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Team among the finest in the NHS

South Tyneside's award-winning Gastroenterology team are in line for another one of the most sought-after accolades in British healthcare.

Their entry, Delivering High Quality Gastroenterology Research, has been shortlisted in the Clinical Research Impact category of the HSJ Awards 2016, the most highly regarded awards in the NHS.

The team have transformed Gastroenterology in South Tyneside over the last 10 years by prioritising research. As a result, they now lead research regionally, nationally and internationally, providing significant benefits to patients locally and more widely by giving them access to the latest treatments and technologies. The development of South Tyneside as the most active bowel cancer screening research site in the UK and a key site internationally is just one of their many achievements.

In July, the South Tyneside District Hospital-based team scooped a top national prize in the SAGE Awards for making South Tyneside a leading centre of excellence for outstanding gastroenterology patient care, research, training and innovation.

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust Chief Executive Steve Williamson said: "It is fantastic that the achievements of the Gastroenterology service are receiving national recognition. The team have put South Tyneside on the map in terms of Gastroenterology research and education and, in doing so, they have driven up the standard of Gastroenterology care."

Consultant Gastroenterologist Professor Colin Rees, who is also the Trust's Director of Research and Development, said: "Throughout every development we've made, improving the quality of patient care and, therefore, the patient's experience, has been our driving force and we're proud to say that the Trust is now recognised as a leader in the field.

"It is due to the dedication and commitment of each and every member of our team that we have been able to rapidly transform Gastroenterology in South Tyneside. In 2006, we had only a small clinical team delivering services and no research profile. Since then, we have expanded the team and, through collaboration with partners regionally, nationally and internationally, the Trust has become a key participant in many academic and commercial research studies."

Professor Stephen Robson, of the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network North East and North Cumbria said: "This latest recognition highlights what can be achieved if individuals and organisations make high quality research 'core NHS business' - the benefits to patients and staff are transparent and impactful. It is a just reward for a lot of hard work and our congratulations go to Colin and his team."

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Pictured above: The gastroenterology team pictured receiving their SAGE award, left to right, Inflammatory Bowel Disease Nurse Specialist Emily Hopkins, Nurse Consultant Carolyn Davison, Consultant Gastroenterologists Dr Simon Panter, Professor Colin Rees and Dr Clare Parker, and Inflammatory Bowel Disease Nurse Specialist Claire Maclennan

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

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