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PRESS RELEASE

'Hospital Staff Celebrate Career Awards'

27 staff at the Royal United Hospital celebrated achieving their National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at a special award ceremony held on Tuesday 20 May at the hospital's education centre. (Nearly 90 qualified for their awards but only 27 could attend).

Trust certificates were presented by Jonathon Evans from Skills for Health who stressed the importance and value of providing the highest standard of care to patients and their families across all parts of the hospital.

Brigid Musselwhite, the Trust's Deputy Chief Executive, Francesca Thompson, Director of Nursing and Sharon Preston, Assistant .Director of Nursing gave their support to the event.

Ms Musselwhite said:

"I am very impressed that these staff have put time and effort into this kind of study. The Trust has provided them with the opportunity to follow a variety of National Vocational Qualification syllabuses and I am delighted that so many have undertaken to do them and gain so many important new skills."

Staff joining the trust at the start of their health career can gain knowledge and further skills by undertaking an NVQ. Those with experience can extend their skills and knowledge, developing career opportunities.

The trust recognises the importance of continuing education and training and encourages all staff to gain qualifications and expertise within areas where they work. As well as improving the standard of care for patients, such awards also help with staff retention and provide excellent opportunities for career development.

NVQ awards were presented in a variety of subjects, including: health care, health and social care, business and administration, customer service, assessor (trained to assess in NVQ) and operating theatres. Specific clinical areas included adult, peri-operative and paediatric care.

Staff undertaking NVQs completed their qualifications in addition to their normal work and many other staff within the hospital are recognised for their support to the candidates, particularly the NVQ assessors who have given much of their own time to ensure success.

Amanda Doman is a healthcare assistant working in Neurology who achieved NVQ Health and social care level 3. She says: "I took the NVQ to further my career prospects. I found it was a question of finding some time outside of work to fit in the extra work as I

am also a Mum. I would like to mention Anita Paradise in the NVQ team who gave me all the questions to answer and set out what I needed to do.”

Another successful staff member is Susan Wyatt, personal assistant to the divisional manager for Medicine, who gained her NVQ Level 3 in Business and Administration. Sue joined the RUH in 2002 initially working for the bank before her present job came up. She says: “ I saw the NVQ as an opportunity to prove that I am not only qualified to do my job, but also that the NVQ has given me the proof that I am actually performing at that level.”

Sue completed the course in nine months. She says: “It was demanding to do the coursework alongside an already busy work environment but it was a great personal achievement. I am happy with what I have done and I really enjoyed the awards evening – it showed Trust appreciation to staff for putting themselves out. It was a nice reward at the end of all that hard work.”

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For more information and pictures from the awards ceremony please contact the RUH Communications Team 01225 825799