

**PRESS RELEASE – JULY 25, 2018**

**Long-serving South Tyneside NHS worker's NHS 70<sup>th</sup> birthday  
invite to meet PM**



Tony Steel swapped his day job as a catering assistant at South Tyneside District Hospital for canapes with Prime Minister Theresa May as part of the celebrations for the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of the NHS.

Tony, 58, who has more than 40 years' service at hospitals in South Tyneside, was thrilled to be chosen to attend a reception at 10 Downing Street for long-serving NHS staff from all over the country.

“It was an honour to represent South Tyneside on such an important occasion and it was a fantastic day – one I’ll always remember,” said Tony, of South Shields. “At first we were in the garden but then it rained and we went inside Number 10. It was an amazing experience walking up the stairs past all the pictures of past Prime Ministers. When I was introduced to Mrs May she asked me what I did and I told her that I worked at South Tyneside District Hospital and explained what my job involves, such as taking patients’ meals to the wards.”

Tony, who was given a special badge for 40 years’ NHS service, discovered that catering was to his taste after beginning his NHS career as an apprentice in 1976. He added: “I really enjoy my job and I’m very proud to be part of the NHS.”

**ENDS**

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