



June 17th, 2016

Child health team reaches for the stars

The children's community nursing team based at South Tyneside District Hospital is a finalist for a national award for its improved clinics for children at higher risk of serious illness due to a common virus.

The team will find out on Thursday, June 23rd, if it has won in the Service Improvement category of pharmaceutical company AbbVie's Embrace Stars 2016 awards.

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms but can lead to severe lung infections in vulnerable children, such as those with chronic lung disease or certain heart problems and the very young or premature babies. A medicine injected monthly over a five-month period can provide some protection to such vulnerable patients.

Clinics for administering the injection were previously held at the District Hospital at different times throughout the week. South Tyneside parents and carers of children at risk from RSV were asked what their preferences were regarding the clinics and it was identified that a Saturday morning was the preferred option. Text message appointments and a system for a reminder phone call the day before the clinic were set up and, as a result, in 2015/16, there has been a 100% success rate in take-up of the treatment, thus protecting vulnerable patients and reducing hospital attendances.

The Embrace Stars awards recognise excellence in the field of RSV protection and improvement in the RSV service for infants and their families, and support best practice within the NHS. They also highlight initiatives that advance medical and scientific knowledge which can benefit or enhance patient care.

Staff nurses Amie Swindon, Gillian Curry, Heather Anderson and Brogan Tallack will attend the awards ceremony in Birmingham on behalf of the children's community nursing team.
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Pictured above: Members of the children's community nursing team, left to right, Gillian Curry, Amie-Jane Swindon and Heather Anderson

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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