



Heath Award recipients L-R: Claire Gibson; Madeleine Gray; Karen Davies; Amanda Stephenson; Daniel Fabian

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Newly-qualified Northumbria nurses honoured for their dedication to the role

Six newly qualified adult and children's nurses have each received an award in recognition of their exceptional efforts in their nursing studies and caring for patients.

The prestigious Heath Award is awarded in recognition of the commitment they've shown whilst studying for their degree at Northumbria University; both academically and within their work placements in local NHS hospitals and community teams.

The Health Award, which was established in 1892 by George Yeoman Heath, former President of the Royal College of Medicine, is presented each year to the best nurses and midwives graduating from Northumbria's [nursing and midwifery programmes](#).

Those studying nursing and midwifery degrees spend half of their time in University, and the other half on placement in NHS hospitals and community teams across the region, where they put their new-found skills into practice.

This year's winners, who all achieved First Class Honours in their nursing degree programmes, were chosen after being nominated for their commitment to studies by the University's academics and clinical staff.

The 2019 winners are: Daniel Fabian of Killingworth who works as a Children's Nurse at the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) in Newcastle, Amanda Stephenson of Northumberland who works as a Community Mental Health Nurse in Alnwick and Berwick, Anna Watkinson from Heaton who works as an Adult Nurse at the RVI, Claire Gibson of Sunderland who works as a Mental Health Nurse at Monkwearmouth Hospital, Karen Davies of Rowlands Gill who works as an Adult Nurse at the Queen Elizabeth in Gateshead, and Madeleine Gray from Morpeth who works as a Learning Disability Nurse at Northgate Hospital in Northumberland.

One of the winners, 27-year-old Daniel Fabian, went on to work in the Bone Marrow Transplant Ward at the RVI – which along with Great Ormond Street Hospital is one of only two centres in the country providing this specialism.

“We were treating patients from Europe and the Middle East,” he said. “The children were in hospital for a long time so you really got to know them and to build a relationship with them. It was difficult as the children were often very sick. But that is why I got into nursing to build those relationships which I enjoy.”

Daniel has since moved to the paediatric research team in the Great North Children's Hospital at the RVI. His role involves providing nursing care for children enrolled in clinical research studies which are across a wide range of areas such as kidneys, skin conditions and blood treatments.

Professor Alison Machin, Head of Nursing, Midwifery and Health at

Northumbria University, said: “Every year I am so impressed with the quality of the nominations for these awards and this year is by no means any exception. The winners have excelled both in their studies and working with colleagues in the local NHS, and I am incredibly proud of their achievements.

“Northumbria University is the largest provider of nurse education in the North East of England, and we are privileged to have such hard working, compassionate and high achieving students who develop into high quality, skilled professionals. It is a real honour to teach and work with them, and it’s wonderful to be able to recognise their efforts in this way.”

The students were presented with their awards - a medal and certificate - at a special ceremony by Professor Kath McCourt, in her capacity as President of the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation.

Professor McCourt has had an extensive career as a nurse, midwife and educationalist in the UK and overseas. On retirement as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, she became a Pro Chancellor at Northumbria University. She is also a Non-Executive Director at the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Professor McCourt said: “Having spent much of my career in the NHS as a both nurse and a midwife I know first-hand what a rewarding profession it is and how dedicated and committed my colleagues were, and continue to be. It is a real pleasure for me to present these awards to such outstanding newly qualified nurses.

“Nursing continues to evolve and I know that the award winners have bright futures ahead of them as the role develops.”

Maurya Cushlow, Executive Chief Nurse at the Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said: “Nursing and midwifery are such critical roles, and the quality of care makes all the difference to the patient experience.

“It’s a privilege to see, first hand, the excellent new generation of nurses and midwives that are graduating from Northumbria University, in partnership with our local hospitals. These students are selected not only for their excellent academic and clinical performance, but also for the behaviours and

qualities they have displayed throughout their education and training. These winners have set exceptional standards within their profession already, and are very worthy recipients of the Heath Award.”

For more information on nursing, midwifery and health courses at Northumbria University, visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/nursing

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