



November 24th, 2016

Top health award for South Tyneside team

South Tyneside's Gastroenterology team have been recognised in the HSJ Awards 2016 as the best in the country for their global impact on clinical research.

They demonstrated how they had targeted research to improve the quality of care, benefit patients and drive innovation. 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.

The awards, the most highly regarded in the NHS, were presented at the O2 InterContinental London hotel. The Clinical Research Impact Award was sponsored by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network.

Ken Bremner, Chief Executive of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust, said: "This accolade is thoroughly deserved. The team, led by Professor Colin Rees, have transformed Gastroenterology at South Tyneside District Hospital over the last 10 years by prioritising research. This has led to patients locally and more widely being given access to the very latest treatments and technologies and they are now recognised leaders in research regionally, nationally and internationally."

Consultant Gastroenterologist Professor Rees, who is also the Trust's Director of Research and Development, said: "This award is fantastic news for our amazing, hard-working team. It is due to the dedication and commitment of each and every member that we have been able to transform Gastroenterology in South Tyneside so rapidly. This award demonstrates the high quality of care and research we deliver for our patients and shows that the very best in healthcare research can be delivered from a small hospital."

Dr Jonathan Sheffield, Chief Executive Officer of the NIHR Clinical Research Network, said: "What's fantastic about this award is that it's not just about the size and scale of the research activity, it's also about organisational culture and the NHS delivering new leading edge therapies. The category gets more competitive each year. To win this award NHS organisations need to demonstrate not only that they are doing research, but also that it is having a tangible impact on clinical practice. That's exactly what South Tyneside has done."

Joining the congratulations was Chris Whitty, Chief Scientific Adviser for the Department of Health, who presented the award. He said: "Clinical research is an integral part of the NHS and it is something that patients really value. South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust is setting a great example of making clinical research core business and helping patients to access research opportunities as part of their care."

In July, the same 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.

Notes to editors

About the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)

The NIHR is funded by the Department of Health to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. The NIHR is the research arm of the NHS. Since its establishment in April 2006, the NIHR has transformed research in the NHS. It has increased the volume of applied health research for the benefit of patients and the public, driven faster translation of basic science discoveries into tangible benefits for patients and the economy, and developed and supported the people who conduct and contribute to applied health research.

The NIHR plays a key role in the Government's strategy for economic growth, attracting investment by the life-sciences industries through its world-class infrastructure for health research. Together, the NIHR people, programmes, centres of excellence and systems represent the most integrated health research system in the world. For further information, visit the NIHR website (<http://www.nihr.ac.uk>).

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Pictured above: Comedian and TV presenter Sue Perkins, extreme left, who was the compere for the awards, pictured with the winning South Tyneside team, including Professor Colin Rees, next to her

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

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