



On behalf of the Royal College of Nursing in Northern Ireland, it is my great pleasure to welcome our finalists, their guests, our sponsors, RCN members and distinguished guests to the 2023 Nurse of the Year Awards ceremony. It is good to be back here at The Culloden once again for what, I am sure, will be another memorable and inspirational occasion.

These awards provide the opportunity to highlight excellence within nursing in Northern Ireland and the contribution that nursing staff make to the health and well-being of the people of Northern Ireland. Despite the ever-challenging environment, this year's finalists demonstrate how nurses in Northern Ireland continue to lead the way in delivering high quality, innovative and person-centred care, contributing to and leading the strategic objectives of service transformation and co-production. I am delighted to see that our

The Open University

The Open University is proud to sponsor the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Learning in Practice Award again this year. This award recognises the excellent teaching and learning that takes place in a range of acute and community settings in Northern Ireland. Student nurses gain invaluable learning experience whilst in clinical practice, supported by mentors, practice supervisors, managers and practice education teams. Working in partnership with the Department of Health, the health and social care trusts and the independent sector, The Open University offers an alternative route into nursing, enabling health care assistants and other support workers to study part-time, while also continuing to work in their substantive roles.

Public Health Agency

The Public Health Agency drives the public health and social well-being agenda in Northern Ireland. It provides a sustained focus to achieving key public health goals and reducing health inequalities. The broad functions of the Public Health Agency are health improvement, health protection, reducing inequalities, improving quality, safety and experience of services, and supporting personal and public involvement.

General Practice Federations, Northern Ireland

GP Federations in Northern Ireland are delighted to sponsor the Primary Care Nursing Award for 2023. There are 17 GP Federations across Northern Ireland. Each Federation is owned by GP practices in its geographical area, and have been established to support General Practice, aiming to facilitate the transformation agenda in health and social care in primary care settings. Within practice teams, General Practice Nurses provide an exceptional contribution in supporting people to stay well for as long as possible, deliver care close to home and aim where possible to avoid unnecessary hospital attendances and admissions. Practice Nursing teams are essential to the delivery of good patient outcomes and this award recognises and celebrates excellence and innovative practice in Primary Care Nursing.

Department of Health

The Department's mission is to work with colleagues across the HSC to improve the health and social well-being of the people of Northern Ireland. It has a statutory responsibility to promote an integrated system of health and social care designed to secure improvement in the physical and mental health of people in Northern Ireland, the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness, and the social well-being of the people in Northern Ireland. A key aspect of that work is the promotion and support of Nurses and Midwives who form the backbone of the health and social care system in Northern Ireland. The Department's Chief Nursing Officer Group, under the leadership of the Chief Nursing Officer Maria McIlgorm, provides professional advice and direction on all issues relating to Nursing, and is leading on the implementation of the Nursing & Midwifery Task Group recommendations as well as specific nurse education (pre- and post-registration), retention, career pathways, service models and quality and safety.

Roberta Brownlee and Silverdale Care Home

Roberta Brownlee is the owner of Silverdale Care Home in Castlederg, County Tyrone. Her innovative and strategic leadership enabled her to progress through a distinguished career to become the chief executive of the largest privately-owned health care group in the UK. Roberta has held a firm belief in the importance of strong nurse leadership from early in her career and in 2015 was awarded the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Outstanding Achievement Award for her outstanding leadership ability spanning some 47 years. In 2019, Roberta was awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours list for her outstanding charity work, which spans 40 years, alongside her significant contribution to health and social care, particularly in her role as Chair of the Southern HSC Trust. Silverdale Care Home provides extensive care for patients with complex nursing needs and is renowned for the quality of care delivered within innovative, evidence-based models. Silverdale has won many quality awards and, in 2013, home manager Geraldine Browne won the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Award for working alongside local general practitioners in Castlederg to develop a model of care that reduced the number of patients experiencing unnecessary transfers to hospital. The management team at Silverdale is committed to continued innovation with a strong emphasis on quality, safety and person-centred care.

