

# HFMA AWARDS 2021



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## Briggs wins top prize

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Winner: Nicci Briggs with HFMA president Owen Harkin

“Nicci has shown remarkable innovative leadership in the development of a nationally acclaimed primary care funding model”

# SPARKLING PERFORMANCE

An exemplary and innovative leader, who has made an impact at local and national level, **Nicci Briggs** is a worthy winner of the 2021 HFMA Finance Director of the Year Award.

The director of finance, contracting and governance at Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Groups (LLR) has led on many fronts over the past year, including tackling health inequality, addressing significant system deficit, bringing together three finance teams and championing diversity and inclusion.

To address health inequality, she led the implementation of a primary care funding model across the three CCGs in just nine months. The LLR funding model has been recognised as the first in the country to reflect patient need and complex issues such as communication and deprivation, better aligning primary care funding with the needs of the population and ensuring greater health equity.

Nominating her for the award, her colleagues said: ‘Nicci leads by example and managed to get the LLR CCG governing bodies and the wider LLR system leadership to see finance as an enabler. Without her leadership, innovation and tenacity, the LLR primary care funding model would not have succeeded.’

The system has one of the largest deficits, with many challenges, but since she joined in September 2020, Ms Briggs has developed local financial engagement, relationship building and collaboration across the system. She led a multidisciplinary task and finish group on the funding model, as well as engagement with 133 primary care practices, gaining universal support.

Provider support was also needed, with system funding growth shifted towards primary care and away from secondary care.

She worked with provider finance leads, putting in place the key principles of financial recovery, with system transformation at its heart. The financial recovery strategy was in place by February 2021, while the primary care funding model was implemented in July 2021.

The judges said: ‘Nicci has shown remarkable innovative leadership in the development of a nationally acclaimed primary care funding model in LLR. She has also championed the health inequalities agenda, as well as supporting the HFMA and system-wide groups, while demonstrating her commitment to diversity and inclusion.’

Her leadership and interpersonal skills stand out. Colleagues said Ms Briggs has a positive, can-do approach, and is committed to finance





of working side by side with clinical and operational colleagues.

Ms Briggs' leadership style is perhaps best demonstrated in her 12 Days of Christmas initiative – innovative, engaging and producing tangible benefits. This offered £5,000 funding each day in the 12 days leading up to Christmas for initiatives that would enhance experience of care; improve the health and wellbeing of the population or staff; address health inequalities; or improve productivity. More than 60

voluntary sector, CCG and primary care initiatives were submitted, and 14 projects selected. These included activities-focused wheelchair groups and suicide prevention training for GPs.

Ms Briggs said: 'I am shocked. The award is a reflection of my team, not just me.'

The primary care funding model is a way of tackling health inequalities, and she said she was pleased the HFMA conference and awards had sought to address other forms of inequality.

'I know Su [Rollason] well, and my money would have been on her. She's fantastic. I don't know Sheila [Stenson], but I can see she's a great finance director. Isn't it great to have an all-female shortlist, too, especially when you add in Owen Harkin's announcements on how the HFMA is addressing the imbalance in the finance function.'

Ms Briggs, an ardent supporter of the HFMA, chairs the association's Digital Council and is a member of the Policy and Research Committee. Outside the HFMA, she chairs the Midlands equality, diversity and inclusion ambassadors network and is vice chair of the Midlands integrated care systems finance transformation group. ●

staff development – when she joined the CCGs, she pledged that 100% of finance studies would be funded. She is also innovative, establishing a weekly blog described as 'fun, informative, personal and celebratory'.

Calm under pressure, and confident in her own ability, and that of her team, she inspires others. For example, her finance team have become system leaders in their own right, supporting other organisations, including acute trusts navigating a period of financial pressure.

This has been underpinned by her focus on people development, championing finance as an enabler, and embedding belief in the value

## Highly commended



The judging panel commended University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust's chief finance officer **Su Rollason** as being 'a highly visible finance leader'

both at the trust and in the wider system across the Midlands.

Ms Rollason has been CFO for just over three years, aiming to further professionalise the finance function through formal methods such as the Future-Focused Finance accreditation system and annual finance awards, as well as informal ways, including regularly reminding her finance team to consider their customers and their needs.

The judges added: 'She has personally championed a focus on waste reduction, cost reduction and financial management through effective engagement with clinical teams. Su has also contributed extensively to the wider system as part of the West Midlands Acute Provider Network and to various regional forums.'

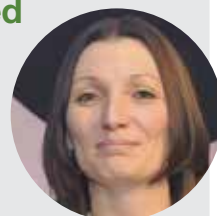
'She is also an enthusiastic supporter of the HFMA, in her role as chair of the Healthcare Costing for Value Institute and the [costing] annual international symposium director group.'

Approachable and enthusiastic, Ms Rollason has balanced the demands of a busy finance department with being the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System finance lead. The system faces a large financial challenge, but she has helped address this by encouraging collaboration among finance directors, and ensuring each is given an equal voice.

She agreed with colleagues the principles of working and prioritisation criteria for all future spending at system level. The group is often said to be the epitome of collaborative working locally.

Ms Rollason believes in openness and transparency in accounting – helping non-executive colleagues better understand the organisational challenges and contribute more fully to finding solutions. And throughout the pandemic, she has ensured each member of the finance team has received regular, effective communication.

## Also shortlisted



Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust executive director of finance **Sheila Stenson**

is an effective finance leader who will not shy away from difficult conversations. A former HFMA Deputy Finance Director of the Year (2016), she promotes personal and professional development as chair of the HFMA's Kent, Surrey and Sussex Branch and in the Skills Development Network. Her approach to development extends to regular one-to-one meetings with clinical directors to give them strategic financial support.

