five qualified registered nursing associates and two student nursing associates on the programme. It is also now supporting one registered nursing associate to undertake the registered nursing degree at Teesside University.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Technology and Data in Nursing

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust: The Comfort Tracker

The Comfort Tracker is a digital remote-monitoring initiative designed to improve the care, comfort and experience of patients in the final 12 months of life, support carers and reduce clinician moral distress. Delivered through a virtual health platform, it enables patients or carers to complete a simple symptom and wellbeing questionnaire from home at agreed intervals. Responses are reviewed via a clinical dashboard by community nursing teams, triggering proactive, timely clinical input when deterioration is identified. It has demonstrated significant benefits, including improved timeliness of care, enhanced patient reassurance, stronger relationships between clinicians and families, and fewer unnecessary visits and admissions.



Finalists

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Innovating patient monitoring to enhance recognition and response to acute deterioration

Variation in observation and escalation led to delays in recognition and treatment of acutely unwell patients. In response, the Recognition and Escalation of Deteriorating Patients initiative was launched by the critical care outreach nursing team. Interventions included structured observation rounds and a real-time digital deteriorating patient dashboard.

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Learning disability dashboard

The learning disability dashboard initiative was developed to address a gap in the visibility, consistency and use of data relating to patients with a learning disability. A clinically driven, data-informed dashboard was developed, which was aligned to key quality, safety and experience metrics for patients with a learning disability, resulting in improved visibility of this vulnerable cohort.

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust: Finding signals among noise

The trust prioritised the development of digital tools for monitoring the quality and safety of maternity services. Dashboards tailored to maternity-specific quality and performance indicators were created, along with patient-tracker boards. They provide real-time tracking of metrics including antenatal screening results and timeliness of care in triage.

Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance: Revolutionising communication skills training for nurses

Across Greater Manchester, cancer nursing teams identified that traditional face-to-face communication training was no longer sufficient, accessible or sustainable. In response, senior nursing education leaders and clinical nurse specialists developed an artificial intelligence-enabled communication skills package to recreate complex, emotionally challenging cancer conversations.

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust: Introduction of red flags and professional judgment in district nursing

Measuring care not done in the community is more challenging than on wards. The trust has introduced routine daily reporting of red-flag indicators through its digital SafeCare system to measure where patient safety is being compromised, staff wellbeing affected and additional support is required.

Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Digitally augmented enhanced recovery after surgery pathway

Traditionally post-operative care is reliant on in-person follow-ups, creating bottlenecks, inefficiencies and patient anxiety. Technology offers a solution to these issues. The Post Op App bridges the communication gap between patients and general and orthopaedic surgical teams, providing real-time support and monitoring.

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust: CalciTrack

Within fracture liaison services and bone health clinics, calcium assessment has historically been inconsistent. Elizabeth Nassuna developed CalciTrack – a digital calcium-intake calculator, which captures dietary intake across common food groups, estimates daily intake and generates personal feedback against recommended thresholds, supporting targeted counselling during consultations.

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust: Data-Driven Triage – Leveraging technology to revolutionise the inflammatory bowel disease advice line

The inflammatory bowel disease service had an overloaded advice line that left urgent patients waiting for intervention. Hazel Morris led a digital transformation initiative to boost patient safety, identify high-risk patients, enhance patient experience and restore staff morale.

NHS England (South East): A knitting pattern for nursing placements – using data to optimise practice learning opportunities

Decisions about placement numbers have often relied on historic allocations and fragmented data. Juliet Borwell has led the development of a data-enabled approach to placement planning, creating system-level visibility of placement demand, capacity and utilisation. Her forecasting method, known as 'knitting patterns', uses datasets to predict demand across the academic year.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Sustainability in Nursing and Midwifery



South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust: Shared wound care – delivering sustainable, low-carbon wound management

This nurse-led initiative aimed to address the environmental impact of community wound management. Ayesha Claire Marshall led the development, implementation and evaluation of the Shared Wound Care model, where selected patients safely participated in their own wound care. The model was implemented across community services in the UK and Ireland. Outcomes were significant, with 97% of patients successfully adapting to shared wound care. Nurse visit frequency reduced by 59%, rising to 72% for longer-wear dressings. This resulted in large reductions in travel, saving over 200 hours and nearly 1,000 miles of travel per week, alongside reduced use of consumables and clinical time.

Finalists

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust: The Eco Bed-Space

Two senior critical care nurses, Jennifer Moon and Charlotte Blanchard, set up the Eco Bed-Space and Eco Med-Space initiatives to pioneer sustainability-driven processes. They aimed to reduce single-use items via multi-drug giving sets and a 'gloves are off' campaign, promote recycling and switch from intravenous to enteral medication routes.

King's College London: Clinical Skills Sustainability project

The project aimed to reduce the carbon footprint of clinical skills teaching by engaging staff and students to identify opportunities for waste reduction and more sustainable practices. It has resulted in more recycling of paper, proportionate personal protective equipment use, and increased awareness of healthcare's environmental impact.

Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Washable incontinence products

Reliance on single-use disposable pads created large volumes of non-recyclable waste, high carbon emissions, rising costs and, for many patients, reduced dignity. The bladder and bowel service piloted reusable, washable continence products, diverting 468 pads from landfill daily.

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Washables and Sustainability Project

Patients at the continence service who were prescribed containment products were invited to discuss using a washable product instead of a disposable. To help, the team developed a continence assessment tool. As a result, 262,000 pads a year are no longer going to landfill.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and Centre for Sustainable Healthcare: The Green Nursing Challenge: Comprehensive insulin reviews and the use of continuous blood glucose monitoring

The district nursing service supports type 2 diabetes patients with insulin injections. The team established a review process using glucose monitoring to assess and optimise insulin regimens. They aimed to boost care while reducing environmental impact. The project was successful with annual environmental savings equivalent to driving 20,000 miles in a car.

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust: Addressing unnecessary linen use

A year-long project was launched by senior infection prevention and control nurse Emma Lewis to cut inappropriate linen use by 30% on an older adult mental health dementia ward. It achieved a sustained reduction in linen use, carbon emissions, plastic waste and cost.

Nuffield Health: Safe, sustainable theatre ventilation

This project aimed to assess whether theatre ventilation could be safely switched off out of hours. The pilot delivered reductions in energy use and carbon emissions. Importantly, surveillance demonstrated a decrease in surgical site infections, providing assurance on patient safety.

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust: Bathroom First – Preventing deconditioning and protecting our planet

Bathroom First is a nurse-led sustainability and quality improvement initiative that challenged the routine use of single-use pulp wash bowls for personal care in adult inpatient wards. It achieved an average 38% reduction in 4L pulp wash bowl use within six months, equating to measurable carbon reduction.

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Centre for Sustainable Healthcare: The Green Nursing Challenge: Combined multi-disciplinary pregnancy and inflammatory bowel disease clinic

This initiative saw gastroenterology and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) nurse reviews embedded into a new joint clinic. This resulted in improved IBD control, fewer pregnancy-related complications, and reduced inpatient admissions. Healthcare emissions were also minimised.

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust: Promoting person-centred care with dignity focused on greener nursing

This nurse-led initiative addressed routine reliance on continence pads for older people. Having exposed overuse of products across wards, the team ensured product selection met patient needs and encouraged patient mobility, resulting in a 37% cut in carbon emissions.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Infection Prevention and Control

Supported by

IPS Infection Prevention Society

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust: A–Z app

Frontline ambulance clinicians operate in fast-paced, unpredictable environments where rapid decision-making is critical. However, accessing clear, relevant infection prevention and control (IPC) guidance at the point of care remains a challenge. The trust developed a digital, point-of-care IPC resource designed specifically for ambulance clinicians. The tool takes the form of an interactive A–Z of infections, providing rapid access to key information including required personal protective equipment, decontamination processes and waste management. The platform is designed for use on trust-issued iPads and mobile devices, enabling one-click access alongside electronic patient care records. Its strength lies in its simplicity, accessibility and responsiveness.



Finalists

HCA Healthcare: Safer lines, stronger care – reducing catheter-related bloodstream infections for parenteral nutrition patients

Catheter-related bloodstream infections pose a risk to patients receiving parenteral nutrition (PN). Noemie Madrid led the development of a PN competency pathway for all nurses administering or disconnecting PN. This included education, supervised practical training, competency assessment and support.

GAMA Healthcare: Reaching the unreachable – transforming infection prevention education through micro-learning

GAMA developed iQ, a nurse-led digital micro-learning platform designed to provide accessible infection prevention and control education that could complement face-to-face teaching. It includes short, practical sessions delivered by clinical experts.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust: Improving oral health

This nurse-led initiative aimed to address gaps in oral health care across community and mental health wards. Key interventions included introducing oral health documentation into electronic patient records, and developing an oral health risk assessment and care plan.

St John and St Elizabeth Hospital: Sepsis Ambassador Quality Improvement Project

The initiative addressed inconsistent sepsis recognition, variable compliance with screening and escalation delays in a private hospital ward. Infection prevention and control (IPC) nurse manager Norman Lobino Jr introduced a designated nurse responsible for ensuring completion of the screening tool and pathway adherence.

