IPS Spotlight

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Infection Prevention Society Awards 2016

Once again in 2016, the IPS presented a range of awards at the annual gala dinner held at national conference in Harrogate. In this issue of *JIP*, we provide the second part of a summary of the awards made: IPS Practitioner of the Year; Link Practitioner of the Year; and the Brendan Moore Award.

IPS Practitioner of the Year

The winner of this award was Sue Millward, Infection Prevention Nurse Consultant, Nuffield Health. She was nominated by Chris Finch, from Nuffield Health. Chris stated that the IPS Strategy highlights the importance of leading, shaping and informing infection prevention locally, nationally and internationally. As an Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) innovator for 28 years, Sue Millward has truly pioneered this.

Sue's IPC career began in the NHS in Walsall, attending her first infection control conference in 1989, which led her to develop the West Midlands Audit Tools. These represented a milestone in auditing both IPC practice and the clinical environment, paving the way for the national project which formulated the IPS Quality Improvement Tools. Over the years, these have been extensively adopted across the UK and internationally, playing a significant role in raising standards of care and improving patient safety.

As an active member of the IPS (and the Infection Control Nurses Association ICNA previously), Sue's roles included being the West Midlands representative on the ICNA National Executive Committee. Over the years, she has promoted the IPS Strategy through her continuous work to sustain improvement in IPC. This was demonstrated in 2007 when she became the first editor of the ICNA journal, the *British Journal of Infection Control* (the former name of the *Journal of Infection Prevention*). Sue has attended many ICNA/IPS conferences over the years, presenting and chairing sessions as well as playing a key role on the organising committee for the Dublin Conference.

In the late 1990s, Sue broke new ground by becoming an independent practitioner, bridging the gap between private healthcare and the NHS, while working cohesively with the commercial sector. Primarily working for Nuffield Health, her strategic role has involved creating a comprehensive IPC service across their 31 hospitals in the UK. This includes establishing a successful IP Link Nurse network, as well as

the implementation of a rigorous surveillance programme, incorporating the mandatory reporting of infections to Public Health England (PHE). Sue has introduced unique IP training courses, including a Cleanliness Passport to implement best practice in decontamination, and university accredited courses for IP Link Nurses and for Directors of IPC, the only one of its kind in the UK. Recently Sue has introduced an asepsis (ANTT) training programme to provide a consistent and standardised approach across the Nuffield group, where theory training is complimented by competency assessments. She regularly organises study days, annual DIPC/IP Co-ordinator training days and Nuffield IP Conferences, most recently in 2015.

Through this work, she endorses the IPS Strategy, as an invaluable influence in the universal promotion of evidence-based practice within IP. Sue Millward represents a tireless champion for the IPS, determinedly promoting IPC in healthcare. As a visionary, she has helped to lay the foundations for infection control quality improvement systems, developed IPC training courses and pioneered IPC services within the private sector. She is constantly looking for ways to progress and promote IPC, and her plans for the future including developing nationally recognised training courses for Hospital Directors and housekeeping staff. Throughout her career, Sue has organised many conferences and presented hundreds of awards, and the Nuffield Health IPC Team nominated her as they believed that she should be recognised and thanked.

Figure 1. Sue Millward receives her award from IPS President Professor Heather Loveday and IPS Patron Professor Tricia Hart.

Link Practitioner of the Year

The award was presented to Yvonne Place, Clinical Assistant, The Thornberry Centre. She was nominated by Deborah Pudner from Livewell Southwest. Deborah described Yvonne's contribution as an infection control link practitioner (ICLP) for over ten years.

Yvonne is a Band 3 and is not afraid to challenge poor practice in anyone. She has been promoting and sustaining high standards of infection prevention and control within her department, which provides prosthetics rehabilitation services ever since she became an ICLP.

Yvonne always strives to promote patient dignity and safety. Yvonne prepared and delivered a PowerPoint presentation to other ICLPs to enhance knowledge about a newly introduced cleaning system. She attended a training session with a representative who demonstrated how to use the product effectively. Yvonne then went on to share this information at the meeting, to promote consistent best practice throughout the organisation. She also shared this information within her own department.