At the trust, she has tackled data quality, reporting, team restructures, and legacy issues with commissioning partners. A respected finance director, she also has board-level responsibility for estates, IT, performance and information governance, and is a system lead for mental health and productivity. In the latter workstream, she led a cross-county savings programme on behalf of six providers and one CCG.

# GAME CHANGER

The **Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust** finance team made it a hat-trick of wins in 2021 by taking the Havelock Award for its ground-breaking year-end training simulation game (see pages 6 and 14).

The Havelock Award recognises a contribution to finance skills development, best practice in the training of finance staff or the raising of financial awareness among non-finance staff. It was established in 1999, and named after former Department of Health deputy finance director Jon Havelock.

Covid-19 brought a lot of changes, not least to working practices, with many non-patient-facing staff working from home. The Liverpool trust was able to move 200 finance staff to remote working almost overnight.

Though an achievement in itself, it was not without challenge. The finance team had to maintain pre-Covid levels of service and contact with colleagues – both financial and non-financial. This led to a heavy reliance on digital resources, and some level of isolation for individual staff. There was pressure to transform services and maintain training, teamwork and interaction.

The training game project stemmed from a challenging year-end audit in 2019/20, which highlighted shortcomings in statutory reporting. The audit report said the preparation of statutory accounts was seen as a niche activity in the finance team. Understanding of the process was poor, and daunting for non-financial accountants.

A 'techy' solution was conceived, designed and implemented in three weeks. Working with software development company Attensi, the team realised that training materials in the form of a game could provide an interactive, informative and accessible route to building understanding and capability. An app would support wider staff development aims, and deliver training to staff working remotely.

The aim is also to provide a team-building activity that offers learning through friendly competition in a fun and protected environment. Non-finance staff have completed the game, and the finance team

**"The innovative and engaging year-end process game app was a superb highlight in the trust's comprehensive approach to staff development"**

sees the innovation as part of its post-merger strategy to use technology to transform and develop into a world-class finance function.

Long-term, it hopes the app will support recruitment at school and university careers days.

And it plans to work with the trust's learning and development teams to roll out the application to

offer non-finance colleagues and new starters an introduction to NHS finance.

'The innovative and engaging year-end process game app was a superb highlight in the trust's comprehensive approach to staff development, supporting finance and non-finance staff in better understanding complex and technical processes,' the judges said.


'The sharing of the game app into the NHS is being scoped and this great idea is likely to benefit many others beyond Liverpool.'

The trust's deputy director of finance, Jim Davies (pictured with assistant director of



Winner: Liverpool University Hospitals NHSFT

finance Dawn Gerrard), said the team was over the moon. 'Not only does the award recognise the good work we have done, but it also brings us closer together as a team,' he added. 'We are all absolutely delighted.'

Mr Davies said the app offered a way to help staff learn in an easily accessible way. 'Almost half of the people who have used the app are non-finance staff, and they have responded well to the bite-sized, interesting and genuinely fun way of learning.' 

## Highly commended

**Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust** was highly commended for its continuing efforts to improve individual, team and organisational development, with a focus this year on inclusivity, diversity, innovation, recognition of achievements and sharing of knowledge. A strategy has been developed, giving a structure to learning and development objectives and a clear commitment to delivering these objectives supported by the chief finance officer. Recruitment of new learning and development ambassadors at different sub-team and responsibility levels has promoted inclusivity, with sub-team ambassadors giving feedback and ideas. Other new initiatives this year include monthly lunch-and-learn sessions, a new continuing professional development template, sub-team presentations at the monthly directorate huddle, and a buddy system where volunteers offer their technical services. The judges said the Royal Papworth submission had demonstrated 'inclusive benefits, achieved for staff over time through the delivery of an impactful finance learning and development strategy'.

## Also shortlisted

The finance team at **Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust** took action to address a lack of confidence among budget-holders in areas such as procurement control, investment appraisal and financial approvals. Training was available, but an internal audit review and a 'soft controls' workshop saw that although control processes were robust and budget-holders keen to engage, they often struggled to navigate the system. A review was used to develop a training package that would meet needs, cover all appropriate disciplines and be comprehensive but not overloading. Online training was developed covering the breadth of finance topics, and made into short animations for each subject.

# ON TARGET

**Guy Dentith** – a finance leader who is helping a large trust in financial special measures turn around its fortunes – is HFMA Deputy Finance Director of the Year.

The East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust deputy finance director was key to the trust delivering its financial plan for both 2019/20 and 2020/21, with a breakeven position for the first time in almost a decade. This was all the more challenging as the trust has been in financial special measures since March 2017 and has a history of failing to achieve its financial targets.

He was central to setting the financial plan and its delivery, introducing robust processes and ensuring close monitoring of the financial position throughout the year.

Mr Dentith has led the trust to a 'good' NHS Improvement use of resources rating, the only trust to have achieved this while in financial special measures. Additionally, the trust delivered an unqualified audit position despite the backdrop of a large, complex organisation, variable Covid-19 spend and the largest capital programme in the trust's history (£70m). He was pivotal in securing £30m additional A&E and £15m ITU capital funding.

Philip Cave, the trust's director of finance and performance, said he had nominated his deputy not just for his leadership, but also his work in the pandemic – mobilising the finance team to work from home on day one of the lockdown. Since lockdown, the productivity of the function has improved, reports are generated quicker, the intelligence behind them is better, and no deadlines have been missed, Mr Cave added.

The morale of the finance function has also improved, with Mr Dentith running online away days, including one on mental wellbeing.

The judges said that in the two-and-a-half years since joining the trust, he has been instrumental in improving its finances and financial governance. The panel was also impressed by his range of technical knowledge and his leadership skills, which they said had clearly made an impact within the trust and also across his local system.

