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Honour for inspirational health visitor

The Institute of Health Visitors has recognised a Northumbria lecturer as an exceptional leader who is making a real difference to children and families in England.

Vicky Gilroy, a Senior Lecturer in Specialist Community Public Health Nursing at Northumbria as well as being a Project Manager at the Institute of Health Visiting, is one of 150 outstanding health visitors to receive Fellowship of the Institute of Health Visiting (FiHV).

The Fellowship scheme, which is sponsored by the Department of Health, set out to identify and acknowledge exceptional health visitors who have made a

real difference to health outcomes for children and families in England.

Fellows had to go through a rigorous application process in which they assessed for their contribution to health visiting, children, families and communities, as well as demonstrating excellence in practice and leadership potential.

The Institute will use its new Fellows to create a country-wide group of expert leaders who will support local community healthcare providers and new local authority commissioners when health visiting commissioning moves to local authority control in October 2015.

Vicky, who had an extensive career working as a practitioner with children and families, both as a children's nurse and a health visitor, now supports the education of future health visitors in her role at Northumbria.

She said: "I've always been passionate about supporting children and families and after working initially as a hospital nurse, I genuinely felt that more could be done to support families in their homes as well as hospitals. This was why I decided to move into health visiting and subsequently into education.

"As well as teaching students and supporting the development of future practitioners, a key part of my role to date has been working with the Institute of Health Visiting to develop a national CPD framework for all health visitors.

"Becoming a Fellow is already proving to be extremely useful and is bringing extra credibility in terms of networking with influential groups to lead the development of children's services. It is certainly opening new doors."

Dr Cheryll Adams, Director of the Institute of Health Visiting, said: "Our Fellows are already really strengthening leadership in the health visiting profession and will now help develop the next generation of health visitors.

"Becoming a Fellow is just the start of an exciting journey with the Institute of Health Visiting. Together, we will integrate new policy and research into practice and ensure that health visitors continue to make a real difference to the health outcomes of children and their families."

The Institute of Health Visiting is a UK Centre of Excellence launched to promote excellence in health visiting practice to benefit all children, families and communities. It aims to raise standards in health visiting practice, to improve public health outcomes for all children, families and communities.

For more information on Northumbria's courses in Public Health Nursing visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/publichealth

For more information on the Institute of Health Visitors visit www.ihv.org.uk

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focussed, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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