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Transforming infection prevention to reduce *Clostridioides difficile* infections

The trust identified prevention of *C difficile* infection as a key priority. It developed a nurse-led improvement programme focused on environmental hygiene, antimicrobial stewardship, prompt isolation, education, behavioural change and multidisciplinary working. The programme saw rates fall from 39.2 to 33.3 infections per 100,000 bed days.

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Reducing healthcare-associated infections through implementation of a water-free patient washing protocol in critical care

The quality improvement project aimed to address the high rate of healthcare-associated infections in a critical care unit linked to inconsistent patient washing methods and risks linked to water use. The main action was instilling a standardised waterless patient washing method.

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Enhancing cleaning standards to reduce *Clostridioides difficile* cases

A quality improvement initiative was launched after a *C difficile* outbreak on an acute medical ward linked to failures in clinical equipment cleaning. Key changes included appointing clinical support worker coordinators, monitoring of high-risk equipment, monthly spot checks and peer-review audits.

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust: Improvements to reduce the number of invasive group A streptococcal infections in the community

A rise in invasive group A streptococcal infections was seen among leg ulcer patients. In response, high-risk patients were identified through clinical record alerts. Cleaning practices were strengthened and wound care practices were also improved by introducing an evidence-based cleansing method.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn NHS Foundation Trust: Swarm

IPC nurses wanted to change how they investigated infections to better reflect a learning-focused, systems-based approach. As a result, they introduced 'swarming', where an IPC group attends a ward area and hold real-time discussions with staff, focusing on understanding the factors that contributed to the infection.

Velindre University NHS Trust: Escape Room – Surviving the Zombie Blood Virus

The IPC nursing team found traditional training conveyed essential knowledge but did not consistently translate into confident, reliable practice. So they designed Surviving the Zombie Blood Virus – an interactive escape room that translates IPC principles into practical decision-making under time pressure.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Care of Older People



DHU Healthcare: Community Virtual Ward

This community-based virtual ward aims to care for patients, including fallers, at home via a remote monitoring platform as an alternative to hospital. But patients who, along with falling, had experienced a long lie and/or had sustained a head injury and were taking an anticoagulant, still previously needed hospital. The team, therefore, developed a pathway to enable management of these patients in their own homes. They work closely with the ambulance service and local fall teams to quickly assess, treat and manage this cohort. The team has seen more than 700 patients in the first 12 months and conveyed 7.7% into secondary care.

Finalists

Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust: Reducing falls in older persons inpatient wards

The trust aimed to address the high rate of falls among older adult inpatients with complex mental and physical health needs. To address this, it implemented a quality improvement project, which tested Interventions including weekly falls huddles, medication reviews, and environment modifications. The initiative achieved a 6.5% cut in falls.

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Delivering harm-free care in the discharge-ready unit

A discharge-ready unit has been set up at two of the trust's hospitals to address delays in discharge for older adults. The nurse-led model focuses on early identification and transfer of patients into a safe, therapeutic environment, supporting them to regain independence through mobility and social engagement.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust: The impact of proactive care on independent living residents

The team identified some of its urgent community response and hospital-at-home demand came from independent living facilities. They completed a resident assessment, including medication and needs discussion, and followed up with assessments at three, six, nine and 12 months. They then measured unplanned healthcare access and compared it with the 12 months before. They calculated a 75% reduction, saving £7,035 in 12 months.

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust: Introduction of pathways in older people community mental health team

Harriet Nabuyondo-Mubiru led a transformation in older people's community mental health care by introducing structured clinical pathways and adapting structured clinical management (SCM). Her team implemented SCM as well as redesigning referral pathways, improving triage, access times and intervention matching.

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust: Promoting mobility through person-centred continence care

The initiative focused on preserving mobility, promoting dignity, supporting rehabilitation and reducing avoidable dependency among older patients. A nurse-led team redesigned continence care by moving away from being pad-focused and ensuring only the right approach and product for the right patient at the right time.

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust: Improving sleep to reduce falls and length of stay on a frailty ward

The trust aimed to cut falls and support shorter admissions on its short-stay frailty ward by improving sleep. A structured sleep-promotion programme was co-designed with staff and patients. Interventions included noise reduction, lighting optimisation, and rationalisation of overnight observations. Sleep quality was measured using daily questionnaires, falls monitoring and length of stay.

NeuroResponse: Personalised UTI digital care pathway

Urinary tract infection is the most diagnosed infection in care homes, and 20% of admissions among dementia patients are due to avoidable causes. Bernadette Porter set up NeuroResponse to co-design care pathways for managing UTIs. A six-month pilot showed positive results for 115 residents with dementia or Parkinson's disease.

Locala Health and Wellbeing: Falls assessment and response tool

This initiative was developed in response to a serious incident where a care home resident experienced harm after being left on the floor after a fall. It revealed an evidence-based method was lacking to assess when to move or escalate residents for support after a fall. To address this, partners in the Kirklees Health and Care system designed the Falls Assessment and Response Tool with clinical questions and red flags to trigger escalation. Staff report better resident experience.

Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust: Quality improvement of the memory assessment service

The service faced challenges in meeting the monthly key performance indicator (KPI) for referral to assessment within 0–6 weeks. A quality improvement review was carried out. It identified waste areas and enacted 26 improvements, while also embedding a 'one-stop' clinic option, giving more patient choice. The reforms led to full service compliance and month-on-month growth in KPI performance.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Children's Services

Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust: Core Needs

The Core Needs early intervention pathway was developed to address a critical gap in neurodevelopmental support for young people in Hull and East Riding. The trust aimed to create a safe, proportionate, needs-led alternative that provided timely support before challenges intensified. It introduced a new model that places clinicians directly into secondary schools to deliver a single, holistic appointment, which focuses on functional needs rather than diagnostic criteria and results in a personalised support plan that young people, families and schools can implement immediately. Young people report feeling understood and supported sooner; schools describe the service as invaluable; and inappropriate referrals into specialist teams have reduced.



Finalists

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust: Implementing the Kaiser Permanente early onset sepsis risk calculator

Advanced neonatal nurse practitioner Laura Govender led the implementation of the Kaiser Permanente early onset sepsis risk calculator at St Helier Hospital to improve the management of at-risk babies. The initiative has transformed care by improving patient experience.

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust: Improving patient safety and experience in prolonged jaundice

Senior sister Katherine Hogan led the development of a nurse-led prolonged jaundice service to improve access, reduce delays, and deliver a more efficient and family centred pathway for babies requiring assessment.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust: Children's hospital-at-home service

The children's hospital-at-home service was established for children with acute medical conditions to receive safe, effective care closer to home. The initiative sought to expand acute interventions into the community. It has improved patient experiences, reduced admissions and aided staff development.

Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board: Positive Directions – Trauma-informed vanguard project

Clinical consultant Lyn Ranson shaped the trauma-informed vanguard initiative to support families in crisis and complex circumstances across health, education, social care and the voluntary sector. To tackle a fragmented system, she developed an integrated model bringing together occupational therapy, education, police and other partners.

HCA Healthcare: Paediatric urology bladder and bowel service

The nurse-led bladder and bowel service at the Portland Hospital was developed to address fragmented care for children with bladder and bowel dysfunction. The urology lead nurse designed a model focused on early intervention, holistic bladder and bowel assessment, behavioural management, pelvic floor rehabilitation and family education.

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust: Delivering compassionate care to the deceased child or young person

A multi-agency project group, led by the head of nursing, met over nine months to drive high-quality practice in the care of deceased children. The project led to the development of action cards, a unified children and young people bereavement guideline and a regional memorandum of understanding.

National Neonatal Surgical Interest Group: Education and best practice standards for neonatal nurses nationally

The National Neonatal Surgical Interest Group is a voluntary, innovative team of nurses and allied health professionals committed to advancing neonatal surgical care. The group has co-produced, neonatal surgical best practice standards and frameworks, promoting neonatal surgical patients at a national level.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Catching our Breath – Making national recommendations breathe for safer children's respiratory care

National asthma reviews served as a call to action to consider potential ways forward for managing asthma. A specialist nurse-led initiative was developed to align day-to-day practice with national recommendations, and address inconsistencies in care.

Croydon Health Services NHS Trust: Tulip – Paediatric neurodisability nursing service

The special school nursing team identified a rise in the acuity and complexity of children and young people with disabilities. Five specialist nurse-led pathways, under the umbrella of Tulip – paediatric neurodisability nursing service, were created. The nurse key-worker model has proved highly effective.

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust: High-risk nasogastric tube feeding with pH greater than 5.5 in the community

Community children's nurses could not be assured that safe nasogastric feeding was taking place due to high pH readings. A multidisciplinary risk management tool was created to be transparent with parents regarding high risk and identify key mitigations to facilitate safer feeding.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Midwife of the Year



Sabrina Fogg: Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust

Sabrina Fogg has been the trust's public health midwife for the past two years, having previously been an enhanced midwife in community services, where she worked with vulnerable women and families in areas of significant deprivation. This background has equipped her with exceptional insight and credibility regarding the real needs of the community. She is a highly visible and inspirational role model, consistently influencing and motivating staff, and works collaboratively across professional boundaries, building productive partnerships to ensure joined-up, equitable care for women and families. She exemplifies the values of public health midwifery and consistently goes above and beyond her role to improve outcomes.