**"A self-confessed 'geek', Guy has been working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to identify ways to automate production of local board reports"**

'A self-confessed "geek", Guy has been working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to identify ways to automate production of local board reports from the information contained in provider finance returns, using his skills to help benefit the national finance function,' the judges

said. 'His focus on continuous improvement and a "how can we make this work?" attitude was clear in the submission made by his finance director, and was also evident to the judges. Guy was viewed to be an excellent all-rounder and a very worthy winner.'

Speaking after he received the award, Mr Dentith said: 'I am extremely proud to have won this. It's really nice to be recognised in this way. I want to thank my team – they have been terrific – and my finance director, Philip Cave, who is great to work for.'

Mr Dentith was praised for the smooth



Winner: Guy Dentith

transition to working from home, which he puts down to the strength of the team.

'We recognised the need to work remotely early on, which gave time for the team to ensure that everything required was in place. We are making regular calls and holding webinars to make sure people are still feeling part of the team.'

## Highly commended

The judges said the shortlist for this year's award was exceptional, but unable to appoint two winners of this award, wished to highly commend **Jo Gooch**, Portsmouth University Hospitals NHS Trust's deputy finance director. During her three years at Portsmouth University Hospitals NHS Trust, Ms Gooch has helped lead the organisation out of financial special measures, achieve a 'good' rating on use of resources, and transition from a £37.9m deficit to a position where it is living within its means. The judges were impressed by her passion for improvement, her role in turning round the financial performance of the trust, and her focus on faster reporting while maintaining quality. She also demonstrated to judges her commitment to talent management and developing the team.

## Also shortlisted

The Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust's **Sophie Harrison** has provided direction for the finance team by writing a directorate strategy that is now used as a basis for all objective-setting. Following a team restructure, she became sole deputy director, and has moved away from formal senior management meetings to a more productive, collaborative approach. She has also recognised achievement by establishing finance directorate awards.

Joining The Christie NHS Foundation Trust in February 2020, **Sally Parkinson** found herself in at the deep end. Due to Covid, those who were not needed on site, including the finance team, were instructed to work from home. She ensured a smooth transition to virtual working. She also stepped up to backfill some of the finance director's duties, providing strong leadership and a seamless service.



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# LIVERPOOL'S TOP TEAM

## Liverpool University Hospitals NHS

**Foundation Trust** finance team has had a busy two years. Not only has the team supported the restructuring of two trusts following a merger in 2019, but it also completely redesigned its service, with a new budget process, all while supporting the trust's response to Covid-19. It is the winner of this year's HFMA Finance Team of the Year Award.

The bringing together of two organisations to create one of the biggest trusts in the country has triggered the development of key finance and governance processes. At the same time, the team continues to support the building of its new £700m hospital and has done all this while supporting the response to Covid-19, which introduced a changed financial landscape.

Finance has led the new hospital project. There were complex financial and technical issues, including some relating to the liquidation of original contractor Carillion,

Covid challenges and changing infection prevention and control requirements. Despite this, the team was able to redesign parts of the new build to meet the new global environment, recover control of the overall

financial picture, and return the project to budget and delivery timescale.

The trust also undertook a complete revision of financial governance during 2021. Standing financial instructions were revised with a bottom-up approach, assisted by external and internal auditors. The revisions simplified instructions and enabled quicker decision-making and resource allocation.

The entire budget process was redesigned with an overriding principle of devolving as much resource to the frontline as possible. The process involved senior clinical, operational and other leaders to establish a fair budget, with formal 'check and challenge' sessions providing a series of check points.

A new business case process was adopted to facilitate the prioritisation of additional spend throughout the year. External governance



Winner: Liverpool University Hospitals NHSFT

experts assessed this process as an 'NHS exemplar' and it has been used to integrated 16 services post-merger in the new organisation.

Rob Forster, the trust's chief finance officer and deputy chief executive, said the trust had to adapt plans to merge the finance team post-merger when Covid hit. 'The finance team adapted amazingly,' he said. 'They merged two ledgers, two systems, two teams and two locations – and this was all done remotely.'

Mr Forster (pictured with head of service Jenny Foster) praised his team's 'can-do spirit'. 'Merging two ledgers alone would be an incredible achievement in itself, but it also took the financial governance systems and made them exemplars, redefining the budget process to be clinically led and organisationally inclusive,' he added.

The judges praised the trust's finance team for seeing the merger as an opportunity to completely review financial governance. 'As well as doing the basics, such as overhauling standing financial instructions and putting a new ledger in place, the team has developed an app-based game that teaches staff about the year-end process and how it affects the whole organisation,' they said.

They also highlighted the finance team's efforts to raise the profile of the organisation – recognising its status as an anchor institution – and to encourage interest in a career in finance, working with schools and colleges, and through Mr Forster's podcast, *The Balance*. The team has also promoted the importance of diversity and inclusion. ●

## Highly commended

The finance team at **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care System** works across 10 statutory bodies and uses an 'intelligent fixed payment system' that supports a focus on system financial balance. The reduced burden on agreeing finances has enabled the deployment of finance skills to help clinicians drive improvements in care and quality. The judges also highlighted the opportunities for staff to progress and share best practice.

## Also shortlisted

The finance team at **Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust** supported the development of the £101m Fit for the Future specialist services programme, with capital accountants supporting the infrastructure development. It also worked with commissioners on a post-intensive treatment unit support service for patients in the community. And it continued to provide a system-wide finance and business intelligence community.

**Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit** has transformed its services over the past year, achieving level 3 Towards Excellence accreditation, investing in robotic process automation and developing a data warehouse and bulk upload tool for month-end and year-end reporting. It also provided support to other NHS bodies to transform their financial control and reporting.

**Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust's** finance team has moved to day one reporting during the past 12 months, enabling faster insight into financial issues. It also redesigned the monthly finance report to focus on key drivers of performance and risk. And it established insight packs for service lines to understand cost drivers and opportunities to improve value. The trust has achieved its financial target for the past two years and continues to achieve more than 98% of non-NHS supplier payment within terms.

"As well as doing the basics, the team developed an app-based game that teaches staff about the year-end process and how it affects the whole organisation"





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# HFMA HONOURS

## Honorary fellowships

The HFMA handed out a record number of honorary fellowships, given to colleagues who have made a sustained and substantial contribution to the life of the association or one of its



committees or branches. However, the evening began on a sombre note, as members took some moments to remember Melanie Simmonds (pictured left), who recently passed away. Ms Simmonds received her honorary fellowship a few weeks ago. HFMA chief executive Mark Knight said she was 'over the moon to have been nominated and awarded it'. He added: 'She constantly thought about the

HFMA in everything she did and promoted the association at every opportunity, and is a colleague who is best described as one of our silent heroes.'



Other honorary fellowships went to:

• **Sandra Easton** (pictured left) – left the health service in the summer, but she continues to get involved with the HFMA and retains an enduring interest in NHS finance.

• **James Rimmer** – also left the service in the summer, and stepped down from the HFMA board of trustees. He is one of the longest standing trustees and chaired the Audit and Finance Committee for a number of years. His leadership and dedication to the association helped it through its darkest days.

• **Kevin Stringer** – he has been a stalwart with the HFMA Governance and Audit committee for more than 10 years and the committee has flourished under his chairmanship and guidance.

• **Colin Forsyth** – (pictured right) a longstanding member of the association, has supported the HFMA both nationally and locally. He has been an active contributor to the Accounting and Standards Committee, has helped organise national conferences, and authored and commented on various HFMA guides.



• **Alison Myles** (pictured left) – who retired at the end of last year. Mr Knight said: 'She is the HFMA. I have known her for nearly 20 years, and she helped me build the association to what it is today. She has staff development in her heart and helped to create South West Finance Skills Development, our e-learning modules, and most recently the HFMA qualification.'

• **Phil Bradley** (pictured right) – has taken early retirement following a long career in NHS finance. He has supported the association for nearly 25 years, and joined the Financial Management and Research Committee in 2006. He has made a huge contribution to its successor Policy and Research Committee, and will be greatly missed by his fellow committee members.



• **Jonathan Stephens** (pictured left) – has been an HFMA member throughout his career, serving as a branch chair and, most recently, as the North West Branch president. He has also made a significant contribution to the HFMA's national work, the Skills Development Network, and the North West Future-Focused Finance regional network of inclusion and diversity ambassadors. He is very much respected and valued and will be missed after 33 years' service.

## Outstanding contributor

An Outstanding Contribution Award was made to immediate past president

**Caroline Clarke** (pictured left). She was appointed HFMA president in 2019, but despite her busy 'day job' as group chief executive of The Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust, she extended her presidency by a further year to help



the association during Covid. Mr Knight said: 'Caroline has made such an outstanding contribution to the work of the association during the past two years that we just simply could not let her go without acknowledging her leadership, her passion for the association and more importantly her friendship.'

## Value maker

**Beth Pidduck** (pictured right), Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust finance transactions manager, took the 2021 One NHS Finance Value Maker of the Year Award. She is one of the lead value makers in the North West and has been a huge supporter and champion of Future-Focused Finance and the value maker network since their launch.



Over the past 12 months, she has provided invaluable support to the One NHS Finance programmes, including delivering workshops for clinicians on demystifying NHS finance, and promoting NHS finance careers.

At her trust, she has supported the move to virtual training, and delivered best practice workshops for the finance and clinical educator network.

# SYSTEM HIT

Access to data between organisations has been one of the challenges of integrating care and collaboration across organisations. But **Dorset Integrated Care System (ICS)** has come up with a solution, which has won it the HFMA Delivering Value with Digital Technology Award.

**"It is great to see the collaboration between clinicians, informatics and finance, with a common aim to maximise the power of data and data analytics to drive value"**

The award is new for 2021, and recognises a digital technology initiative that is innovative and delivers improved value through maximising the outcomes that matter to people, at the lowest possible cost. It was awarded in association with Health Education England, which is supporting the 12-month HFMA project *Delivering value with digital technologies*. This aims to help finance staff support the transformation of care through digital technologies.

The Dorset project, known as the Dorset Intelligence and Insight Service (DiiS), delivers live health and social care data across the Dorset ICS. It aims to enable the appropriate sharing of health and social care information. It supports system planning to deliver better health and wellbeing outcomes, and proactive care. The partners believe this, in turn, will help them design innovative, multidisciplinary and digitally enabled interventions that are scalable across the population.

The service gathers data from a variety of sources, including primary and secondary care, mental health and community services, social care and public health in a cloud-based Microsoft Azure data warehouse, built in-house. Live, automated dashboards are developed in consultation with operational colleagues and factor in wider determinants of health, which enables segmentation of the population according to a variety of risk factors.

For example, using the data available in a Covid-19 insights dashboard, the DiiS team worked with colleagues in The Blackmore Vale Partnership, part of The Vale Primary Care Network, during the pandemic to establish a population health management approach to identify vulnerable people most at risk from Covid. The analysis provided evidence for tailored interventions and better utilisation

of resources across primary and community care, voluntary and third sectors, and provides a means of monitoring outcomes and benefits. In the second phase, initiated as the first lockdown eased, the project focused on people who were shielding.

The service has allowed clinicians, in consultation with social care colleagues, social prescribers and voluntary and third sectors, to work more closely, directing multidisciplinary teams to those most in need. Three-quarters of one cohort contacted by the PCN received a social prescribing offer with a recorded outcome, for example.

