

Press release – Wednesday 24th March 2021

One year on, ICU Physiotherapist at Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust wins national award for critical COVID-19 care



Cordy Gaubert, a Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist at Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (BTHFT), has won the prestigious NHS Employers Outstanding Contribution title, at the fifth [Our Health Heroes Awards](#), for her integral role in the ongoing fight against COVID-19.

More than 300 NHS and Social Care staff came together virtually on March 23, with sector and government leaders for the ceremony, where Cordy was presented with the top prize by Michelle Wayt, Assistant Director at NHS Employers.

Healthcare professionals submitted more than 600 nominations across nine award categories, including the closely contested Outstanding Contribution title. On announcing the national winner, Michelle said: *“Chosen from hundreds of nominees, Cordy stands out as a true role model and a credit to the NHS. Her remarkable efforts, commitment, and passion for her work is what makes her so deserving of this award. This is an incredible achievement to celebrate and relish in, you should be so, so proud.”*

Delivered by Skills for Health, with the help of partners NHS Employers, UNISON, SFJ Awards and Bevan Brittan, the annual Our Health Heroes campaign shines a light on the extraordinary efforts of thousands of healthcare support staff who work hard behind the scenes to keep the system running. After a year in which the NHS faced its toughest ever challenges, the first anniversary of the first UK lockdown was an apt day to be recognising, reflecting, and celebrating the difference to people lives these unsung health heroes continue to make, day after day.



Cordy said: *“This year has been the most challenging of my career, both physically and emotionally, but has also demonstrated to me the incredible human resilience in my physiotherapy, nursing and medical colleagues, and also in our patients.”*

Since the onset of the pandemic, Cordy has worked tirelessly alongside her medical colleagues at BTHFT, implementing changes in service to accommodate the vast numbers of COVID-19 hospital patients. Throughout the last twelve months, as lead Intensive Care Unit (ICU) physiotherapist, she has worked above and beyond her contracted hours, ensuring appropriate equipment is available to meet the needs of patients. She has spent endless hours checking novel uses of Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machines, to allow patients to be treated, and to make certain the hospital would not run out of oxygen.

During this time, Cordy has also been an unrelenting support to the wider Multi-Disciplinary Team within ICU and Neuro Physiotherapy, provided respiratory teaching to the huge numbers of staff redeployed to the medical wards, and worked closely with those picking up discharged ICU patients. Meanwhile at home, she developed pathways of care to try and prevent complications of long-stay ICU patients, effectively bringing respiratory, musculoskeletal, and neuro-physiotherapy teams together in a unified way.

Cordy shows great compassion for her patients and treats them with a seemingly endless energy. She is always happy and keen to share her knowledge and learning about her experiences with patients with peers and wants to hear back in return. She has spearheaded collaboration between a wide cross-section of the therapy department, like never before, yet she would deny this and say it was a total team effort.

On the back of this work, Cordy has also submitted a business plan for ongoing roles working in Critical Care Rehabilitation, in order to enhance the ongoing care that ICU-leavers get once discharged and back on the long road to recovery. She has also led on the acquisition of equipment to aid patient recovery in ICU, which has also benefitted the Stroke and Neuro teams in their rehabilitation efforts.

Nicola Sheehan, Head of Therapies at BTHFT said: *“We are extremely proud that Cordy was nominated for this award. She is an inspirational physiotherapist who goes over and above in the care and support of her patients and her team. COVID-19 has brought many challenges for health services, patients, and staff, and Cordy truly has made an outstanding contribution in the ongoing fight against this disease.”*

Cordy is an unassuming force to be reckoned with and throughout the pandemic has led a uniformed endeavour where clinicians felt supported, patient care has been excellent, and services have developed for good.

Cordy said: *“I was extremely overwhelmed and humbled to hear I was nominated for this award. To win the national trophy means a huge amount to me personally but is also a reflection of many people's hard work and the collaboration between multi-professional teams. I am very lucky to work with such brilliant, supportive, and innovative colleagues within our Therapy department and on Critical Care at BTHFT.”*

Cordy fought off strong competition from two other finalists from across the UK, yet after securing the most support via a public vote, was decided the national gold winner. Dr Amit Arora, consultant geriatrician at University Hospitals of North Midlands took home the silver and Janis Hostad, an



Education and Development Coordinator for cancer and palliative care at Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, was awarded the bronze.

John Rogers, Chief Executive at Skills for Health said: *“We received over 470 nominations for this award and arguably every one of them deserves recognition for their efforts during the last year. Cordy, Amit and Janis continue to go above and beyond in so many ways and have made an outstanding contribution, not only to the immediate care of individuals, but to their colleagues and the wider healthcare sector.”*

For more information about all of this year’s Our Health Heroes winners and to watch the ceremony on demand, visit: <https://skillsforhealth.org.uk/about-us/our-health-heroes/>

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Notes to editors

About Skills for Health

[Skills for Health](#) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to the development of an improved and sustainable healthcare workforce across the UK. Established in 2002 as the Sector Skills Council for Health for the UK health sector, it is the authoritative voice on workforce skills issues and offers proven solutions and tools, with the expertise and experience to use them effectively.

About NHS Employers

[NHS Employers](#) is the employers’ organisation for the NHS in England. They support NHS workforce leaders through practical tools and resources, expert advice, and guidance, and by listening to employers to ensure their voice is represented in health policy and practice.

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