Finalists

Sara Balmforth: Forget Me Not Children's Hospice

Sara Balmforth has transformed perinatal palliative care within pregnancy by creating a compassionate, integrated model where previously care was fragmented, poorly understood and often absent. As the first midwife in Europe employed by a children's hospice, she has pioneered a pathway that ensures families facing life-shortening diagnoses receive consistent, specialist support from diagnosis through birth, death and beyond. The impact of this work is evidenced by a greater than 500% increase in antenatal referrals and a 1,300% increase in bereaved referrals. This model now underpins a nationally recognised perinatal pathway.

Jaye Fish: NHS Humber Health Partnership

Jaye Fish is an outstanding diabetes specialist lead midwife whose impact has been transformative for both patients and colleagues. She has developed and implemented a robust and much-needed service for women with type 1 and type 2 diabetes, as well as those diagnosed with gestational diabetes during pregnancy. This has improved the quality, consistency and accessibility of care. What truly sets her apart though is her unwavering commitment to person-centred care. She goes far beyond the expectations of her role to ensure every woman receives individualised support. In a community characterised by health inequalities and high levels of deprivation, she is delivering a better future.

Siobhan Jarzabek: Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Siobhan Jarzabek hopes to contribute to safer maternity services both locally and beyond. She is a practising NHS midwife and clinical educator who identified a safety gap in maternity emergency care, and independently developed a solution alongside her clinical role. Obstetric and neonatal emergency records are often still paper-based or completed retrospectively within electronic systems that are not designed for use under pressure. ScribeMat is a stand-alone digital emergency scribing system designed using human-factors principles specifically for high-acuity maternity and neonatal care. The project is now supported through the Mid and South Essex Innovation Fellowship.

Emily Kent: Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Emily Kent has been an advocate for action to address the critical lack of employment opportunities for newly qualified midwives in 2025. She identified a growing and deeply concerning issue, with third-year midwives graduating into a workforce crisis where NHS trusts were unable to offer posts, leaving newly qualified midwives unemployed at a time when maternity services are under immense pressure. In response, she led a national petition calling for urgent action to protect newly qualified midwives and ensure safe workforce planning. The petition gained national media coverage, bringing widespread public attention to a problem previously under-recognised outside the profession.

Daniela Petrova: Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust

With over 25 years of clinical experience and more than six years in senior leadership, Daniela Petrova has delivered high-impact improvements in patient safety, service quality and staff experience across maternity services. As ward manager for the labour ward and maternity triage, she provides operational leadership, embedding a culture of safe escalation, timely clinical decision-making and compassionate, woman-centred care. A defining achievement has been her leadership of maternity triage transformation. By combining frontline insight with multidisciplinary collaboration and data-driven methodology, she led the turnaround of a service that now shows measurable improvement in triage assessment times.

Hayley Seale: HCA Healthcare

Hayley Seale manages an ever-increasing number of services within the outpatient setting of the Portland Hospital, consisting of 1,500 midwifery bookings per year, preassessments, antenatal appointments, maternity facility tours, postnatal clinic, infant feeding clinic and more. She is the driving force for the services she provides and is dedicated to improving care, while empowering and enabling her midwives to deliver exceptional care and an exceptional experience for women and families. Over a decade, she has championed increased safety provision for midwifery-led births, changes to staff working patterns to maximise continuity of care during labour and implemented new services such as postnatal and infant feeding clinics.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Nursing in Primary Care

Staffordshire Training Hub: General practice nurse foundation school

General practice nursing (GPN) faces long-standing workforce pressures, characterised by high attrition, inconsistent training and fragmented entry routes. The Staffordshire General Practice Nursing Foundation School provides a system-wide response to this challenge. Over four years, it has evolved into a fully integrated, nurse-led workforce model supporting the entire GPN career pathway. By standardising education, supervision and support, the model removes traditional barriers to entry and ensures a consistent, high-quality learning experience across all settings. The programme integrates pre-registration exposure, transition into practice and ongoing development. Together, these form a continuous, end-to-end workforce pipeline from student to experienced practitioner and leader.



Finalists

Bay Medical Group: Primary mental health team

Previously, 30–50% of GP appointments had a mental health factor, compounded by high levels of deprivation, health inequalities and strained mental health services. A nurse-led primary mental health team was set up to improve access to specialist mental health support.

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust: Testing without barriers – non-invasive STI screening

Many women arrive at HMP Bronzefield with undiagnosed sexually transmitted infections (STIs) but only 69% agree to vaginal swab screening. The team redesigned the model to use part of a urine sample for STI testing, removing invasive swabs and boosting uptake.

Court Street Medical Practice: Step up to step down the carbon footprint

This nurse-led initiative was developed to cut the carbon footprint linked to respiratory care while boosting outcomes. Jessica Carpenter implemented an intervention focused on staff education, holistic patient reviews, sustainable inhaler prescribing and ongoing audit cycles.

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust: Assessing lower-limb ulcer patients within two weeks

Angela Skillern led an initiative to ensure patients presenting with lower-limb ulcers, at James O'Riordan Practice, received a full diagnostic assessment by a practice nurse within two weeks.

City and Hackney Integrated Primary Care: Primary care transformation project management office programme – Springfield Park Primary Care Network

This nurse-led programme was created to rebuild the primary care nursing workforce across seven London boroughs. It includes a training scheme, preceptorship support, leadership skills and apprenticeship pathways.

City and Hackney Integrated Primary Care: Improving childhood immunisation uptake through community clinics

A nurse-led initiative was launched to tackle low uptake and repeated measles and pertussis outbreaks. Nurses designed a more flexible, family centred model that brought care closer to communities, and included Sunday and weekday clinics, and targeted outreach.

Old Fire Station Surgery and Wessex Cancer Alliance: Cervical screening for people with learning disabilities – learning resources for sample takers

Wessex Cancer Alliance has reconvened a nurse-led group to review training materials to assist cervical sample takers to support people with a learning disability to access cervical screening.

Gender Plus: Registered independent gender hormone clinic for those 16 years and over

Paul Carruthers established the Gender Plus Hormone Clinic in response to gaps in access to timely, evidence-based gender-affirming care. It provides holistic, patient-centred care, including comprehensive assessments, hormone therapy and psychosocial support.

Edge Hill University and Cheshire and Merseyside Training Hub: Transforming primary care education through co-production, inclusion and student-led innovation

This nurse-led initiative brought together student nursing associates, primary care clinicians, educators and people with lived experience to co-produce a practice-focused curriculum that reflects the realities of current primary care.

Moreton & Meols and Wallasey Wellbeing Primary Care Network: Diabetes integrated assessment and support team model

There was a gap in specialist diabetes support across Wirral. Claire Culshaw developed the diabetes integrated assessment and support team (DIAST) to embed expertise in primary care. She now leads a team of 10 DIAST nurses, trained in advanced diabetes management.

University of Bedfordshire: Integrating primary care experience into simulated practice learning for pre-registration nurses

This initiative enabled a large cohort of students to gain an understanding of nursing in general practice. It included a two-day workshop covering the fundamentals of primary care and a simulated practice learning experience.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Nursing in the Community



Airedale NHS Foundation Trust, University of Bradford and West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board: Community nursing student-supported service placement

The initiative – by a trust, university and integrated care board – responded to increasing demand for community-based care, workforce challenges and an imbalance in placement opportunities favouring hospital settings. A pilot embedded 12 pre-registration nursing students into a community nursing team using an innovative 4:1 student-to-supervisor model, creating a student-supported service that enhanced care, boosted service capacity, increased placement capacity and provided a high-quality learning experience. The pilot delivered over 4,200 placement hours, increased service capacity of the community nurse supervisor by up to 50% and influenced students' intentions to pursue community roles.

Finalists

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust: Single Point of Access – Frailty hospital at home
The Single Point of Access (SPA) was developed as a nurse-led initiative to simplify referral pathways by providing one centralised access point into community services. SPA enables patients to be rapidly assessed, ensuring timely, appropriate interventions in the community.

DHU Healthcare: Northamptonshire palliative and end-of-life care
DHU Healthcare has launched a new countywide specialist palliative and end-of-life care service across Northamptonshire, bringing together previously separate teams into one coordinated, nurse-led model delivering care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust: Reducing moderate harm pressure ulcers
Melissa James led an initiative to reduce moderate harm pressure ulcers developing under the care of her district nursing team. It focused on proactive neighbourhood nursing, prevention before cure and improving patient safety through system-wide learning and practical frontline solutions.

Hartlepool and Stockton Health: Primary care outreach team
Linda Antunes identified a gap in access to care for patients with long-term wounds who were unable to engage with traditional services, for example, those experiencing homelessness. Her team developed an outreach service that takes care directly to places where they feel safe such as hostels.

Institute of Health Visiting: Community nursing innovation in perinatal and family mental health
Fathers' perinatal mental health has historically been under-recognised within community health. This nurse-led initiative addressed this gap by translating clinical research into practice through Invisible, an evidence-based, therapeutic film intervention.