The judges said: 'This features innovative and creative use of data at scale across Dorset ICS to support improvements in patient care and the better use of resources. There are good examples of how data insights have led to action, with changes to clinical practice to improve population health and tackle health inequalities.'

'It is great to see the degree of collaboration between clinicians, informatics and finance,



Winner: Dorset Integrated Care System

with a common aim to maximise the power of data and data analytics to drive value.'

Head of DiiS, Heather Case (pictured above, right, with Livvy Williams, deputy head: transformation at DiiS) said she was delighted to win the award. 'It has taken four years to build, but the hard work has been worth it. We are all more connected, and this will help the integrated care system and the digital healthcare agenda.' ●

## Also shortlisted

**Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust** was shortlisted for projects where IT, finance and costing teams worked together to deliver value in patient care using digital technologies. In one scheme, the teams were able to redirect 50,000 hours of clinical time by removing duplication, reducing inefficiencies and eliminating paper-based processes.

In another example, they automated ambulance handovers, with a digital worker called Bob, which automates the transfer of data from the South Coast Ambulance Service to the emergency department system, ensuring handovers are faster and safer. It also minimises the stress for patients, with the need for questions on their medical history reduced.

Staff feel better supported by technology, that their concerns have been heard and acted on, and that they have been given more time to care for patients.

As a result of fast-tracking its digital transformation, **St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust** has made its patient care safer and more efficient. Digitisation means that more than 2,000 clinicians no longer use paper for observations, assessments, handovers and referrals, with 40,000 electronic handovers now completed each month. Its new digital process supports the target of removing 90% of paper. The trust moved from 178th in the NHS digital maturity ranking to 19th in less than a year. Patients also benefit from reduced lengths of stay, better communication and greater choice. Clinicians see improved processes, prioritisation of the sickest patients, greater agility in patient care and improved information and collaboration. A mobile bed management system has enhanced patient flow, and overall clinical productivity has increased.



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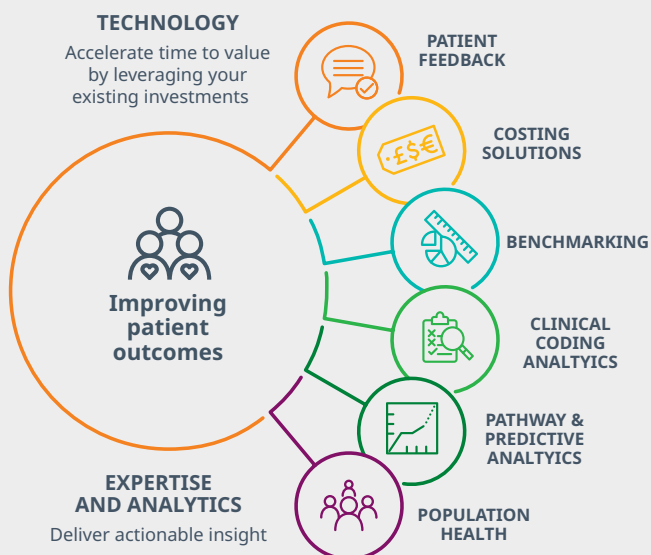
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# AMBASSADOR ROLE

## Airedale NHS Foundation

**Trust** has taken a comprehensive approach to diversity and inclusion within the finance team, making it a worthy winner of this year's inaugural HFMA Diversity and Inclusion Award.

Improving diversity and inclusion within finance teams has been prioritised nationally, with the NHS finance equality, diversity and inclusion action plan published recently by One NHS Finance. It is an agenda that has been enthusiastically embraced by Airedale, where diversity ambassadors are helping to make significant improvements across the team over the past 18 months.

Job applications are encouraged from a wide audience using various channels. The trust has created apprenticeships and shadowing opportunities, empowered people to make changes in their roles, and has a finance director who is leading the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) agenda across the West Yorkshire system.

An equality and diversity ambition is also built into the finance team's five-year finance strategy and workplan. This involves the development of 'lunch and learn' sessions, improved engagement with local schools and colleges, the introduction of job rotation and swaps, and plans to make finance information and training more accessible to all.

A diverse workforce is already in evidence. Of the 63 people in the finance team, which also includes the information department, 71% are women and 29% men. At band 7 and above, women represent 59% of the workforce. Its ethnicity mix aligns with its population (81% white, 17% black, Asian and minority ethnic). This continues at band 7 and above.

The trust says this has been achieved by proactive recruitment, with a team passionate about the agenda and aware of the benefits of having diverse opinions around the table.

Diversity and inclusion ambassadors have played a big role – and the trust has three. As one of the first providers to have such ambassadors, efforts were made to ensure they had a voice and were able to suggest changes. The five-year strategy includes a plan to create



Winner: Airedale NHSFT

a five-year plan specifically on EDI and this is currently in development.

The team measures its performance using gender and race diversity data and also by looking at the access to development opportunities team members are getting – ensuring this is inclusive.

Outside the trust, executive director of finance Amy Whitaker (pictured with assistant director of finance Izaaz Mohammed) leads on EDI across the system and has encouraged support for the ambassador network, with all


trusts now having an ambassador. She also chairs the diversity and inclusion ambassador network for North East and Yorkshire and is encouraging other systems to further commit to this agenda.

Speaking after the awards ceremony, Ms Whitaker said the trust was now over-represented at senior level, which sent out a great message.

'We are now known for our diversity and inclusion agenda and hopefully this award will amplify that,' she said, adding that people were moving sideways into the trust, as well as applying for promotions.

She also insisted results could be achieved quickly. 'We thought it would be a long-term

challenge, but it happened for us in two to three years,' she said. 'We appointed a couple of key posts and created some apprenticeships and things turned around really quickly.'

