



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Amanda Pritchard
Chief Executive, NHS England
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS

Our reference: BS21685

13 April 2022

Dear Ms Pritchard

Re: NHS Parliamentary Awards

The fantastic service our NHS provides would not be possible without the passion and dedication of its staff. Especially during the pressures of the pandemic, NHS workers have gone above and beyond to support and care for not only their patients, but also their colleagues. The welfare of NHS staff is paramount to the delivery of services and the retention of staff, and I am delighted that the NHS Parliamentary Awards offer MPs a way to recognise the many outstanding individuals, teams, and projects that take place across the country.

Ashford and St Peters Hospitals Trust in my constituency is one such example of fantastic staff working to support each other and our community. Through the pandemic they have prioritised staff welfare, with one exemplary project having been transforming the catering service into a welfare hub for staff. The Executive team recognised good food can improve health, productivity & well-being and translate into better work performance, fewer sick days, quicker recovery and increased motivation - benefiting staff and also their patients.

I wanted to nominate the catering team for their transformational work, and acknowledge the innovative leadership of the Trust in prioritising staff wellbeing in such a way. But I was incredibly disappointed to note that there does not appear to be a category to recognise the work of staff who are not 'front line' staff, or who work to support colleagues, not just patients.

All NHS staff play a vital role, whether they are doctors, nurses, administrators, cleaners, HR, or the Executive team, and I believe all exceptional work across the NHS should be able to be recognised during these awards.

I am sure you can imagine my disappointment and frustration when my office was therefore advised to put a nomination for excellence in supporting staff welfare into the 'Mental Health' category, which was created to recognise 'the individual or team that has worked across organisational boundaries to develop new and effective services to help people living with mental health problems in their community.' This clearly does not reflect the work of the team I wish to nominate.

My experience clearly highlights that there is no category currently able to recognise this work. I would urge you to look into this and see how this can be addressed, and request you consider the creation of a new category so MPs nominations to the NHS Parliamentary awards can reflect the importance of supporting our workforce, as well as the excellent front line services our NHS delivers.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Spencer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style with a long horizontal tail stroke at the end.

Dr Ben Spencer MP
Runnymede and Weybridge

cc. The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Health
Martin Beck, CEO Dods Group