IQVIA: Multiple sclerosis patient support programme
Multiple sclerosis patients are at high risk of treatment non-adherence. This nurse-led community programme provides structured, personalised adherence support during the first 12 months of treatment. Nurses identify barriers to adherence, provide education and support injection technique.

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust: AI digital wound care in district nursing
The trust has introduced an artificial intelligence wound care solution across district nursing, tissue viability, vascular nursing and podiatry, to improve patient care and collaboration across teams. Scans are taken in the person's home and instantly uploaded to their electronic patient record, enabling virtual specialist oversight and support in real time.

Sirona Care and Health: Reducing health inequalities in community stroke prevention
The integrated community stroke service provides needs-led rehabilitation for people after stroke, which is delivered by six stroke specialist nurses. They started an initiative where electronic blood pressure machines were loaned to patients who could then submit regular recordings. This ensured equal access for people unable to fund their own devices as well as reducing the demand on staff.

St Giles Hospice: RUN-PC triage tool
The hospice's community palliative care team was under pressure, with growing referrals and delays. The community team adopted an evidence-based triage tool. Clinical staff answer seven questions covering physical suffering, psychological distress, caregiver burden, communication needs and urgency of need to generate a numerical score. This directs a recommended response time, from crisis through to routine, while retaining individual clinical judgement.

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust: High-risk nasogastric tube feeding with pH greater than 5.5 in the community
Community children's nurses were regularly presented with children and young people where they could not be assured of safe nasogastric feeding due to high pH readings. A multidisciplinary risk management tool was created to facilitate safer, effective feeding in community settings.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Learning Disabilities Nursing

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust: Building the registered nurse for learning disabilities workforce – T-level student placement initiative

Learning disability nursing faces an acute workforce crisis, with a 42% decline in registered nurses and reduced university programmes creating regional 'nursing deserts'. The Future-Ready T-Level Placement Programme was developed as a nurse-led initiative to address this challenge. Five healthcare T-level students from two colleges undertook rotational placements across specialist services including community learning disability teams, key worker and intensive support teams. Students were interviewed by a consultant nurse and an expert-by-experience, and assigned a mentor, structured induction, supervision and peer reflection sessions. Outcomes were highly positive.



Finalists

Achieve Together: Embedding co-production at the heart of adult social care

Michael Fullerton inspires and leads the development of two strong groups – Unity and Campaign 4 Change – to ensure the voices of people with learning disabilities are prominent in influencing adult social care, including over specialist support strategies and best practice and policy.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board: Psychological therapies and wellbeing team

Adults with learning disabilities across North Wales have historically experienced significant barriers to accessing mainstream psychological therapies. A dedicated psychological therapies team, including nurses, has now been established to deliver dialectical behaviour therapy skills groups, increasing access to skills that support emotional regulation, distress tolerance and relationships.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board: Using Positive Behaviour Support to understand and reinterpret behaviours considered to be a significant risk

This nurse-led initiative focused on holistic assessment, therapeutic intervention and long-term planning to support a young man with learning disabilities through a critical transition into adulthood. A specialist learning disability nurse provided strong clinical and ethical leadership, ensuring practice was grounded in person-centred values.

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust: Nurse-led community engagement to reduce health inequalities

The respite and day service cares for adults with learning disabilities and complex health needs. The team wanted to increase engagement with families and carers to create a sense of community. They started off small with a quarterly newsletter but now have a full calendar of well-attended annual events and coffee mornings.

Egalité Care: Equal lives – a nurse-led model transforming care for adults with learning disabilities

Debbie Clark established Egalité Care in response to over-reliance on long-stay hospital placements or residential care for adults with learning disabilities. She developed a nurse-led domiciliary care model focused on enabling people to live independently in small, supported living environments. Integrating holistic oversight with daily support was key.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Wessex Cancer Alliance: Cervical screening for people with learning disabilities – learning resources

Wessex Cancer Alliance has reconvened a nurse-led group to review training materials designed to assist cervical sample takers to support people with a learning disability to access cervical cancer screening. Refreshed resources and a toolkit have been designed as an active learning pack.

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust: Supporting families who manage risky behaviours at home

Children with learning disabilities whose behaviours pose a risk to themselves or others are at increased likelihood of school exclusion, family breakdown and crisis responses. Nurses designed, led and evaluated a community-based parent support programme, co-produced with families and partners.

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust: Evaluating the 'Let's Talk Boobs' education workshops

This project delivered 13 workshops to people with learning disabilities in Greater Manchester. The workshops covered breast health and self-examination, what is cancer, the importance of breast screening and the breast screening journey. They used accessible language, demonstrations, bespoke interactive activities and games, such as Boobie Bingo.

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust: Transformation of the adult learning disabilities services

John Savage has begun transforming the trust's adult learning disability services, redesigning and co-creating a service that is fit for purpose. He has worked across the health and social care system to provide high-quality, personalised care. This has included the successful redesign of respite services, which did not meet the needs of patients or their families.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Nursing in Mental Health



Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust: Efficient perinatal mental health – a nurse prescriber model

The perinatal mental health team (PMHT) identified delays and inefficiencies in how adults were allocated to medical or non-medical prescriber (NMP) appointments. Audit showed heavy dependence on medics, long waits for medical appointments, inconsistent use of NMPs, inequity between localities, and high 'did not attend' rates. The team introduced dedicated NMP clinics, redesigned multidisciplinary referral pathways to make NMP allocation the standard consideration, and strengthened NMP governance and supervision. NMPs received enhanced consultant supervision every six weeks; and band 6 nurses were supported to progress to band 7 to expand prescribing capacity. A re-audit demonstrated a positive shift towards holistic practice.

Finalists

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust: Communicating safely – post-incident debrief, providing a voice for distress

This initiative addressed a gap between post-restraint debrief best practice and what happens in services. Nurses created a simple conversation model, drawing on non-violent communication principles and guidance on post-incident reviews.

Bay Medical Group: Primary mental health team

Previously, 30–50% of GP appointments had a mental health factor, compounded by high levels of deprivation, health inequalities and strained mental health services. A nurse-led primary mental health team was set up to improve access to specialist mental health support.

Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust: Core Needs

Young people with neurodevelopmental needs were waiting too long for help. Craig Russo designed an early intervention model placing nurses in schools. Each person gets one holistic assessment followed by a plan and review.

Institute of Health Visiting: Invisible – Transforming paternal mental health through nurse-led innovation

The Invisible film initiative was developed to address the mental health needs of fathers during the perinatal period. Designed for health visitors and nurses, it has been widely embedded into training, supervision and multidisciplinary team development in perinatal services.

Suffolk GP Federation: ADHD monitoring and prescribing service

Changes to shared care agreements posed a risk to managing attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) patients. The federation created a service with its local mental health care providers, enabling safe prescribing and monitoring of ADHD medication to continue.

Kent and Medway Mental Health NHS Trust: Start-aFresh cognitive behavioural therapy

This nurse-led initiative targeted a gap in psychological treatment for people who self-harm. It adapted three psychological therapies, including cognitive behavioural therapy, so they could be delivered by liaison mental health staff after training.

Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust: Introduction of nurse-led clinics in the community

Perinatal services are not always suited to women with moderate acuity needs. As a result, patients assessed as having moderate perinatal mental health needs are now offered care via nurse-led clinics, rather than intensive home-based care.

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust: Detecting kidney disease in severe mental illness – a point-of-care creatinine pilot

Shamilah Nabyangwa launched a project to improve the early identification of chronic kidney disease in mental health service users through point-of-care creatinine testing and staff training.

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust: Turning risk into visible action – patient safety improvement in nurse-led clinics in adult community mental health services

This initiative transformed patient safety across 11 adult community mental health depot, long-acting injectable and clozapine clinics. The trust introduced electronic patient journey boards to give real-time visibility of patient safety risks.

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust: From Observation to Intervention: Transformation of enhanced care in mental health

This programme transformed a passive, observation-based model into a proactive approach centred on continuous therapeutic engagement. An enhanced care model was introduced, supporting safe escalation and de-escalation.

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust: Improving access to ADHD treatment to reduce comorbid mental health needs

This project addresses delays in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder assessment. A nurse-led model was launched to boost access, safety and experience. Key was setting up satellite clinics to aid capacity.

SPONSOR

Cygnet

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Ingrid Fuchs Cancer Nursing Award

South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust: Nothing About Us Without Us: Co-producing a new model of care for people living with cancer



People living with treatable, but not curable (TBNC) cancer often occupy an overlooked space within cancer services. Two-thirds of the trust's patients with TBNC live in the most deprived deciles, with many also facing low health literacy, cultural barriers, social isolation and financial insecurity. Analysis showed that 46% of people with TBNC attended emergency care within 12 months of diagnosis and 79% were admitted. The trust established the Living with Cancer initiative to respond to this inequity through compassionate, nurse-led and inclusive leadership. Early outcomes included a robust baseline of TBNC need, improved staff understanding and clearer communication at key transition points.

Finalists

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust: Cancer self-referrals

To improve early detection of cancer, the trust designed self-referral pathways aimed at giving patients faster access to diagnostics. It offers a suite of self-referral pathways for post-menopausal bleeding, colorectal and breast symptoms.

Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust: Children's books

Specialist breast care nurses Emily Turnbull and Rachel Lockerbie have written a unique series of children's books for breast cancer patients to give to their children. Each of the three books explains a different type of treatment: surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy.

Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Humanising Data – a nurse-led transformation of acute oncology data

Variation and gaps in data quality across cancer pathways limited understanding of patient need, outcomes and service performance. In response, the nurse-led Humanising Data initiative was launched to improve the accuracy, completeness and relevance of acute oncology data.

Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust: Breast cancer supported self-management pathway

The supported self-management pathway service was set up to support patients after breast cancer treatment. It includes a direct-access phone line and email, introductory call, needs assessment and emotional wellbeing empowerment.

Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust: Acute oncology service – low suspicion metastatic spinal cord compression pathway

Demand for acute oncology (AO) services continues to grow. In response, the AO nursing team developed a low-suspicion metastatic spinal cord compression (MSCC) pathway, so patients with MSCC symptoms could bypass the emergency department and inpatient admission.

Macmillan Cancer Support: The Cancer Professionals Podcast

The Cancer Professionals Podcast was developed to increase the accessibility and reach of Macmillan's training and education offer. Episodes combine clinical expertise with lived experience.

The Christie NHS Foundation Trust: Reducing drain dwell times in malignant pleural effusion through an enhanced practice nurse role

Drain dwell times for patients with malignant pleural effusion were historically long. Two enhanced nurse practitioners were employed to focus on awareness and education around intercostal drain management, giving knowledge and advice to other clinicians.

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust: Optimising care and experience of patients diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer

An evaluation found just 55% of trust patients with metastatic prostate cancer had access to a specialist nurse. Via a partnership with a pharmaceutical company, two new specialist nurses were able to be recruited.

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust: At Home, Not in Hospital: An ACP-led virtual ward transforming acute oncology care

AO services face pressure from rising systemic anti-cancer therapy use and associated toxicities. To address this, the trust developed an advanced clinical practitioner-led virtual ward within an AO triage assessment unit, initially for low-risk febrile neutropenia.

United Lincolnshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust: Sleep in Cancer

NHS and charity partners have delivered a nurse-led initiative that is transforming how sleep health is understood for people living with and beyond cancer. Outcomes have included improved identification of sleep issues, increased staff confidence and measurable improvements in patient wellbeing.

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust: Faster diagnosis standard lung quality improvement – putting patients first

Lung diagnostics can be an anxious time for patients and their families, so this project aimed to improve the patient experience. Initiatives implemented include cross-site lung pathway meetings, a nurse-led haemoptysis clinic and follow-up phone calls, ensuring results are communicated clearly and promptly.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

The King's Award for Integrated Approaches to Care



King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Helping hands sensory blood test clinic

Children and young people with a learning disability and/or autism often experience distress when undergoing blood tests, frequently resulting in repeated failed attempts, use of restraint, delayed treatment, non-attendance and lasting psychological harm. In response, the paediatric learning disability and autism nursing service developed Helping Hands, a trauma-informed service to improve the experience of blood tests for children under 18 with additional needs. The service delivers personalised interventions including environmental adjustments, adaptive communication tools such as storyboards, play therapy and desensitisation visits. It also provides a clear referral pathway, enabling early identification of children with significant anxiety or trauma.

Finalists

Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust: Proactive Care Team

The team won funding to tackle health inequalities in central Bradford. The team provides timely access to 11 disciplines – including advanced practitioners, mental health nurses, and palliative care nurses – who work together to holistically address unmet needs, in a coordinated approach to reduce health inequalities.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust: Lipid Optimisation Programme

The programme is a radical approach to cardiovascular prevention. It uses a population health tool to identify eligible patients across Buckinghamshire. Over 4,400 patients have been reviewed so far at unmatched pace and scale. Senior research and innovation nurses lead the initiative, facilitating the patient journey.

University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Multiple sclerosis family planning and pregnancy clinic

The clinic was established to enable proactive, coordinated care for women with multiple sclerosis who wished to start or expand their families. The clinic set up a nurse-led pathway coordinating neurology and obstetric care.

East and North Hertfordshire Teaching NHS Trust: Carer Experience Service

The Carer Experience Service embeds unpaid carers as partners in care for patients with long-term conditions. It utilises a volunteer workforce that gives emotional reassurance, advocacy, navigation support and continuity between hospital and community care.

Barts Health NHS Trust: Shared responsibility, reduced visits – targeting paediatric emergency department frequent attendances

This initiative addressed a systemic failure where 351 children attended a paediatric emergency department (ED) more than five times annually. Tricia May-Parrott pioneered the family liaison nurse role to act as a 'system bridge' between the ED, regional integrated care board and local community services.

City St George's, University of London: Pregnancy and Parenting Circles: Transforming pregnancy and postnatal care through cross-sector collaboration

This midwife-led project developed an integrated group-based model of pregnancy and postnatal care called Pregnancy and Parenting Circles. It brings together midwives, health visitors and family support practitioners to deliver wraparound care to groups of women with similar due dates.

Moreton & Meols and Wallasey Wellbeing Primary Care Network: Diabetes integrated assessment and support team model

Across Wirral, there was a clear gap in specialist diabetes community support, leading to practice variation, delayed intervention and avoidable secondary care escalation. To address this, Claire Culshaw developed the DIAST (Diabetes Integrated Assessment and Support Team) model to embed specialist diabetes nursing expertise into primary care.

City and Hackney Integrated Primary Care: Integrated community clinics to improve childhood immunisation uptake – Springfield Park Primary Care Network

The network launched a nurse-led integrated immunisation initiative to tackle low uptake and repeated measles and pertussis outbreaks in North Hackney. Nurses designed a more flexible, family centred model that brought care closer to communities, and included Sunday and weekday clinics, and targeted outreach.

Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust: Integrated diabetes and advanced chronic kidney disease clinical and research programme

Patients with diabetes and advanced chronic kidney disease experience a large treatment burden, often attending fragmented hospital appointments across specialties. In response, Hellena Hailu Habte-Asres developed a nurse-led model that embeds diabetes management within kidney services, redesigning traditional outpatient pathways.

SPONSOR

Nuffield Health

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Dame Elizabeth Anionwu Award for Inclusivity in Nursing and Midwifery

Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust: Integrated diabetes and advanced chronic kidney disease clinical and research programme

Diabetes and chronic kidney disease disproportionately affect people from ethnic minority communities and those living in areas of socioeconomic deprivation, yet patients receiving haemodialysis are frequently excluded from diabetes technology pathways. To address inequalities, lead clinical academic nurse Hellena Hailu Habte-Asres developed a clinical research initiative focused on widening equitable access to continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) by embedding CGM into routine care through multidisciplinary collaboration, staff education and patient engagement. Evaluation showed CGM uptake increased from three to 59 patients, representing an 89% increase in access.



Finalists

Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust: Core Needs

This early intervention pathway was developed to address a critical gap in neurodevelopmental support for young people. The model sees clinicians delivering a holistic appointment, which focuses on functional needs and results in a personalised support plan, in schools.

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust: Inclusive Leadership Behaviour Programme

This programme was developed to address structural inequities within leadership. It adopts an explicitly anti-racist and behaviour-based approach to encourage leaders to take responsibility for how power, privilege and hierarchy shape workplace experiences.

Institute of Health Visiting: Invisible No More: Leading change in inclusive perinatal mental health care

Sharin Baldwin identified a gap in care for fathers' mental health during the perinatal period. She developed Invisible, a film to challenge bias, cut stigma, and support practitioners to recognise and respond to fathers' mental health needs.

Hartlepool and Stockton Health: Primary care outreach team

Linda Antunes identified a gap in access to care for patients with wounds who were unable to engage with traditional services, for example, those experiencing homelessness. Her team developed an outreach service that takes care to places where they feel safe, such as hostels.

King's College London and Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust: Comedy, samosas and nursing

This project addressed lower breast screening uptake and higher preventable mortality among South Asian women. Mary Tanay led development of an inclusive approach using humour to enable discussions about breast health.

Homerton Healthcare Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Parkinson's disease among the Afro-Caribbean community

This initiative addressed inequitable participation in Parkinson's clinical research, despite it being more common in some Black and Afro-Caribbean populations. A specialist Parkinson's clinical research nurse role was created to embed research within routine care.

James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: The Circus Project

Traditional research participation routes often create barriers for neurodivergent, migrant and informal worker communities. The trust partnered with Oak Circus Centre on workshops using non-verbal and arts-based approaches explaining what research is, what participation might involve and finding opportunities.

Lincolnshire Community and Hospitals NHS Group: Career progression in Black and minority ethnic nurses using targeted initiatives

The group implemented inclusivity initiatives to support career development for internationally educated nurses. Interventions included cultural integration sessions, career development workshops, and engagement through a staff network.

Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust: Embedding inclusion and equity to improve access, engagement and outcomes for children and families

Children and families within inclusion health groups experience some of the poorest health outcomes. In response, the trust created a specialist community public health nurse for inclusion to boost access, engagement and outcomes for underserved children and families.

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust: A multilingual approach to antenatal vaccination

This project addresses consistently low uptake of pertussis vaccine among non-English-speaking women and women seeking asylum. The team created a pregnancy journey map translated into the five most-commonly spoken languages among local women. The tool aids clearer communication.

