

Annual Clinical Excellence Awards 2021 competition launches

- High-performing consultant doctors and dentists, and academic GPs can apply for the annual national Clinical Excellence Awards competition
- The 2021 Awards will recognise the extraordinary work of senior clinicians in all disciplines, including work undertaken during the pandemic
- The Minister for Care has called for more women and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background to apply to improve representation and ensure excellence is recognised across the NHS

High-performing consultant level doctors and dentists and academic GPs in England and Wales can apply for national Clinical Excellence Awards (CEA) as the 2021 competition opens today (Monday 7 December).

The awards will recognise the extraordinary work staff have undertaken over the last four-to-five years, including efforts this year in response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic in relation to patient care, research or COVID-19 related clinical trial work. Those who have delivered nationally in other clinical services, teaching or training during this period will also be recognised.

This year Ministers are calling for more women and BAME backgrounds to apply. Analysis indicates that consultants from BAME backgrounds are under-represented as a proportion of applicants. Women have also been consistently under-represented, but evidence suggests that when women do apply, they are as broadly successful as men in securing an award.

To reduce the burden on staff and employers during this busy time, the process has been simplified and the application window extended from the usual eight to fourteen weeks. Following the suspension of the 2020 awards due to the pandemic, a higher number of awards will be available this year.

Minister for Care Helen Whately said:

I'm delighted to launch the Clinical Excellence Awards competition for 2021. This year's extended and expanded scheme is an important means of recognising and rewarding the work of senior doctors and dentists, particularly during this hugely challenging time. It's important we pay tribute to our extraordinary NHS and social care staff – they have been truly inspiring through such an unprecedented year.

I urge as many people as possible to apply – and especially women and those from ethnic minority backgrounds so we can recognise excellence right across the health service. Good luck to all those applying and thanks to all our NHS and social care staff for their continued hard work.

Professor Geeta Menon, Postgraduate Dean South London, Health Education England and Medical Vice Chair, South East ACCEA Subcommittee:

It is important that we recognise the extraordinary skills and knowledge our consultants and GP academics bring to the NHS, especially during these challenging times. We hope to receive a wide range of applications, to enable the NHS to recognise all those, regardless of their background, who have gone above and beyond their day to day role.

Applicants self-nominate with sign-off and agreement by their employer and must demonstrate achievements over-and-above their usual work responsibilities that have had a national or international impact. The scheme is run openly and fairly and every application is considered on the merits of the evidence presented. Applications are scored by members of a regional sub-committee and the scores are then averaged and ranked against competitors. Following a rigorous quality assurance governance process, recommendations for new and renewed awards are sent to the Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards' Main Committee for agreement before being sent to Ministers for final approval.

The Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards will be shortly seeking views on reforms to the current national awards. This follows recommendations made by the Pay Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration to review and incentivise the Clinical Excellence Awards for consultants at local and national levels. The consultation will ask for views to ensure that any new scheme fairly assesses and rewards the highest performing consultants and academic GPs, regardless of their background.

Notes to editors

The 2021 competition opens to applications on 7 December 2020 and closes on 18 March 2021. Ordinarily, each year 300 new CEAs are awarded in England at four levels of progression and are renewable subject to application.

Awards last for 5 years and yearly award values are; Bronze – £36,192; Silver – £47,582; Gold – £59,477 – gold and; Platinum – £77,320. The awards are pensionable and on-costs increase the value of the awards. Final numbers will be determined by a number of factors, including the quality of applications.