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## Media Release

### RUH celebrates role in award-winning infection reduction project

The West of England Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) is delighted to announce that the PreciSSlon Collaborative has been named as the winner of the Infection Prevention and Control Award at this year's HSJ Patient Safety Awards, recognising their hard work and dedication to healthcare in what has been an unprecedented 18 months across the sector.

Surgical site infection (SSI) is common after colorectal surgery but most hospitals do not know their SSI rates.

PreciSSlon is a collaboration between the AHSN and multi-disciplinary teams in all five hospital trusts in the West (Royal United Hospitals Bath, Gloucestershire Hospitals, North Bristol Trust, University Hospitals Bristol and Weston, and Great Western Hospitals) who worked together to measure 30-day patient-reported SSI and introduce a locally developed four-point evidence-based care bundle, which was delivered in operating theatres.

RUH Medical Director Dr Bernie Marden said: "We're really proud of our RUH team who've played an important part in this regional collaboration to reduce surgical site infection after elective colorectal surgery. Improving patient safety is a priority for the Trust and this project will be of enormous benefit in improving patient outcomes. Well done to everyone involved."

Since the PreciSSlon care bundle was introduced in November 2019, the SSI rate in the West has been nearly halved. It is estimated that by April 2021, the work of the collaborative prevented 115 patients from developing an SSI, with an associated cost saving of over £500,000.

Following a comprehensive and thorough judging process, the West of England AHSN and the PreciSSlon collaborative were handed the distinguished award, standing out amongst

a highly competitive shortlist. The project was selected by the judges for its ambition, visionary spirit, and demonstrable positive impact.

PreciSSlon was also a finalist in the Perioperative and Surgical Care Initiative of the Year category.

Over 900 guests gathered at Manchester Central on Monday night (20 September 2021) to celebrate the driving of positive cultural change and innovation in the healthcare sector today across a total of 159 finalists and 23 categories. The awards highlight the organisational, team and individual efforts to push the boundaries of patient safety and minimise risk, enhance quality of care and ultimately save patient lives.

**Anne Pullyblank, Medical Director at the West of England AHSN and Consultant Colorectal Surgeon at Southmead Hospital in Bristol, said:**

“This has been a fantastic project, which has delivered real change to patients in a short time during a pandemic. The results we have achieved at such a challenging time for many hospitals are incredible.

“Combined regional average baseline figures showed surgical site infection (SSI) was 18% before November 2019. Introducing the PreciSSlon bundle elements in all trusts resulted in an almost 50% improvement in SSI to a regional average of just 9.5% and a significant improvement in patient experience.

“Working as a regional collaborative has helped staff and hospitals to support each other during the difficulties of the Covid-19 pandemic and engagement was high, with theatre teams in particular feeling empowered to make a difference.

“We are really thrilled to have won this award. It’s so encouraging for all the teams across the five trusts and seven hospitals to have our efforts recognised by the HSJ awards programme, particularly when we think back and consider the many challenges we’ve all had to face in recent months.”

**HSJ Editor Alastair McLellan added:**

“The projects, teams and individuals this year have been of a remarkable quality and each of the winners of the HSJ Patient Safety Awards have been recognised based on their work to push the boundaries of patient safety and most importantly, save patient lives. We all know and can appreciate what an incredibly difficult period this has been for so many of our colleagues working across the healthcare landscape – and that’s what makes it such an honour to be celebrating projects of such high calibre and significance.

“We are also aware that the West of England AHSN and the hospital trusts involved in the PreciSSlon collaborative are not alone in supporting and growing such a culture of hard work and positive change in healthcare – with patient at its very core – but on this occasion, they really did stand out as delivering exceptional services and ideas. I’d

therefore like to offer my congratulations to them all on winning the Infection Prevention and Control Award at this year's HSJ Patient Safety Awards."

The winners and those highly commended were announced across 23 categories during the HSJ Patient Safety Awards ceremony held at Manchester Central on 20 September 2021.

### **Recognition in other award categories**

PERIPrem, a project also run in partnership with all the hospital trusts in the region to introduce a new perinatal care bundle to improve outcomes for premature babies, was Highly Commended in the Patient Safety Pilot of the Year category.

Three other West of England AHSN collaborations were also shortlisted for HSJ Patient Safety Awards:

- **PreCePT** – Prevention of Cerebral Palsy in PreTerm Labour: Quality Improvement Initiative of the Year (involving all hospital trusts in the West of England and nationally)
- **The West of England Learning Disabilities Collaborative**: Learning Disabilities Initiative of the Year
- **Videos to support the training of carers to identify deterioration and communicate concern**: Patient Safety Education and Training Award (in partnership with Wessex AHSN, Health Education England, Hampshire, and Isle of Wight ICS).

More information on these projects can be found at: <https://www.weahsn.net/news/hsj-patient-safety-awards-2021/>

### **ENDS**

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

For more information/media enquiries relating to the HSJ Patient Safety Awards 2021, please contact Kitty Weale at [kitty.weale@trinitypr.co.uk](mailto:kitty.weale@trinitypr.co.uk) or tel: 0207 112 4905

For more information on the West of England AHSN and the PreciSSlon collaborative, please contact Vanesther Hamer at [Vanesther.hamer@nhs.net](mailto:Vanesther.hamer@nhs.net) or tel: 07887 944950.

#### **PreciSSlon cost savings**

A UK study demonstrated that the cost of an SSI after elective colorectal surgery is £4928 (range £4020-£7503). Overall, we estimate that PreciSSlon has saved 115 patients from developing an SSI since the start of the project in November 2019. Using the estimate of £4928 per SSI, this would extrapolate to a cost saving of 566,720. This does not include additional savings from SSI reduction after emergency laparotomy.

For more information about PreciSSlon visit: [www.weahsn.net/precision/](http://www.weahsn.net/precision/)

#### **About the West of England AHSN:**

The West of England AHSN is one of 15 Academic Health Science Networks established in 2013 by NHS England as the innovation arm of the NHS. Its membership includes all

NHS provider and commissioner organisations and the universities of Bristol, Bath and UWE. Here in the West of England, our AHSN has earned a reputation for its ambitious, joined-up vision for healthcare innovation and transformation. Find out more at [www.weahsn.net](http://www.weahsn.net).

**About the HSJ Patient Safety Awards:**

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues, maximising safety precautions for patients and vulnerable people in hospitals, care homes and across the community is more important than ever. The Patient Safety Awards celebrate the teams at the frontline pushing the boundaries of patient safety and driving cultural change to minimise risk, enhance quality of care and ultimately save lives.

For more information on the HSJ Patient Safety Awards visit:

<https://awards.patientsafetycongress.co.uk/>

**Notes to Editor:**

The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust provides acute treatment and care for a catchment population of around 500,000 people in Bath, and the surrounding towns and villages in North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. The hospital provides healthcare to the population served by four Clinical Commissioning Groups: Bath & North East Somerset CCG, Wiltshire CCG, Somerset CCG and South Gloucestershire CCG.

The Trust provides 759 beds and a comprehensive range of acute services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

In 2015 The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust acquired the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust. The RNHRD treats patients from across the country offering services in rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME, cancer related fatigue and fatigue linked to other long term conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

The RUH is changing - we have an exciting programme of redevelopment underway transforming our site and further improving the services we provide. The Trust has opened the purpose-built RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre and is now working towards the new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: [www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit\\_for\\_the\\_future](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit_for_the_future)

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)