NHS England: Choices College

Choices College supports routes into NHS employment for young people aged 16–24 with learning disabilities, autism or additional needs. Joan Pons Laplana co-designed a pathway, which includes personalised preparation, meaningful placement, and transition into employment or apprenticeships.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Ann Shuttleworth Rising Star Award



Nikola Szymanska: HC-One

Nikola Szymanska is an early career nurse who demonstrates the qualities of an emerging leader and is already making a meaningful contribution to the future of nursing. Working within a complex care home environment, she has already made a significant impact. Recognising recurring medication discrepancies, she led an initiative to strengthen resident safety using an electronic medication system. She also identified communication challenges between staff and residents. To address this issue, she designed practical communication flashcards that staff could carry in their pockets. Alongside her clinical work, she has played an active role in developing future nurses, mentoring students, delivering career insight talks and leading placement coordination in her care home setting.

Finalists

Rakshita Chauhan: St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Rakshita Chauhan noticed her colleagues arriving stressed and carrying tension into shifts that demanded everything from them. A qualified yoga practitioner, she offered free wellbeing sessions that grew to up to 70 colleagues for breathwork, yoga, visualisation and meditation in clinical governance. She has brought the same approach to patients.

Stephanie Craig: Queen's University Belfast

In less than five years since qualifying, Steph Craig has transformed services, inspired students and advocated nationally and internationally. She bridges the worlds of academia and practice in a way that is rare and impactful. Whether she's developing digital resources, mentoring students or designing public health games, her work is always person-centred and thoughtful.

Jenny Gilchrist: Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

Jenny Gilchrist shows exceptional leadership, innovation and impact as an early career nurse who has been registered for less than five years. She is the first and currently only children and young people's research nurse in her trust and leads the child and adolescent digital mental health research workstream. Her work reflects the best of nursing.

Zoe Hunt: Royal Centre of Defence Medicine

Zoe Hunt is an exceptional emerging nursing leader whose impact has been felt rapidly and positively since being promoted to sergeant. She has shown maturity beyond her time in rank, combining strong clinical credibility with thoughtful, people-centred leadership. She has supported military and NHS staff, managed key administrative tasks and backed clinical education.

Tarcia Joseph: City and Hackney Integrated Primary Care

Tarcia Joseph is an exceptional early career nurse whose journey into nursing reflects resilience, compassion and determination. She began as a receptionist, progressing through healthcare assistant and nursing associate roles before qualifying as a registered nurse. She then completed the specialist community nursing in general practice postgraduate programme.

Keannu M Arnoco: Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Inside less than five years in the NHS, Keannu Arnoco has been a passionate internationally educated nurse and educator, demonstrating continuous progression, leadership, innovation and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. His career has progressed from frontline roles to clinical skills facilitator, practice educator and now lead nurse for the clinical assistant workforce.

Emily Shuttleworth: Kingston and Richmond NHS Foundation Trust

Emily Shuttleworth has worked to develop a nurse-led hepatology service from scratch in her trust. This involved developing and maintaining a liver cancer surveillance pathway, by creating a tracker and virtual clinic to help improve patients' access to their results and engage them in the surveillance process. Since this has been implemented, the pathway has identified six new primary liver cancers.

Tim Walsh: West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Since being a student to becoming a children's nurse, Tim Walsh has shown natural leadership, wanting to improve the quality of his practice and the services in which he works. His caring nature ensures he delivers consistent compassionate care and demands it from colleagues. He has the creativity to innovate and redesign services to boost patient experience and outcomes.

Paul Wharton: Practice Plus Group

Paul Wharton makes an exceptional contribution, consistently acting as a role model, inspiring others, and serving as an exemplar of professional nursing values. Since qualifying in 2024, his work in a quality and governance-focused role has delivered measurable improvements in patient safety, quality assurance and organisational culture, significantly exceeding expectations for his experience.

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Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Nurse Leader of the Year

Sherwin Criseno: University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust



Endocrinology lead nurse/consultant nurse Sherwin Criseno has redefined what specialist nursing can deliver for patients, professionals and healthcare systems. He has transformed endocrine nursing from an under-recognised discipline into a nationally and internationally respected, evidence-driven and genuinely patient-centred area of practice, delivering demonstrable improvements in care quality, workforce capability and system leadership. In Birmingham, he leads the largest specialist endocrine nursing team in Europe, delivering highly complex, nurse-led care across multiple endocrine pathways. His leadership is distinguished by its grounding in patient partnership and research translation. In 2024, he became the first nurse to be appointed to the UK Society for Endocrinology's board of trustees.

Finalists

Nasra Ali Ahmed: HCA Healthcare

Paediatric complex surgical/urology and pain lead nurse Nasra Ali Ahmed has led transformational improvements in complex surgical services through compassionate leadership, innovation and a commitment to excellence in care. During a period of increasing demand, she has led service redesign across urology, plastics, neurosurgery, craniofacial and general surgery.

Michael Joel Apas: The London Clinic

Clinical practice educator Michael Joel Apas is an exceptional and transformational nurse leader who has delivered measurable improvements in patient safety, workforce experience and performance. As an internationally educated nurse, he has translated lived experience into culturally responsive education programmes, increasing OSCE pass rates from 40% to 67%.

Lynette Walker: HCA Healthcare

Intensive care unit clinical ward manager Lynette Walker empowers and advocates the continuous growth and development of her team. She has commissioned two intensive care units within two continents, which is rare for any leader. The rationale behind the success of this was the combination of 36 years of clinical expertise and a 'boots on the ground' approach.

Tracie Lewin-Taylor: Shooting Star Children's Hospices

Paediatric palliative care nurse consultant Tracie Lewin-Taylor is a compassionate, inspiring and innovative leader who provides strategic and clinical leadership. She is an expert in network and system development and delivery, supporting complex services and pathways to enable paediatric palliative care close to home.

Norman Lobino Jr: St John and St Elizabeth Hospital

Infection prevention and control nurse manager Norman Lobino Jr is an exceptional nurse leader who has shown measurable impact on patient safety, staff capability and service quality through the implementation of a 'sepsis ambassador' project in a private hospital. He designed a shift-based, nurse-led model that ensured a designated sepsis ambassador on every shift.

Nilam Patel: Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

Senior matron Nilam Patel consistently exemplifies outstanding clinical leadership, compassion and innovation while achieving measurable improvements in patient care and staff experience. Through her leadership, she has delivered sustained improvements in service quality, patient outcomes and team morale. She is approachable, decisive and forward-thinking.

Prajeesh Pulikkal Poulose: Care UK

Care and clinical services lead Prajeesh Pulikkal Poulose is a dedicated nurse leader with 14 years of experience in the UK's social care sector. In this role, he leads a team of clinical trainers who deliver all of Care UK's clinical training programmes. Having qualified as a nurse overseas and moved to the UK, he is a nurse role model, showing where passion and dedication can take your career.

Caterina Speight: Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust

Clinical services manager Caterina Speight is an exceptional nursing leader whose vision and determination have transformed care for people experiencing homelessness in Brighton. She was instrumental in setting up the homeless health inclusion team, a multidisciplinary service delivering proactive, community-based care to individuals who struggle to engage with traditional services.

Orsolya Beáta Szász: Maria Mallaband Care Group

Registered home manager Orsolya Beáta Szász is an inspirational nurse who leads with compassion, enthusiasm, empathy and dedication. She empowers her team to strive for excellence. Throughout her career, she has shown that no matter how far up the ladder she climbs no one should ever not get their 'hands dirty' and provide care to people of all levels.

Rebecca Worswick: Bolton Pulmonary Fibrosis Support Group

Sister and interstitial lung disease (ILD) specialist nurse Rebecca Worswick runs the new ILD/pulmonary fibrosis clinic at the Royal Bolton Hospital. She has worked tirelessly to make the new clinic come to fruition and was the perfect choice to lead it. She advances nursing, seeks ways to support staff and collaborates with all levels of healthcare providers.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Team of the Year



Barts Health NHS Trust: Adult critical care transfer

The ACCESS critical care transfer team was commissioned to address significant variation, delays and risk in transferring critically ill patients across London. Historically, transfers were often undertaken by non-specialist teams, leading to inconsistent standards, avoidable incidents and increased pressure on intensive care. The ACCESS service is fundamentally nurse-led, with transfer practitioners at the core of both clinical delivery and service development. Drawn from intensive care, emergency departments, and theatres across London, these experienced nurses work in small teams in unfamiliar and high-risk environments, requiring advanced clinical decision-making, adaptability, and autonomy. Transfer safety has improved, with no recorded serious incidents since implementation, and delays to specialist care have been reduced.

Finalists

Barts Health NHS Trust: Lost to Follow-Up project

The nursing team identified that high-risk patients requiring life-saving hepatocellular carcinoma surveillance were frequently 'lost to follow-up'. The team transitioned from a reactive model to a nurse-led proactive safety net, re-engaging with over 100 patients.

