

13 May 2014

QNI Spring Awards held on International Nurses Day

Almost 220 community nurses and their guests gathered for an evening of celebration on International Nurses Day.

At the event, five nurses received the Queen Mother's Award for Outstanding Service. Fifteen nurses were presented with awards for completion of Fund for Innovation and Leadership projects during 2013, and 65 Queen's Nurses received their badges and certificates.

The event was held at the Royal Garden Hotel in London. The invited audience included a delegation of nurses from Leiden, The Netherlands, who are visiting the UK to learn about care of the elderly here.

The Outstanding Service Awards were presented by Kate Billingham CBE, Chair of the QNI's Council. Julia Gibson-Cranch, Christine Madeley, Ruth Oshikanlu, Candice Pellet OBE and Claire Rowley were presented with their certificates, signed by the charity's Patron, HM The Queen. The award was founded in 1994 and is presented to nurses and midwives who have given exceptional service to patients. The award is for those who have given service to patients and the profession, over and above the call of duty; and have made a particularly distinguished contribution to the health of people in the community. Their full citations are given below.

The project leaders of the Fund for Innovation and Leadership were presented with their certificates by Lady Henrietta St George. Lady Henrietta is a trustee of the Burdett Trust for Nursing, which provides financial support to this key programme run by the QNI. The individual projects run for one year and were completed in December 2013. Together they improved the lives of hundreds of patients. Following the award ceremony, the nurse leaders gave poster presentations about their projects to the guests. A full list of the nurses and the titles of their projects is given below. More information about their projects will be available on the QNI website in due course.

The Queen's Nurses were presented with their badges and certificates by Jane Cummings, CNO England. The title of Queen's Nurse (QN) indicates a commitment to the values of community nursing, to excellent patient care, and to a continuous process of learning and leadership. Locally, they are leading improvement projects and redesigning services to improve care for patients. Nationally, they have been in demand from a number of organizations including the Department of Health, for their expertise in and commitment to community nursing. Ms Cummings said that today's QNs embody the virtues of the theme for International Nurses Day 2014, which is: 'Nurses are a force for change and a vital resource for health'.

The audience also heard from George Plumtre, chief executive of The National Gardens Scheme (NGS), the QNI's long term partner and key funder. Mr Plumtre joined the other speakers in congratulating the award winners and Queen's Nurses, and paid tribute to the vital importance of the work that they do improving care for patients in their own homes and communities everywhere. Kate Billingham and the QNI's chief executive, Dr Crystal Oldman, together thanked the NGS and the thousands of garden owners who volunteer for it, for the vital funds that they raise for the QNI each year.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Photographs of the event can be downloaded

here: <https://plus.google.com/photos/105129537556059981437/albums/6013959937346079025?authkey=CL3T-CbgPbXEQ>

If you would like further details of any of the award winners, please contact the QNI communications team.

Outstanding Service Award winners' citation

Ruth Oluwatosin Oshikanlu

Ruth is an inspirational professional who is passionate about the Health Visiting profession and the clients she serves. She is proactive and is always looking for opportunities to support her colleagues to deliver excellent care. Ruth does not mind doing difficult things and is always willing to put her head above the parapet, challenging the status quo to improve client experience and quality of care provided.

Ruth is a great leader and is very resilient and tenacious. She does not give up but will keep striving for success, endeavouring to carry others with her. Last year, Ruth developed a toolkit to help pregnant women and new mothers tune in to the needs of their unborn/new babies to foster the neurological development of their babies and promote infant mental health. She self-published a parenting book, *Tune In To Your Baby: Because Babies Don't Come with An Instruction Manual*. The book was designed for parents to use as if they had the Health Visitor with them at all times. She invited over 30 parents to read and review the book, as she wrote it to ensure it was relevant and met their needs. She is currently developing this into a programme and an app for clients to use on their smartphones.

Ruth is visionary, believing nothing is impossible and seeks solutions to problems. Once she has an idea, it does not remain one for long. She develops it and seeks the support she requires to actualise it. Ruth has attributes of a transformational leader and is always learning, viewing mistakes as an opportunity to learn, recognising that there is no such thing as failure. Ruth has a passion for working with marginalised communities and has been involved with delivering projects to meet the needs of vulnerable and socially excluded groups. She is also an associate member of the CNO BME Advisory Group.

She is pioneering and has been in many of the first groups - She worked in one of the first Family Nurse Partnership pilot sites and was on the first Nurse First cohort, where she obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Innovation and is now undertaking her Master's degree. Her desire for narrowing the gap in inequalities inspired her to form a charity in collaboration with six other passionate individuals, where she supports communities to develop their own time banks within schools, GP practices and their local communities. In her own time she also volunteers as mentor/coach for young girls with low-self-esteem. Ruth has been able to achieve all the above despite being a single parent. Ruth is an excellent role model for the profession.