

Awards recognise best in finance management

TRUSTS IN NORTHERN Ireland and Liverpool were the main winners in this year's HFMA Awards 2005, presented at a gala dinner during the HFMA annual conference earlier this month.

Foyle Health and Social Services Trust was named overall winner of the Accounts Team of the Year, finance director Lesley Mitchell receiving the award. But the Northern Ireland body was run a close second by **Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust**, which was highly commended.

This is the second year of the team competition and the award was presented in association with the Department of Health and sponsored by consultancy KPMG.

The Foyle trust was recognised for producing high-quality annual accounts and working papers to an accelerated timetable despite severe staffing difficulties. The judges – including Department of Health finance director Richard Douglas, KPMG audit partner Trevor Rees, outgoing HFMA chairman Scott Haldane and David Pratt representing the HFMA Accounting and Standards Committee – were impressed with the team's can-do approach. They also drew attention to the 'excellent relationship' with the trust's auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Speaking at the awards ceremony, Mr Haldane said all entries were of the highest quality. Just four points out of a maximum of 120 separated Foyle from Mid Yorkshire, whose highly commended award recognised the accounts team's contribution to transforming the trust's performance despite continuing financial challenges.

There was a new award for financial management this year. Developed in conjunction with accountancy body CIMA, its focus was on good practice in financial reporting. The judging team of CIMA chief



Winning teams: Foyle (top) and Mid Yorkshire

executive Charles Tilley, former HFMA Financial Management and Research Committee chairman Andy Leary and new HFMA chairman Phil Taylor again had to decide between a high calibre of entries.

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust won, the judges highlighting the 'clarity and readability of the report and the obvious connection with the key services in the organisation'. **North West Wales NHS Trust** was highly commended for its entry, and for its use of technology to support the flow of budgetary information.

HFMA chief executive Mark Knight hailed the awards a major success. 'It is absolutely right we should celebrate excellence in healthcare finance and we look forward to expanding the awards programme over the coming years,' he said.



Top managers: Liverpool (top) and NW Wales

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Five HFMA members were singled out for individual awards at this year's ceremony:

Special Recognition Awards

John Gibbons (left) was commended for his active membership of the Yorkshire branch for more than 20 years, most years spent on the branch committee and two as its chairman. He retired from his post at Harrogate NHS Foundation Trust in early 2005.

Graham Nix (left) was nominated for his award by the South West branch, which described him as a 'glowing example in the NHS finance function' worthy of local and national recognition.

Tom Taylor (right) (West



Midlands branch) also received an award for 'substantial and unwavering support to the HFMA and the finance staff development agenda'. Mr Taylor, branch chairman in 2004/05, left Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic Health Authority, where he was director of delivery, to be chief executive of Shrewsbury Hospitals NHS Trust in August 2005.

Outstanding Contribution Awards

Steve Elliot (top right) (Welsh branch) and **Alastair MacArthur** (Scottish branch) were both singled out to receive Outstanding Contribution Awards. Mr Elliot is chair of the branch's Financial Management and Research Network and is a regular contributor to the HFMA's *Introductory guide to NHS finance* and *Healthcare Finance*. Mr MacArthur led the branch's project to develop a Scottish version of the HFMA *Introductory guide to NHS finance*.