Yvonne has implemented and monitors cleaning rotas within her outpatient department. These rotas are there to ensure all patient equipment is cleaned in-between patients, to ensure all patients receive clean safe care. Yvonne has taught the doctors how to clean their couches, between patients and attach 'I am clean' green labels to the equipment at the end of the day. Introducing the rotas and green labels is an excellent way of communicating to other staff and patients that the equipment is clean and ready to use, and complies with CQC requirements. Yvonne's initiative was to promote and sustain high standards of IPC practice for all service users.

Her initiative to date has:

- Enhanced the awareness of patient equipment decontamination and monitoring
- Promoted best practice and enhanced clean, safe, effective care
- Inspired others to implement best practice, through education and role modelling
- Prevent service users from, acquiring a healthcare-associated infection
- Minimised the risk of cross-transmission and avoidable death

In support, the Infection Prevention and Control Team has revised the decontamination policy to ensure it reflected the new initiative and provided Yvonne with a venue and support when giving her presentation.

Yvonne has always demonstrated excellent leadership and consistently acts as a role model. She regularly attends

IPS regional meetings and feeds back all learning that has taken place, at her team meetings and at quarterly ICLP meetings. Yvonne has met a lot of challenges, but she does not let anything deter her. At present her new goal is to get all staff involved in ensuring that their desk and computer areas are clean. Yvonne has come up with a reward chart which she intends to implement. She is then going to randomly ask staff questions on IPC; if they answer correctly they will be rewarded with a star. The staff member who has the most stars at the end of the week will receive a reward. Her aim is to promote and sustain best practice throughout her department. Yvonne has used her own initiative, time and money to implement this initiative.

Figure 2. Link Practitioner of the Year Award is presented to Yvonne Place.

Brendan Moore Award 2016

The recipient of the Brendan Moore Award in 2016 is Dr Evonne Curran. She was nominated by Karen Wares on behalf of the Scientific Programme Committee, and by Gary Thirkell and Carole Hallam on behalf of the Consultative Committee.

With over 29 years of experience in Infection Prevention and Control, Evonne is internationally recognised for her passion for infection prevention and for the IPS. Evonne is well respected and a regular speaker at IPS national and branch conferences. She is an inspiring role model to many IPCNs. The esteem in which she is held by the IPS was evidenced when she was asked to deliver the EM Cottrell lecture at IPS Conference in 2014.

Carole Hallam said that she first heard Evonne speak at the ICNA Conference in Dublin in 1996 where she inspired and encouraged IPCNs to participate in a multi-centre research project looking at phlebitis/peripheral venous cannula. She helped IPCNs believe that they could participate in research and contribute to the evidence base for IPC

particularly in preventing IV infections and managing outbreaks.

Evonne has worked tirelessly as a member of the Research & Development Group, including as Co-ordinator, and was particularly supportive when the IV Forum was re-established, helping by providing both encouragement and guidance especially at the beginning of the Vessel Health Preservation project. Evonne has the ability to share her extensive knowledge without making anyone feel inferior and helped the IV Forum develop ideas into a successful project.

Her lengthy career makes it difficult to summarise her contribution but her expertise in outbreak identification and management is second to none. As R&D coordinator she led the HOUDINI study and the WINCL study and has greatly supported IPS branches with R&D workshops.

Evonne has authored many articles over the years and uses a style that makes the subject matter both interesting and understandable. She has been instrumental in increasing the knowledge base for infection prevention practice, both from her written articles and her fabulous presentations at conferences. She continues to write the outbreak column for the *Journal of Infection Prevention*, providing an enormously helpful resource for practitioners.

Karen Wares said, 'I consider myself very lucky that last year Evonne joined the IPS Scientific Programme Committee (SPC) as a co-opted member. Evonne has enthusiastically embraced programme planning and made excellent speaker suggestions drawn from her breadth of reading and networks of contacts. She is held in high regard by the SPC.'

