

Schwartz Shining Star

People who have made inspiring contributions to running Rounds in your organisation.

Nomination: Ali Smith, University of Surrey School of Health Sciences

We wish to jointly nominate Ali Smith for the Schwartz Shining Star award. Ali is the clinical lead for Rounds in our School and is a very bright shining star in our view! Ali lives and breathes wellbeing – of students and of staff – it is built into her DNA into everything she does and so running Schwartz has become a natural adjunct to her everyday life in putting wellbeing first and thereby supporting others to thrive.

Ali was instrumental in enabling us to introduce Rounds to the University of Surrey School of Health Sciences; without her active involvement and commitment to preparing, organising and running Rounds – and ensuring we learn and improve as we go along – we would not be where we are today: which is nearly 2 years on, and running Rounds regularly for staff and for students that are extremely well evaluated and attended. Despite our facilitator group growing over this time, as clinical lead and lead facilitator, Ali has remained at the forefront of every Round that we run in the School. She is either facilitating Rounds or supporting and training those in the facilitation role, demonstrating her passion and commitment to Rounds, sharing her knowledge and skills to ensure sustainability of them, and role modelling the importance of Rounds.

Ali is a brilliant facilitator: we all learn so much from her when we see her in action, whether in panel preparation or in the actual Round – she is a great listener and definitely always has panellists' backs. She is excellent at naming the emotions in the room and providing a safe space drawing on her expertise in mental health nursing. We have run some very emotional Rounds particularly in the last year during the pandemic, and Ali's skills in ensuring the psychological safety of the panellists and audience members, her careful questioning in preparation, and her ability to draw out themes to ensure the 'elephant in the room' is visible and acknowledged is extraordinary.

In the past year, in addition to the huge workload involved in ensuring Rounds run effectively in our School, Ali has also been instrumental in spreading Rounds and what we might call the "Schwartz Love" in webinars and meetings with colleagues across the university. This has led to great interest in many other schools and faculties at Surrey, including the Vets School who held a pilot Round last month in which Ali was the lead facilitator.

Ali just comes alive when she talks about Rounds – her passion and commitment to their importance to supporting student and staff wellbeing is wonderful to see and puts a smile on everyone's face, including her own. She uses any opportunity to ensure she is promoting Rounds to students and to staff and for all these reasons – and more - she is definitely our Shining Star!

Professors Jill Maben and Cath Taylor

4th March 2021