The judges said the Airedale team was 'passionate' and showed 'real commitment' to the agenda. They were working inside and outside their organisation and looking to make change sustainable. 'The senior team is engaged and leading by example,' they said. 'This was a really, really great submission.' 

## Highly commended

**Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust** was highly commended by judges for a 'seriously impressive submission' and for working through challenges methodically and with clear commitment. The population served by the trust is among the most ethnically diverse in England and the team's mix of black and minority ethnic and female staff is well above the national average. However, its challenge has been in senior roles (8C and above), where there is significantly less diversity. An EDI improvement group has led a range of initiatives that have delivered diversity data analysis, flexible working, unconscious bias training, reverse mentoring and lunch-and-learn cultural awareness sessions.

## Also shortlisted

**Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust** also set out to tackle diversity in senior roles. A survey explored the team's understanding of diversity, feelings of inclusivity and being valued, and equal opportunities for training and development. It also sought views on what changes were needed. This led to a set of recommendations and a measurable action plan. Examples of actions include: the sharing of good examples of inclusive adverts; the consideration of annualised hours on case-by-case basis; the creation of diverse interview panels; and the setting of diversity and inclusion targets across all banding levels.

# OUTSTANDING WIN

Judges said they were 'blown away' by **Matthew Wood** – winner of the 2021 HFMA Working with Finance – Clinician of the Year Award – and his unique role as clinical finance director of Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust. They said he had helped to deliver an unbreakable bond between clinicians and finance teams that had underpinned service improvement, transformation, innovation and leadership.

Dr Wood was the first clinician at Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust to take on the role of clinical director of finance in 2017. He undertakes this role alongside his duties as consultant anaesthetist and clinical director for one of the trust's four divisions.

The role involves providing financial advice and assurance to the chief finance officer, chief nurse and medical director on financial matters that impact patient care, investments, efficiency, benchmarking, process and governance. And as part of the role, he sits on the trust's finance and investment committee, the capital priorities group, the business case review committee and the trust leadership team.

Trust chief finance officer Mark Orchard said: 'Matthew has played a direct and active role in developing the trust's financial strategy for improvement. I could not be more proud to be on this team and to work alongside Matthew and our finance team at this time.'

Dr Wood has been instrumental in integrating the clinical world with the finance agenda. He plays an active role in the patient-level costing/service line reporting programme and champions clinical engagement throughout the organisation.

He led a costing review to audit patient notes against what was recorded within the costing system to help ensure costing data provided an accurate translation of medical notes. As a by-product of these reviews, insight packs have been developed for services to provide a one-stop shop of information to highlight efficiency opportunities.

During the first wave of the pandemic, Dr Wood drove the trust-wide procurement work and led a daily Covid panel establishing a lean process to scrutinise requests.

He also supported trust efficiency programmes. For example, he led work to



Winner: Matthew Wood

**"Dr Wood had helped deliver an unbreakable bond between clinicians and finance teams that had underpinned service transformation, innovation and leadership"**

standardise the orthoprosthesis used for knee replacements, which led to a recurring saving of £300,000 per year. This approach is now being rolled out across other consumables used within theatres.

In leading his division, Dr Wood ensures that full consideration is given to the financial position and is keen for effective controls

to always be in place, whether related to workforce, safety or procurement.

And he is a strong supporter of the organisation's Delivering Excellence programme, which has finance as one of five key strategic aims.

Dr Wood said that the award was recognition for a team that had made huge efforts to understand and respond to the needs of clinicians. 'This is demonstrated by their help securing funding – capital and revenue – for clinical services and understanding what will and won't work for clinical cost improvement schemes.'

He also praised the way finance data was made available in a timely and comprehensible way, in particular highlighting day one reporting and reference cost data.

'I hope the award encourages clinical leaders to explain financial issues to clinical colleagues and ignite some more interest from clinicians, from all professional backgrounds, in management of financial resources,' he added.

The judges said the role had the potential to be replicated across the country and Dr Wood was an outstanding recipient of the award. ●

## Also shortlisted

**Sue Priestley**, clinical director for gastroenterology at St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, was shortlisted for her work in securing resources for the trust's gastrointestinal physiology service and increased staffing. During her time as clinical director, the trust's gastroenterology reference cost score has improved from an already impressive 83 to 80 and she also led work to improve procedure coding following a Getting it Right First Time review. Dr Priestley is also the 'go to person' for colleagues when writing business cases or completing research bids.

As clinical director for respiratory services at Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, **Mike Davies** is responsible for efficiency and effectiveness. He has shown a firm grip of budget and expenditure, a wider recognition of transformational opportunities and respect for robust reporting and data collection. Working with management accounts colleagues, Dr Davies identified permanent benefits from alternative working arrangements established in the trust's response to Covid-19. He also oversaw pathway redesigns, safeguarding access for long-term patients while achieving cost savings.



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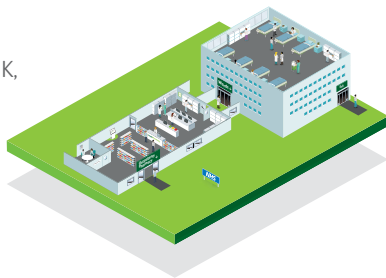
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# MERGER MANAGERS

## Liverpool University Hospitals NHS

**Foundation Trust (LUFT)** was given the 2021 HFMA Governance Award for the steps it took to successfully merge and restructure two trusts, while responding to Covid-19 and the subsequent shifting financial landscape. The trust is now one of the biggest in the country, following the merger of Aintree University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust in October 2019.

The new trust needed a fit-for-purpose governance structure. So, in 2021, the trust revised its governance, in collaboration with service users and its audit and finance committee, and using external expertise. This aimed to simplify financial governance, and facilitate precise and agile financial management, giving powers to budget holders.

The review helped the trust better manage risk and achieve its objectives by promoting strong and integrated governance. This was recognised in its 2021 external audit report.