Balmoral Healthcare

Balmoral Healthcare is delighted to sponsor the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Independent Sector Award for 2023, a newly introduced category that we are again proud to be supporting. Balmoral Healthcare is one of Northern Ireland's leading health care agencies. Founded by Amanda McCully and acquired by Kieran McCormick in 2021, both registered nurses, Kieran continues to run the company with the same dedication and passion for nursing which first inspired the establishment of the business in 2000. For the past 23 years, we have been building on our excellent reputation for recruiting only the highest calibre of registered nurses, paramedics, senior care assistants and health care assistants. High nursing standards and values along with a committed focus to patient safety and person-centred care is at the heart of Balmoral Healthcare, filling thousands of vacancies each year and striving to ensure safe staffing levels are continued, we take great pride in the high quality of care we provide.

HSC Clinical Education Centre and Business Services Organisation

The HSC Clinical Education Centre [CEC] is a regional service of the Business Services Organisation [BSO] which delivers high quality in-service education to support the learning and development needs of nurses, midwives and allied health professionals employed by HSC Trusts. It also provides consultancy services to a variety of other organisations from the statutory, voluntary, community and independent sectors. The key aim of the CEC is to work collaboratively and be responsive to the needs of its customers to support the provision of safe and effective care. The CEC team of highly skilled professionally registered teaching staff design, deliver and evaluate a wide range of evidence-based programmes, maximising the use of modern educational approaches to enhance the learning experience. The CEC is immensely proud to sponsor the RCN Northern Ireland Team Manager of the Year Award.

Macmillan Cancer Support

Macmillan Cancer Support is here to do whatever it takes to support people living with cancer. Our ambition is to be there for everyone, from the moment someone is told that they have cancer, for as long as we're needed to help them live life as fully as they can. Supporting people through services including the Macmillan website, our Information and Support Centres and the Macmillan Support Line, Macmillan professionals help us work with heart, strength and ambition. Macmillan nurses are at the heart of our charity's work. Right from the moment an individual is diagnosed and throughout their cancer journey, they should have access to the highest quality care and the support, energy and inspiration they need. Macmillan is delighted to sponsor the 2023 RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Cancer Nurse Award and is delighted to be able to celebrate the achievements of the entire nursing workforce across Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service exists to improve the health and well-being of the people of Northern Ireland. We apply the highest levels of knowledge and skill to preserve life, prevent deterioration and promote recovery. We touch lives at times of basic human need when care and compassion are what matter most. Our dedicated, committed and highly skilled staff work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to ensure that our patients receive the best possible care.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Northern Health and Social Care Trust Southern Health and Social Care Trust South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Western Health and Social Care Trust

In 2020, the nursing profession was due to celebrate the year of the Nurse and Midwife, which also marked 200 years since the birth of Florence Nightingale. In recognition of this important event, the Directors of Nursing in the five health and social care trusts created an award to recognise nurses and midwives in leadership roles, at lead level, who have demonstrated a passion for developing their leadership, professionalism, innovation and creativity alongside a passion for the health and well-being of their patients.

STUDENT AWARD

Sponsored by the Queen's University of Belfast

NURSING RESEARCH AWARD

Sponsored by Ulster University

2023 NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS PROGRAMME



Grace McAleer
The Open University

Grace is a final year pre-registration nursing student and her nomination focuses upon her commitment to addressing the gap in health care provision for people in Northern Ireland impacted by female genital mutilation [FGM]. Her nominator explains how Grace epitomises



HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER AWARD

Sponsored by Liverpool Victoria

2023 NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS PROGRAMME



Cathy Glass

Nursing service manager: trauma, orthopaedics and fractures
Western Health and Social Care Trust

Cathy's nomination focuses on her exceptional commitment to improving and developing services for people requiring orthopaedic surgery, either electively or as the result of trauma. She has been instrumental in securing investment that has enabled her to develop the service and improve nurse sta ng levels, all of which have contributed to enhanced outcomes for patients. Cathy has also collaborated with other services to develop care pathways that have improved access to timely and appropriate patient care. She has secured investment in practice education and quality improvement to support learning and development and thereby enhanced the recruitment and retention of sta within orthopaedic services. Cathy leads and represents the Western Trust across many regional workstreams aimed at improving access to orthopaedic services. She has worked relentlessly to maximise the use of available resources, particularly through the new day case theatres at Altnagelvin Area Hospital, and through the development of out-patient services throughout the trust. Cathy's nominator highlights how she cares deeply about patients, colleagues and the unit, adding: "Cathy has been instrumental in resetting the service. Her professionalism, knowledge, and passion for trauma and orthopaedic nursing is greatly admired and respected by all her nursing, medical and manager colleagues. A colleague comments: "Cathy has always made time for all of the sta and is very approachable. She is patient-centred and has been a strong advocate for patients. I particularly admire her persistence and resilience in such tough times that we face." The judging panel described Cathy as "an excellent role model" and commended her patient-centred approach to her role and responsibilities.