Institute of Health Visiting: Making fathers visible

A nurse-led, multidisciplinary team of health visitors, researchers, educators, filmmakers and third-sector partners developed Invisible, an evidence-based film to challenge bias, reduce stigma and support clinicians to better recognise fathers' perinatal mental health needs.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust: We're Going to the Zoo

Many critical care patients face fear, trauma and loss of independence, while their families endure anxiety and exhaustion. The trust created a rehabilitation programme featuring supported visits to Whipsnade Zoo, providing activity, social interaction, peer support and nature experiences.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board: Integrated autism service

The integrated autism service, delivered by a multidisciplinary team, was overwhelmed but committed. A clear improvement plan was co-produced and, within two years, assessment capacity increased from 3–6 assessments per month to 25–30 per month.

Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust: Maternity triage – Birmingham symptom-specific obstetric triage system

The trust's maternity triage improvement team showed outstanding teamwork, innovation and commitment to patient safety, by transforming maternity triage services through the implementation of the Birmingham symptom-specific obstetric triage system.

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust: Toward Zero Suicide

A multidisciplinary team leads suicide prevention and intervention efforts across Northern Ireland. It has developed a specialist suicide prevention care pathway, training, targets for minimising restrictive practice and cut post-discharge follow-up from seven days to within three.

Filipinos in Care: Project CHARM

Project CHARM was created to address the social care issue of nurses often being expected to step into leadership roles without a clear, structured route into management. It is a free, nurse-led leadership programme delivered over five months for aspiring registered managers in care homes.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust: Quality improvement team

Nurses identified care improvements but struggled to progress ideas. As a result, the quality improvement team set up improvement boards to provide a structured forum where teams present improvement work, review data, escalate challenges and get real-time support.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust: New team, real results – transforming outbreak prevention

The trust's infection prevention and control team is a newly formed resource across both hospital and community services. Following its introduction, outbreaks or periods of increased incidence fell by 42%, bed days lost by 84% and norovirus outbreaks by 76%.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Day 1 discharge programme following thoracic surgery

The trust's thoracic nursing and allied health professional team introduced a Day 1 Discharge Programme (D1DP) for patients following anatomical lung resection, improving personalised, patient-centred pathways and reducing unwarranted variation in care delivery.

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust: Embedding Martha's rule patient wellness questions through collaborative working

This initiative focused on embedding Martha's Rule into everyday ward practice through nurse-led collaborative working. Outcomes include improved patient engagement, earlier escalation of deterioration and positive feedback from patients and families.

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Nursing Times Awards 2026

Winner

Nurse of the Year

Susie Lagrata: University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Advanced headache nurse practitioner and lead nurse Susie Lagrata has spent more than 18 years dedicated to transforming headache care in a field that is often under-recognised despite its significant burden. She has pioneered multiple firsts in the UK and Europe, including the first nurse-led multiple cranial nerve block clinic and the first nurse-led Botox service for chronic migraine, models now widely adopted nationally and internationally. She also established a nurse-led neuromodulation service, including the UK's first remote deep-brain stimulation and occipital nerve stimulation programming pathway for headache. Under her leadership, the headache nursing team has grown from one nurse to nine, now the largest headache nursing team in the UK.

Finalists

Sian Francis: Swansea Bay University Health Board
Lacking consultant cover, advanced nurse practitioner Sian Francis cared for a patient who had sustained a limb-threatening fracture with vascular injury. She converted the struts to a different type, designed the correction programme and taught the patient to make the daily adjustments. The result was perfect and the product of four years of self-funded specialist learning.

Nicola Dunlop: Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Adnexal nurse consultant Nicola Dunlop's national and international impact spans community eye health education, professional guidance and research leadership. She also leads a community engagement project, tackling preventable sight loss in underserved Black and minority ethnic communities.

Leanna Brace: Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
During her career, senior research nurse Leanna Brace has advocated for women's health, with a focus on improving care for those experiencing pregnancy loss. She set up the first gynaecology research team at her trust, initiated the development of a bereavement nurse role and secured funding for two bereavement suites on the gynaecology ward.

SPONSOR
HCA Healthcare UK

Sherwin Criseno: University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust
Endocrinology lead nurse/consultant nurse Sherwin Criseno has redefined what specialist nursing can deliver for patients, professionals and healthcare systems. In Birmingham, he leads the largest specialist endocrine nursing team in Europe, delivering complex, nurse-led care across multiple endocrine pathways.

Rebecca Bennett: Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Children's hospital-at-home nurse Rebecca Bennett has shown remarkable dedication and leadership in spearheading a quality improvement project within her service. Her work on the triage and prioritisation tool has enhanced patient safety and service efficiency.

Liz Forster: Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust
Practice educator Liz Forster is an exceptional leader who has transformed recognition for healthcare support workers at her trust. She has developed a 12-month induction and development programme and also a band 2–3 competency framework, creating a transparent pathway for advancement.

Nicole Lee: London and South East Burns Network
Burns network manager Nicola Lee is committed to improving burns care. As the first nurse to serve as chair of the British Burn Association, she has worked to raise the profile of nursing leadership nationally while also acting as a role model for colleagues across the specialty.

Laura Govender: Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust
Advanced neonatal nurse practitioner Laura Govender is an exceptional nurse leader who has transformed neonatal care at St Helier Hospital. Her nurse-led implementation of an early onset sepsis risk calculator has delivered measurable improvements in patient safety, family experience and staff empowerment.

Tracie Lewin-Taylor: Shooting Star Children's Hospices
Paediatic palliative care nurse consultant Tracie Lewin-Taylor provides strategic and clinical leadership. She is an expert in network and system development and delivery, supporting complex services and pathways to enable paediatric palliative care close to home.

Joan Pons Laplana: NHS England
Joan Pons Laplana has transformed opportunities for young people with learning disabilities and autism. Through Project Choice, he created pathways into the NHS and his improvements in patient safety have saved countless lives. The sepsis pathway cut mortality and length of stay and the FluBee and CoronaBee digital tools reshaped vaccine education.

Martha Williams: Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Clinical lead for tissue viability Martha Williams has led an extraordinary project. She introduced a structured, evidence-based clinical pathway to improve the timeliness, consistency and quality of care for patients with venous leg ulcers. Mean time to healing fell from 184 to 78 days.

Nursing Times Awards 2026

Meet Our Charity Partner

Florence Nightingale Foundation



Professor Greta Westwood

A charity that is dedicated to developing and supporting nurse leadership skills at every level in the UK and beyond has been chosen as the partner for our annual celebration of the best in nursing.

Each year, the Nursing Times Awards shines a light on the brightest talent in the profession and recognises those making nursing innovative, patient-focused and inclusive. In line with those ambitions, we can reveal that the Florence Nightingale Foundation (FNF) will be our charity partner for the 2026 Nursing Times Awards.

This represents the second time in recent years that *Nursing Times* has worked closely on an event with the charity, which was previously our partner for the 2025 Nursing Times Workforce Awards.

The foundation can trace its roots all the way back to its namesake, the founder of the modern nursing profession. Following the death of Florence Nightingale in 1910, nursing leaders called for her passing to be marked with the creation of an educational foundation so nurses could "follow in her footsteps". In 1934, the Florence Nightingale International Foundation was formed, which subsequently evolved to become today's Florence Nightingale Foundation.

The FNF builds on the enduring legacy of Florence Nightingale, supporting nurses and midwives across the UK and globally to become strong, influential and confident leaders. The foundation develops nurse and midwife leaders at every career stage, enabling them to stay, thrive, lead and transform health and care.

Through its high-impact and transformational leadership programmes, independent and trusted voice, member engagement and growing alumni network, it creates a ripple effect of change. Among the courses on offer are:

- Windrush Leadership Programme
- Aspiring Digital Healthcare Leadership Programme
- Emerging Leaders Programme
- Established Leaders Programme

Every nurse or midwife the charity supports is equipped to drive improvements that extend beyond themselves – across teams, organisations and the patients and communities they serve.

The FNF brings together nurses and midwives from across sectors and career stages into a connected community of leaders who feel supported, valued and inspired to make a difference.

Professor Greta Westwood, chief executive of the FNF, said: "We are delighted that the Florence Nightingale Foundation has been chosen as the *Nursing Times* charity partner for this event.

"We invest in development for nurses and midwives at every career stage, and support for the foundation creates a powerful ripple effect," she said.

She added: "When a nurse or midwife is supported to stay, thrive and lead, entire teams are strengthened, services are transformed, and patients and communities experience better care, across the UK and beyond."

Steve Ford, editor of *Nursing Times*, said: "I am delighted that the Florence Nightingale Foundation has accepted our invitation to be our charity partner for the 2026 Nursing Times Awards.

"We have worked together with the foundation on a range of projects, campaigns and events in recent years, so it's great to be working with them again, this time on our main awards of 2026.

"By becoming our charity partner, I hope we can further raise awareness of the brilliant work they do for furthering nurse leadership as well as hopefully bringing in some valuable donations for them too."