It revised its key strategic frameworks, including standing financial instructions, and budget-setting and business case processes, with help from internal and external auditors and comparisons with other trusts.

Rules were simplified to speed up decision-making and resource allocation, and the new regulations were presented in a user-friendly guide to support budget-holders.

It focused on budget-holder engagement and increasing their ownership of the budget and business case processes. Both processes were redesigned. The budget procedure was co-designed with the budget-holders, based on transparent, factual, realistic and prioritised spend. Six check-and-challenge sessions, including one with the full board, were held.

The new business case process allows additional spend to be clearly identified, prioritised and approved, and has been used to integrate 16 services post-merger. Budget-holders are also offered finance training. The trust's charity governance was overhauled. Charities from the two legacy trusts were merged, with a re-tender of fund management enhancing its recognition of social benefit.

Deputy director of finance Shahida Mohammed (pictured with deputy chief finance officer Ian Jones) said: 'We brought together the two organisations under a single governance structure and made sure the



Winner: Liverpool University Hospitals NHSFT

"The trust developed a comprehensive, structured approach to embedding good governance – achieving this at such a difficult time was remarkable"

governance was fit for purpose. We took the opportunity to consolidate our policies and practices.'

The judges said the trust's work had provided a strong, integrated approach to governance. 'It's developed a comprehensive, structured approach to embedding good governance – achieving all this at such a difficult time was remarkable. We were particularly impressed by the use of

technology, developing a training app used to inform and connect individuals within and outside of finance. This work at LUFT provides a number of learning opportunities, from reducing charitable funds to effective business case and budget process development. Each element provides a good example of how active engagement has been used to improve financial management and embed great governance through the organisation.' ●

## Highly commended

The judges highly commended both submissions that were also shortlisted. **NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP)** was commended for its central management of the procurement and financing of personal protective equipment (PPE) and field hospital equipment during the pandemic. PPE procurement increased from £4.5m a year to about £300m in 2020/21. NWSSP had to rapidly transform the procurement and decision-making processes. The judges said NWSSP had delivered clear, effective and rapid governance in unprecedented circumstances. There were exceptional pressures to advance payments to unknown suppliers with high risk ratings and prices. The judges felt the governance approach developed by NWSSP provided invaluable support to staff under pressure. It had developed a 28-point checklist, which included consideration of the product standard, company background checks, pricing and payment arrangements, and advice and notes on risk to the board.

The judges also highly commended **Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group** on its work to merge its three constituent CCGs. There were four elements to the CCG's approach: structure; oversight responsibilities; people, culture and stakeholders; and infrastructure. TIAA's assurance helped satisfy NHS England and NHS Improvement and a new accountable officer that all the merger conditions had been met. 'The approach to engagement with partners from different sectors, in particular GP members, and how they worked together positively to engage communities, was particularly impressive during a pandemic,' the judges said. The judging panel also praised the CCG for a simple, clear governance approach. 'The focus on culture and supporting staff through the management of change provides some excellent lessons that can be shared as integrated care systems come together,' they added.





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# COST STARS

Robust costing is the main informer of **Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust's** strategic objective to eliminate its underlying deficit. The trust has transformed its costing process in recent years, and it is the winner of the 2021 HFMA Costing Award.

Back in 2017/18, the mental health trust had an underlying annual deficit of £6m and reported management accounts via cost centres. Outputs from its patient-level costing system were not widely shared and clinical teams did not understand if their services made a loss or broke even.

The change came with the development of service-line reporting (SLR), which enabled the trust to see the financial performance for each of its four clinical care groups. To do this accurately, it worked with commissioners to split its income from its block contract into something that was unit price based.

It also needed to allocate medical time accurately – again, working with clinical directors to understand job plans and build apportionment tables within its system.

With 33 sites and 66 buildings, estates colleagues worked with the costing team to review floor plans and internal areas to give a better understanding of building occupation and resource allocation.

The new SLR approach revealed that one care group was responsible for nearly half of the trust deficit, driven by a bed price that was lower compared with peer organisations, with an impact of £1m a year. It also became clear that costs on one site in the trust were considerably higher than another, despite providing the same services.

This enabled the finance team to challenge the care group and start to understand the drivers of these higher costs. To date, the care group's recurrent cost improvement programme has been £1.5m.

The memory assessment service was another area subject to a deep dive. With the

**"The clarity of purpose from the senior finance team about the important role of costing in managing finances and improving services shone through"**



Winner: Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

service operating at a loss of £1m a year, the analysis revealed variation across the 11 teams covering the county, with initial assessments taking


between 30 minutes and two hours. A clinician-led initiative standardised this time.

The trust is keen to improve its understanding of outcomes, using patient-reported outcome measures. Activity is being linked into SLR reporting and required outcome measures are being reviewed.

Deputy director of finance Victoria French (pictured far left) said the finance team had worked incredibly hard over the last few years, venturing into territory that has felt relatively untouched in terms of mental health costing.

'We are fortunate to have had engagement at all levels in the trust,' she said. 'This has helped to confirm the importance of good costing data in helping to inform decisions. We were also taken seriously when escalating areas that were outliers and needed addressing, and then given executive support in tackling these.'

She said having the costing function integrated within financial management had encouraged a team approach to costing.

The judges called the work 'a leading example of costing in a mental health trust.' 'The leadership and clarity of purpose from the senior finance team about the important role of costing in managing finances and improving services shone through.' 

## Highly commended

Finance staff at **Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Groups** were a key part of the team that introduced the Leicestershire primary care funding model in 2021/22. The model uses population health data, primary and secondary care statistics and costing information in a needs-based formula that aligns primary care funding with population need. It helps to address health inequalities and provides a simpler payment approach, reducing the number of separate payment streams to general practices. Compared with the national funding model, the system provided increases of more than 10% to practices with a high index of multiple deprivation. The team worked closely with research institutes and based its weighting on a known weighting used in Europe, but adapted to reflect the local population.