Laura Spiers

Children and young people services governance co-ordinator
Southern Health and Social Care Trust



PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD

Sponsored by the Public Health Agency

INDEPENDENT SECTOR NURSING AWARD

Sponsored by Balmoral Healthcare

2023 NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS PROGRAMME



Linda Graham

Regional manager

Spa Nursing Home Group

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a renewed focus upon co-production and co-design between the Department of Health and the independent sector in Northern Ireland. Linda embraced the opportunity to apply her expertise and passion in order to generate improvements that have benefited patients and staff. She was closely involved with the Enhanced Clinical Care Framework [ECCF] established by the Department of Health in 2021 and co-chaired its sub-group on workforce planning. This involved the testing of an acuity tool for the independent sector, enhanced training and education, a staffing model, and an independent sector career pathway. The national ECCF project references prevention, anticipatory care, self-management and early intervention, urgent and emergency care, and palliative and end of life care. Her nominator describes Linda as an ambassador for the sector and praises her capacity to develop innovative quality improvement initiatives and influence on behalf of the nursing profession and patients. She is involved in joint

CHIEF NURSING OFFICER RISING STAR AWARD

Sponsored by the Department of Health

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2023 NURSE OF THE YEAR
AWARDS PROGRAMME



Sarah Richmond

Staff nurse

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Sarah joined the urgent and emergency care team as a newly-registered nurse in September 2021, having previously undertaken a practice placement in the emergency care village at the Royal Victoria Hospital. The short stay unit within the emergency care village can be a very challenging area in which to work. A high number of patients present during a mental health crisis and often struggle with addiction issues. Sarah's compassion and ability to



LEARNING IN PRACTICE AWARD

Sponsored by The Open University

Judges: John D'Arcy, The Open University; Stephanie Foster, The Open University; Edna Grant, RCN Northern Ireland Board

Julie Baxter

Deputy sister

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Julie completed a pressure sore prevention and management course at the Queen's University of Belfast in 2019. Her nominator says: "I believe Julie should be recognised for an award, as I have never before in 30 years of nursing seen information brought back to the clinical setting and shared with so much enthusiasm and to so many people. All the information that was learnt from the course was brought back to the ward setting and then put into a poster." Julie has spent much of her own time designing posters, booklets, stickers and pens to help staff with the staging, recording, management and prevention of pressure sores. The posters have been widely distributed and displayed in many different

PATIENT'S CHOICE AWARD

Sponsored by the Patient and Client Council

Judges: Katherine McElroy, Patient and Client Council; Keith Wright, Patient and Client Council; Maureen Dolan, RCN Northern Ireland Board

2023 NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS PROGRAMME









Nicola Loughlin
Delirium nurse co-ordinator
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Nicola has established a leading role in the development and implementation of a pioneering

KATHLEEN ROBB AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO NURSING

Sponsored by the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery [NIPEC]



The Kathleen Robb Award for Outstanding Contribution to Nursing is aimed at recognising exceptional service to the nursing and midwifery professions in Northern Ireland. The award is sponsored by NIPEC and the previous winners are:

- 2002 Dr Mona Grey OBE
- 2003 Miss Kathleen Robb OBE
- 2004 Dame Mary Uprichard
- 2005 John Walsh
- 2006 Professor Mary Hanratty CBE
- 2007 Kate O'Hanlon MBE
- 2008 Judith Hill CBE
- 2009 204 (North Irish) Field Hospital (Volunteers)
- 2010 Carmel Hanna
- 2011 Susan Semple
- 2012 Elizabeth Henderson OBE FRCN
- 2013 Professor Hugh McKenna CBE FRCN
- 2014 Margaret Graham
- 2015 Roberta Brownlee MBE
- 2016 Robert Sowney FRCN
- 2017 Professor Tanya McCance
- 2018 Professor Martin Bradley OBE FRCN
- 2019 Professor Kader Parahoo
- 2022 Mary Hinds