● Find out more information at florence-nightingale-foundation.org.uk

Nursing Times Awards 2026

The Judges

Ronke Ajidahun, preceptorship matron, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Liz Alderton, district nurse team lead, North East London NHS Foundation Trust

John Alex Melencio, senior clinical site manager, Barts Health NHS Trust

Darryn Allcorn, chief nurse and director of integrated professions, University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust

Obi Amadi, lead professional officer, Unite the Union

Sreeja Ambattuchittethu, director of nursing for surgery and peri-operative care, Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust

Paula Anderson, chief nursing information officer, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Nafiza Anwar, director, Association of South Asian Midwives

Tina Arnold, lead infection prevention and control specialist nurse, NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board

Laura Atherton, operational manager, Milk Bank at Chester

Michelle Bateman, visiting professor, University of Derby

Heidi Beaven, bereavement midwife, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Anne Biggs, deputy clinical director, Allergy UK

Jim Blair, independent consultant nurse – learning disabilities

Emma Blakey, lead nurse for sustainability, NHS England

Robert Bleasdale, chief nurse, Chelsea and Westminster Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Lorraine Burgess, Macmillan dementia nurse consultant and Queen's Nurse, The Christie NHS Foundation Trust

Chris Caldwell, development director, nursing leadership institute, Barts Health NHS Trust

Lisa Canade, school nurse, Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Peter Carter CBE, director, Carter Consulting

Michael Cervantes, project manager, digital patient pathway management programme, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Kathryn Cobain, chief nursing officer, NHS Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board

Victoria Cochrane, director of midwifery, North West London NHS Foundation Trust

Rhea Conn, clinical sustainability nurse specialist, NHS England

Rachael Corser, chief nurse, Barts Health NHS Trust

Julie Critcher, professional officer, School and Public Health Nurses Association

Marie Crofts, chief nursing officer, NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board

Olivia Crossing, sister and co-founder, Worksights Ltd

Thomas Currid, head of nursing, director of student engagement, satisfaction and employability, University of Essex

Kirsty Day, deputy sister, critical care outreach, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Reema D'Souza, associate chief nurse, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Paul Edwards, chief nursing officer, Dementia UK

Bianca Esmeralda, senior nurse critical care division, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Kath Evans, director of nursing, babies, children and young people, Barts Health NHS Trust/NHS North East London Integrated Care Board

Cliff Evans, nurse consultant and educationalist, Medway NHS Foundation Trust

Christine Finch, infection prevention lead, Nuffield Health

Emma Firth, regional primary care and safeguarding lead, Practice Plus Group

Heather Franklin, digital lead midwife, Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Micheal Fullerton, director of wellbeing, strategy and collaboration, Achieve Together

Julie Garbett, regional nurse director, Cygnet Group

Nyarai Gondo, associate chief nurse, London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust

Jayne Goodwin, national head of research delivery nurses, midwives and allied health professionals, Health and Care Research Wales

Katie Grant, community nursing team leader, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Joanna Grant, senior nurse business director, Social and Healthcare Consultancies

Jesca Gudza, team manager, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust

Hannah Hague, deputy director of business development, partnerships and strategy, Primary Care 24

Stella Hannaway, nurse lead therapies, NHS University Hospitals of Liverpool Group

Laura Hardman, digital lead midwife, Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Cathy Harrison, advanced nurse practitioner in haemophilia and haemostasis disorders, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Sarah Hayes, chief nursing and midwifery officer, East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust

Louise Horne, national nursing officer, Unison

Fiona Hoskins, chief nursing officer, Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Anulika Ifezue, clinical lead trainer perinatal and infant mental health/senior research leader, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Blerta Ilazi, ReSTORE programme lead, South Yorkshire Primary Care Workforce and Training Hub

Jentin James, nurse consultant, Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust

Sheeba Jefferson, nurse director, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Shini Jijay, advanced nurse practitioner, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Helen Jones, lead nurse for the clinical research workforce, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Marsha Jones, deputy chief nurse, Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Minija Joseph, lead nurse for inpatient theatres, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Ismail Kaji, parliamentary and government engagement officer Mencap, and co-clerk, All Party Parliamentary Group on Learning Disability

Dalvir Kandola, consultant midwife – lead of inclusivity, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

Christine Kapopo, deputy chief nurse, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

Louise Keane, co-chair, Social Care Nursing Advisory Council for London, Louise Keane Consultancy

Jasmine King, urology specialist nurse practitioner, North Bristol NHS Trust

Tonya Kloppers, chief nurse and director of infection, The London Clinic

Olesya Kovyzhenko, lead urology advanced nurse practitioner, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Susie Lagrata, advanced nurse practitioner and lead nurse, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Helen Landers-Flynn, associate chief nurse for adults, Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust

Helen Laverty MBE, assistant professor of learning disability nursing, University of Nottingham

Steph Lawrence MBE, chief executive, Queen's Institute of Community Nursing

Jo Lay, associate professor in nursing, University of Leeds

Owen Ledbetter, head of professional learning, Nuffield Health

Deepa Leelamany, lead urology clinical nurse specialist, HCA Healthcare, and visiting lecturer, University of Roehampton

Anna Liza Ferrer, lead nurse for surgery, theatres, anaesthetics and endoscopy, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Xyza Macutay-Malloch, senior operations manager, Maria Mallaband Care Group

Mandy Mangham, surgical care practitioner, The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

Hazel Manzano, matron for neonatal service, North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust

Trudie Martin, chair, Unison

Katie Mashingaidze, nurse consultant for continence, Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Tricia May-Parrott, family liaison nurse, Barts Health NHS Trust and NHS North East London Integrated Care Board

Professor Mick McKeown, professor of democratic mental health, University of Central Lancashire

Gail Mills, lead nurse for research and development and health and care research director, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Shane Mills, executive director of nursing and quality, Cygnet Group

Professor Calvin Moorley, chair of diversity and social justice, London South Bank University

Gabriel Morostes, quality improvement lead and safeguarding lead, Priory Group – South Region and Scotland

Alison Morton, chief executive officer, Institute of Health Visiting

Gwen Moulster OBE, consultant nurse, Gwen Moulster Consultancy

Tess Murdoch, service development, integration, transformation and delivery lead for Age Well, NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board

Hansa Nair, advanced critical care practitioner, Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Benash Nazmeen, assistant professor, University of Bradford

Pippa Nightingale MBE, chief executive. Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Caroline Nyawira, quality improvement manager, Bromley Healthcare

Sally Nyinza, infection prevention and control specialist nurse, UK Health Security Agency

Caroline Ogwanga, lead practitioner, Uganda Nurses and Midwives Association – UK

Emily O'Hara, director of quality and chief nurse, Sanctuary Care

Dame Crystal Oldman, vice president, International Care Home Nurses Organisation

Teresa O'Nwere-Tan, advanced nurse practitioner, Tan & Co

Ruth Oshikanlu MBE, executive director, Goal Mind and Abule CIC

Abigail Owen, plastics surgery trauma unit manager, Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Claire Painter, chief nursing officer, HCA Healthcare

Candice Pellett, independent project manager/district nurse

Rachel Perry, research nurse, Marie Curie Hospice

Catherine Plowright, registered nurse and honorary fellow, British Association of Critical Care Nurses

Stefano Pochetti, head of clinical programmes, NHS England – South East Region

Emma Rajakrishnen, registered midwife and founder, Elythia Maternity and Elythia Equity CIC

Angela Rantell, consultant nurse, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Karen Roberts, group head of health and clinical governance, Lifeways Group

Bally Sall, cancer clinical nurse specialist, Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust

Shella Sandoval, chief nursing information officer, East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

Jane Sanjeevi, senior diversity and inclusion specialist, University Hospitals of Northamptonshire NHS Group

Rosi Shepherd, chief nursing officer, NHS Bristol, NHS North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board

Kam Singh, nurse consultant, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Pauline Singleton, cystic fibrosis nurse specialist, University Hospitals Tees

Marcia Smikle, head of safeguarding children, Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Rachel Smith, clinical educator – infection control, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Oliver Soriano, chief nurse officer, Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Jordan Spires, practice educator for the culture of care programme, Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Janice Stevens CBE, chief nursing officer, The Wellington Hospital, HCA Healthcare

Sharon Sundersingh, advanced critical care practitioner, Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Edmund Tabay, chief nursing officer, Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Mary Tanay, Macmillan nurse consultant in genomics, Berkshire Cancer Centre, Royal Berkshire NHS Trust

Abigail Tapfumaneyi, clinical lead for vaccination, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Alison Taylor, acute oncology nurse consultant, Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance

Annie Taylor, registered nurse and co-founder, Worksights Ltd

Claire Taylor MBE, senior nurse in oncology and chief nursing officer, London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust

Connie Timmins, education and professional development committee coordinator, Infection Prevention Society

Jay Trondillo, senior regional director, Maria Mallaband Care Group

Joana Turner, senior pelvic floor clinical specialist, Barts Health NHS Trust

Professor Jamie Waterall OBE, deputy chief public health nurse for England, Department of Health and Social Care

Kimberley Webster, research nurse, Newcastle GP Services

Katy Welsh, functional assessor, Advo Health

Stephanie Wetherell, advanced nurse practitioner and lower gastrointestinal Faster Diagnosis Standard lead, Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Graeme Wright, chief nurse, Kingston and Richmond NHS Foundation Trust

Lynne Yates, advanced clinical practitioner-nurse, Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust

Amanda Young, director of nursing programmes, Queen's Institute of Community Nursing

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The Nursing Times Awards will return in 2027

Look out for details on how to enter at
awards.nursingtimes.net