As Nurse Consultant in Health Protection Scotland Evonne always demonstrated professional integrity retaining a distinctly human and patient focus within a political landscape that entirely fits with the IPS vision. While Evonne has now retired from Health Protection Scotland, her love for IPC continues through her new venture as an Independent Infection Prevention Nurse Consultant. The Society is delighted to have made this award to Evonne.

Roles held by Dr Evonne Curran

Secretary Scotland Branch (mid 1990s).
Research and Development committee in 2000s. Chair until resigning to take on the CHART project.
Led and worked on several multicentre projects for IPS, the Phlebitis project, the CHART project and WINCL.
IPS Research & Development Committee Coordinator January 2011 – December 2013
Member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Infection Prevention* and author of the popular 'Outbreak' column.
Delivered the EM Cottrell lecture at the IPS conference in 2014.
Member of Scientific Programme Committee 2015–2016.

Figure 3. Dr Evonne Curran receives the Brendan Moore Award.

Profile: Helen O'Connor, IPS Education & Professional Development Committee Co-ordinator

I joined the London branch of the IPS (known at the time as the Infection Control Nurses Association) when I took up my first post in infection control in 1994. This was in a small acute trust in East Hertfordshire, which sadly no longer exists. I was a lone ICN in the organisation so I joined the society to meet others and basically find out what the role really entailed. People were very friendly and offered support and advice. I will always remember an Infection Prevention and Control Nurse (IPCN) called Rosemary Readman who was an unintentional mentor to me for many years.

The London branch split in 2006 and I moved in to the North London branch which covered trusts North of the River Thames, extending into Hertfordshire, Essex and East Anglia where I first took up the position of Education Lead. I held several different roles before being one of several IPCNs who were instrumental in setting up the East of England branch.

I had always had an interest in Tissue Viability and obtained a qualification in this at the University of Hertfordshire, prior to choosing infection prevention. In 1994 an opportunity came up to work for a company manufacturing pressure-relieving and -reducing products as an infection control specialist. This was a new role for the company and very exciting. While in this role I taught engineers and sales teams from the UK and Europe about IPC measures necessary as they worked in hospitals and in the company decontamination units. The manual decontamination of mattresses was very labour-intensive and time-consuming and led me to develop an automated washing machine, working with the University of Milan who validated the process, and commissioned two laundries. This

role also enabled input into the design of products to enable smooth manufacturing lines and suitable materials, all with decontamination in mind. Other aspects of this position included writing the decontamination instructions for equipment, which was tricky at times because products were sold across Europe and I had to learn about the different disinfectants in use across Europe. In the final year in the role I covered European subsidiary companies advising on decontamination and auditing.

After five years, I returned to the NHS as a Senior IPCN in North London and very shortly afterwards moved closer to home and took up my first position as a Consultant Nurse and Deputy Director of Infection Prevention and Control at East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust. During this time, I held an honorary contract at the University of Hertfordshire, where I taught on the IPC Management Module and the Midwifery undergraduate programme. I developed an interest in Decontamination and have been the Decontamination Lead in my last and present roles, and in addition to the IPS I am a member of the Central Sterilising Club.

While at East & North Hertfordshire I developed an interest in the activities of the Operating Department and embarked on a two-year project to improve surgical site

infection. I was delighted to be asked to present this work at a conference in London and then subsequently contributed to the revision of the Standards and Recommendations for Safe Perioperative Practice published in 2014.

I responded for a call for new members to the Education and Professional Development Committee (EPDC) in 2011. They were looking for two clinical members, and at the time the IPS Competences were being revised. This is a little ironic, as I enter my last year on the committee I find myself leading the revision of the same piece of work six years on. In my two years as the Co-ordinator of the EPDC, our work is focusing on the content of both pre-and post-graduate IPC education, and the revision of the competences, required for all practitioners engaged in IPC. This work will lead in to accreditation and credentialing projects being taken forward by the IPS.

In my role as co-ordinator of the EPDC I attend a European network of societies who have a focus on sharing clinical and educational practices within geographical Europe. It is a good opportunity to share with others the good work that is being done by the IPS, and is an example of the opportunities provided by the IPS for members who choose to take active roles within the Society.