

Monday, March 2nd 2009

## PRESS RELEASE

### **National innovation award for Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's rapid MRSA screening test**

A new rapid screening test for MRSA introduced as part of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre NHS Hospitals Foundation Trust's drive to cut hospital infections has won a national award.

The screening procedure, called Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), won the Department of Health and the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency's award for innovation in the field of Healthcare Associated Infection (HCAI).

The Trust won the "Team or individual from the NHS or industry that has contributed in the most practical way to promoting the development and/or adoption of HCAI related technology" category and was presented with the prize in London.

The screening test cuts turnaround time for MRSA results from 72 hours to just two hours. By picking up MRSA early the quality of care to the patient is greatly improved.

During the six-month trial of screening the number of cases of MRSA bacteraemia fell by 63%.

Dr Nick Harper, deputy medical director of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre NHS Hospitals Foundation Trust, said the award: "The rapid screening test was introduced by the Trust last year to ensure we could screen emergency admissions and produced an appropriate clinical environment for their care.

"This is cutting edge technology that has been implemented in very few hospitals in the country and it has been a key element in the reduction of MRSA cases in the last 12 months.

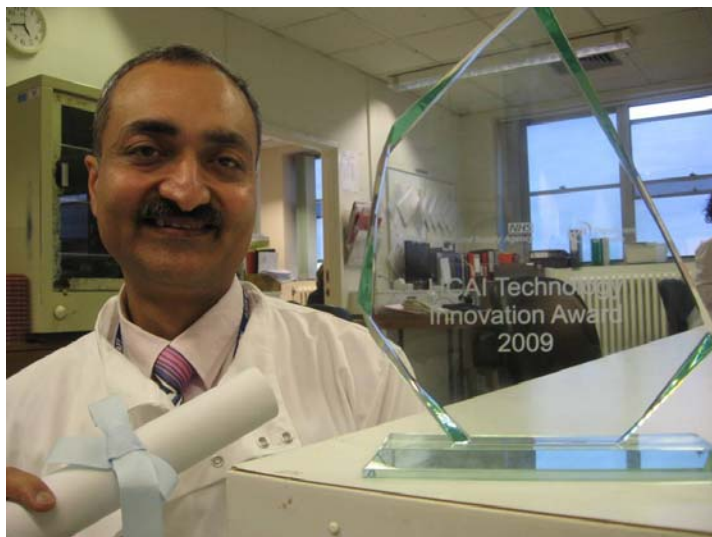
"This award recognises the excellent work taking place in Blackpool in regard to infection prevention and control being undertaken by the team, the laboratory staff and the wider Trust."

Preventing hospital infections is one of the Trust's key priorities as it is one of the biggest areas of public concern. The Trust has introduced several initiatives aimed at preventing hospital infections such as the 'Ban the Bugs' campaign and the hand washing campaign and we were one of the first in the country to successfully complete a deep clean programme of its hospitals following a £400,000 investment by the Primary Care Trusts.

The Trust has also recently revised its uniform policy to introduce "bare from the elbow" which applies to all staff who have contact with patients.

Latest figures have shown that the Trust is also making huge progress in reducing clostridium difficile and was praised by Health Secretary Alan Johnson recently for reducing numbers of cases of c. diff by 43% last quarter - the biggest reduction in the North West and the fourth biggest in the country.

To win the award the Trust staved off opposition from Nottingham University NHS Foundation Trust and private firm Hygienics Biosecurity. The award is a major boost for the Trust and I would like to congratulate everyone who was involved in its success.



**Caption: Dr Achyut Guleri, consultant microbiologist, with the HCAI Technology Innovation award for its rapid MRSA screening test.**

For further information about this Press Release, please contact Derek Quinn, Communications Manager on 01253 306941.

#### **Notes to Editors:**

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust became a Foundation on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 and wishes to strengthen its links with the community it serves through the Foundation Trust Membership scheme for members of the public. For more information, or to apply, please telephone the Membership Officer on 01253 306875 or visit the Membership Section on the Trust's website: [www.bfwh.nhs.uk](http://www.bfwh.nhs.uk)

