

Eastbourne Doctor wins PM award

News story

NHS Doctor from Eastbourne awarded Prime Minister Boris Johnson's daily Point of Light.



An NHS doctor from Eastbourne who designed digital flashcards to help healthcare workers wearing PPE communicate with their patients has been awarded Prime Minister Boris Johnson's daily Point of Light.

Dr Rachael Grimaldi, who is currently on maternity leave, was moved to help her colleagues on the front line after hearing heart-breaking stories of how patients were unable to understand clinicians through layers of PPE. Her digital flashcards break down the barriers between carers and patients by displaying messages about the patient's condition and treatment on mobile devices such as phones and tablets. Rachael's pioneering technology, already available in 10 languages and in read aloud mode for visually impaired patients, is now being used in over 50 countries.

In a personal letter to Rachael, the Prime Minister said:

This pernicious disease had left many patients unable to hear the words of doctors and nurses who are compelled to speak through masks and visors. But your digital flashcards have harnessed the power of technology to restore that vital communication. Because of you, patients can once again hear critical information on their condition and benefit from those precious words of empathy and compassion which provide such care and comfort in the most difficult moments.

I am lost in admiration to hear that your innovation has already been adopted in fifty different countries and is being translated into thirty different languages, including a "read aloud" mode for blind patients. It will surely continue to assist healthcare around the world long after we have defeated this pandemic.

Reacting to the Prime Minister's announcement, Rachael said:

I am absolutely delighted to have received this award, it is an honour to be recognised in this way. This has truly been a team effort bringing the concept to fruition and I am very grateful to friends, family, colleagues, businesses, services and organisations for donating their time, expertise and support. The dedication and commitment of all to improving patient safety and care has been tremendous.

The Prime Minister's UK daily Point of Light award was first launched in April 2014 to recognise outstanding individuals making a difference where they live. Rachael is the 1365th person to be recognised. As Britain unites to fight the spread of coronavirus, the award is focusing exclusively on people serving their community through the pandemic.

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