## Also shortlisted

**East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust** developed a local cost per weighted activity unit (WAU) to help senior managers hold services to account for performance. The index was considered particularly important given the increased use of guaranteed income and block contracts and moves away from service line reporting based on the delegation of payment by results income. The metric is reported as an index against a target of 100 and combines financial performance and casemix-adjusted activity information. Reports are published by working day eight, giving a close to real time view of performance compared with national cost per WAU data published annually.

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# Past winners

## Finance Team\*/Accounts Team

- 2020\* Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHSFT
- 2019\* Hampshire and Isle of Wight Partnership of CCGs
- 2018\* Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHST
- 2017\* Alder Hey Children's NHSFT
- 2016 Hull CCG **photo 1**
- 2015 Nottingham University Hospitals NHST
- 2014 Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHSFT
- 2013 Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS FT
- 2012 Alder Hey Children's NHSFT
- 2011 5 Boroughs Partnership NHSFT
- 2010 NHS Bournemouth and Poole
- 2009 Mersey Care NHST
- 2008 Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHST



## Clinician/Clinical Engagement\*

- 2020 Kulandaivel Sakthivel, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHST
- 2019 Maggie Davies, Western Sussex Hospitals NHS FT
- 2018 David Berridge, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHST **photo 2**
- 2017 Paul Buss, Aneurin Bevan UHB
- 2016 Tara Kearney, Salford Royal NHSFT
- 2015 Stephen Liversedge, Bolton CCG
- 2014 Rob Duncombe, The Christie NHSFT
- 2013 David Fearnley, Mersey Care NHST
- 2012 Malik Ramadhan, Barts Health NHST
- 2011 Jason Leitch, Scottish Government
- 2010 Philip Thomas, Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals Trust
- 2009 Ellen Wilkinson, Cornwall Partnership NHST
- 2008\* South Manchester PBC and NHS Manchester



- 2012 Richard Wheeler, Oxford University Hospitals NHST
- 2011 Joanne Fitzpatrick, The Christie NHSFT
- 2010 Elaine Konieczny, Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHST

## Finance Director

- 2020 Catherine Phillips, North Bristol NHST **photo 3**
- 2019 Karen Geoghegan, Brighton and Sussex Hospitals NHST/Western Sussex Hospitals NHSFT
- 2018 Kathy Roe, Tameside and Glossop CCG/Tameside MBC
- 2017 Adrian Roberts, Manchester University NHSFT
- 2016 Annette Walker, Bolton CCG
- 2015 Simon Worthington, Bolton NHSFT
- 2014 Alan Brace, Aneurin Bevan UHB
- 2013 Colin Martin, Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHSFT and Bill Shields, Imperial College Healthcare NHST
- 2012 Caroline Clarke, Royal Free London NHSFT
- 2011 David Melbourne, Birmingham Children's Hospital NHSFT
- 2010 Steve Webster, North Bristol NHST
- 2009 Paul Hinnigan, NHS Blackburn with Darwen PCT
- 2008 Sue Jacques, County Durham and Darlington NHSFT
- 2007 Jane Tomkinson, Countess of Chester NHSFT

## Innovation\*/Efficiency

- 2020\* Alder Hey Children's NHSFT
- 2019\* Cheshire and Merseyside HCP, with MIAA
- 2018\* Devon Partnership NHST
- 2017\* Lancashire Care NHSFT
- 2016\* Bolton CCG and Bolton NHSFT

- 2015\* Dorset CCG
- 2014 Alder Hey Children's NHSFT
- 2013 Portsmouth CCG
- 2012 Countess of Chester Hospital NHSFT/ Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHSFT **photo 4**
- 2011 NHS Oldham
- 2010 Basildon & Thurrock University Hospitals NHSFT
- 2009 Newham University Hospital NHST

## FFF Award

- 2020 Natasha Monroe, NHS England and NHS Improvement
- 2019 Ken Godber, East Midlands lead
- 2018 Mark Songhurst, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHST
- 2017 John McLoughlin, NHS England
- 2016 Ben Roberts, Bolton NHSFT

## Governance

- 2020 East Suffolk and North Essex NHSFT
- 2019 Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHST, Sutton CCG and Surrey Downs CCG
- 2018 Northern Care Alliance NHS Group and Mersey Internal Audit Agency
- 2017 Chorley and South Ribble CCG and Greater Preston CCG
- 2016 Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHSFT **photo 5**
- 2015 North East Lincolnshire CCG, North Lincolnshire CCG, Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHSFT, Navigo Health and Social Care CIC and Care Plus Group
- 2014 South Warwickshire NHSFT
- 2013 Imperial College Healthcare NHST
- 2012 Leicestershire Partnership NHST/EMIAS
- 2011 University Hospital of South Manchester NHSFT
- 2010 Plymouth Hospitals NHST and Audit South West
- 2009 The Ipswich Hospital NHST
- 2008 Plymouth Hospitals NHST

## Havelock Training

- 2020 Alder Hey Children's NHSFT
- 2019 Countess of Chester Hospital NHSFT
- 2018 Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHSFT
- 2017 North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHST **photo 6**
- 2016 London Ambulance Service NHST
- 2015 Liverpool CCG
- 2014 The Walton Centre NHSFT
- 2013 Nottingham University Hospitals NHST
- 2012 Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHSFT
- 2011 East Kent Hospitals University NHSFT
- 2010 NHS Central Lancashire
- 2009 Heart of England NHSFT
- 2008 NHS London

## Embracing technology

- 2020 East Lancashire Hospitals NHST

## Overcoming adversity

- 2020 NHS Business Services Authority