

Finance stars shine in HFMA awards

TWO PRIMARY CARE trusts and two acute trusts shared the spoils in the 2006 HFMA Awards, unveiled at a black-tie gala dinner during the association's annual conference in December.

Eleven shortlisted organisations were among the 600 guests and conference delegates to hear the judges' final decisions in this year's three awards – for Accounts Team of the Year (sponsored by KPMG), Financial Management, and Governance (sponsored by Ardentia).

Wrightington Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust were singled out as Accounts Team of the Year from a shortlist that also included Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust, NHS National Services Scotland and Durham Dales Primary Care Trust. Judges were impressed by the winning trust's 'sound professional approach' and 'exceptional' planning for the accounts process. Judges also highly commended the Durham Dales team.

This year's Financial Management Award was developed in partnership with the Audit Commission and Trust Practice and aimed to recognise the finance role in supporting efficiency improvements. The award was divided into two categories: one for PCTs and another for trusts and foundation trusts.

Three applications were shortlisted for the PCT award, including Salford Primary

Care Trust (in conjunction with Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust) and Stockport Primary Care Trust. However, North East Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust was selected as the winner for its work reshaping finance and information to support practice-based commissioning. The PCT has improved patient care and reduced costs and judges said the work provided a model for others to follow.

Bro Morgannwg beat off competition from King's College Hospitals NHS Trust and Liverpool Women's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to win the trust award. The judges praised the Welsh trust's 'sheer persistence in pursuit of financial savings'.

Some aspects of the trust's financial management, which involved finance staff being embedded in front-line directorates, were 'not necessarily innovative'. But judges said some of the savings schemes used cutting edge technology.

Bro Morgannwg made its third shortlist in the Governance Award. However, this time the organisation had to settle for being highly commended after Oldham Primary Care Trust was named as winner. The north-west PCT's integrated approach to governance impressed judges.

Hounslow Primary Care Trust was the other organisation shortlisted.

MEMBER AWARDS

Three HFMA members were given special recognition awards at this year's HFMA annual conference gala dinner and awards ceremony. The awards recognise substantial and sustained contributions to the life and work of the HFMA.

Philip Gutcher, finance director at Bradford District Care Trust, was given the award following a nomination from both the Yorkshire Branch and the national Accounting and Standards Committee, which he chaired for several years before stepping down last year.



Two other special recognition awards were presented. **Christine Daws**, now director of finance for the Welsh Assembly Government, was nominated by the Welsh Branch for her contribution to the NHS finance function in Wales and for supporting the branch's delivery of an education and development programme. She also supported the branch in producing the *Introductory guide to NHS finance in Wales*, due to be published shortly.



Mike Brereton, director of finance and governance at Wirral Primary Care Trust, was put forward by the North West branch for sustained and significant contributions to the branch's success.



Paul Taylor, now a management consultant, was given the HFMA outstanding contribution award for his work at local and national level. In particular, the award recognised Mr Taylor's research into international tariff funding systems, which led to the HFMA publication *Home thoughts from abroad*. As part of his prize, Mr Taylor will attend the UK/US Exchange over the coming two years.



Winning line-up (clockwise from above left): Wrightington Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust; Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust; Oldham Primary Care Trust; North East Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust

