



## Schwartz Awards 2021: Shining Star

### ★ Harriet Barker ★

Harriet Barker is Lead Nurse, Senior Adult Medical Service (SAMS) and Frailty, and Lead Schwartz Round Facilitator at Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

★ Harriet has been involved in Schwartz Rounds at Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals almost from the start of the programme which has been running for 8 years. She has been the lead facilitator for most of those years.

Harriet exemplifies all of the characteristics that make Schwartz Rounds such a powerful tool in helping our staff talk about and reflect on their emotional experiences in providing health care.

She is an excellent empathic listener and successfully teases out the underlying issues behind the initial comments from both the panellists and the audience. In the pre-meets she identifies the key emotional components of the stories so that the Round can be conducted safely and during the Round ensures that the panellists are protected. She is comfortable with the silence that can occur during Rounds and always provides a perfect summary of the stories that have been heard at the end.

She has been a powerful advocate of change with the successful innovative development of "pop-up" rounds (<https://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/event/training-pop-rounds/>) and was the facilitator of the film on the Point of Care website showing how effective Rounds can be (<https://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/news/new-schwartz-round-film/>).

She has remained active in the programme despite being in a leadership role during the pandemic with all the emotional stresses that has involved and has adapted quickly to the need to run the Rounds virtually.

We could not have run our programme without Harriet.

*Peter Wilkinson  
Clinical Lead Schwartz Rounds Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals  
Consultant Cardiologist*

★ Harriet has inspired me to become more involved with Schwartz Rounds in our Trust and I was thrilled to be invited to join the Steering Group last year. I've been privileged therefore to take part in the pre-meets with panellists to prepare them for the actual Round and have seen first-hand the way Harriet makes people feel at ease – her warmth and encouragement gives them confidence and reassurance. Harriet's emotional intelligence shines through, both at the pre-meets and whilst facilitating the Rounds.

Our most recent Round, held virtually via MSTeams, was particularly emotive. Harriet demonstrated her ability to hold herself together so professionally whilst supporting the panellists and an audience of nearly 60 colleagues to cope with the emotive silence which followed the panellists' stories – she remained calmly on the screen, whilst clearly feeling vulnerable, and reflected on what she had heard. Her approach enabled others to contribute - I found it very moving. I'm looking forward to



training as a Facilitator myself next month, and it really is due to Harriet that I feel able to do this, so thank you Harriet!

*Olwen Revill  
Evidence Specialist (Librarian)  
Schwartz Round Steering Group*



Harriet has been a very consistent and experienced member of the Schwartz Round panel who facilitates rounds with ease and assesses the tone of the room with such sensitivity.

*Charlotte Broughton  
Head of Patient Experience and Involvement  
Schwartz Round Steering Group*



It isn't easy to hold together all the strands of the emotional stories we hear at the Schwartz Rounds. Perhaps it is a skill learned over many years of commitment to the Rounds, perhaps it is intuitive and innate... Our Shining Star Harriet seems to do it with such ease: Deftly summarising themes, pin-pointing the feelings at play, tolerating silences and containing the fears and anxieties that emerge.

When we have an audience, many of us find it hard to resist the temptation to grandstand! Harriet manages to maintain such a clear focus on the stories and on the well-being of each participant. These are such special, quiet, qualities and rare attributes - they are deserving of great acclaim!

Insofar as any of these skills can be taught, I feel that we all learn so much from working with Harriet: observing her practice and hopefully following her lead and example.

*Dr Christina Hoskins  
Specialty Doctor Anaesthesia  
Schwartz Round Steering Group*

A beautiful tribute to our Shining Star from the last Schwartz Round:

Thank you, I don't know how you held yourself together so professionally and facilitated so beautifully, without a big box of tissues!