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## Child health staff are real stars

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

The team won the Service Improvement category of pharmaceutical company AbbVie's Embrace Stars 2016 awards for their work in relation to respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

Trust Chief Executive Steve Williamson said: "Our children's community nursing team are dedicated to improving care for patients in South Tyneside and they deserve this fantastic recognition for their work which is making such a huge difference to children's lives."

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-Jane Swindon, Gillian Curry, Heather Anderson and Brogan Tallack represented the winning team at the awards ceremony in Birmingham.

**ends**

*Pictured above: Receiving the award for the children's community nursing team, left to right, staff nurses Heather Anderson, Brogan Tallack, Amie-Jane Swindon and Gillian Curry all staff nurses within the Children's community nursing team*

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

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