

Division of Neuropsychology Awards

Liam Dorris



An impressive line up (L–R): Dr Phil Yates, Professor Nick Alderman, Dr Jenny Jim, Professor Barbara Wilson, Professor Julie Snowden and Professor Liam Dorris (all images courtesy Andrew James)

THE AWARDS COMMITTEE have again been struck by the exceptionally high quality of the nominations received over the past year. The level of achievement demonstrated by DoN members is truly inspiring. This was also evident at the recent Division of Clinical Psychology annual conference awards session, where our members featured prominently. Professor Jon Evans was awarded the MB Shapiro Lifetime Achievement award, Dr Esther Cole was awarded the May Davidson award for outstanding contribution, and Claire Douglas received the pre-qualification award. We offer our congratulations to these colleagues and also thank the Division of Clinical Psychology for recognising their achievements.

Turning to our own divisional awards, the committee was very pleased to make the following awards at the networking meeting in Manchester on 31 January 2020.

Professor Julie Snowden: Barbara Wilson Lifetime Achievement Award

Professor Snowden along with her colleague, David Neary, set up the Cerebral Function Unit in the 1980s – a specialist multi-disciplinary diagnostic unit devoted to early onset and atypical dementias. This was the first specialist dementia service in the UK to be established within a neurological centre. In addition to her clinical diagnostic role, Professor Snowden has been part of a research team investigating neurodegenerative disease,



Professor Barbara Wilson presenting the lifetime achievement award in her name to Professor Julie Snowden

with a personal contribution concerning the precise characterisation of cognitive and behavioural features of neurodegenerative disease. She contributed to the classification of the frontotemporal dementias and the development of internationally recognised diagnostic criteria. She has worked on the mapping of clinical phenotype to neuropathological, neurochemical and molecular markers of disease, and contributed to the identification of three major genes linked to frontotemporal dementia. Professor Snowden's prolific and influential academic contribution alongside her clinical work highlights the crucial role of neuropsychology in understanding degenerative brain disorders, leading to improved prospects for treatment and management of patients.

In presenting the award, Professor Barbara Wilson said, 'I am truly delighted that Julie Snowden has won the Barbara Wilson award this year. She is a real giant among neuropsychologists. I first met Julie in 1982 at an International Neuropsychological Society meeting in Italy. I was impressed then and

have become even more impressed over time. If I know Julie is lecturing at a conference I know I am in for a treat. She is one of the very best lecturers in the world. Her talks are always thoughtful, scholarly and entertaining. Not only is Julie a very successful and productive neuropsychologist, she is a thoroughly likeable person and first and foremost a very worthy winner of this award'.

Professor Nick Alderman: Distinguished Contribution Award

During a long and illustrious career, Professor Nick Alderman has achieved international recognition as an authority in neurobehavioural rehabilitation and has made a very significant contribution to the care of people with acquired brain injury, particularly those with challenging behaviour, in both NHS and independent healthcare settings.

Having graduated with a masters in clinical psychology from the University of Glasgow in 1986, Nick then completed a PhD supervised by Barbara Wilson at Cambridge. After



Professor Alderman accepting his award for distinguished contribution

managing the Neuropsychology team within the National Brain Injury Centre at St Andrews Healthcare from 2001 to 2013, Nick then joined the Priory Group, and then the Elysium Healthcare group where he is Clinical Director of the Neurobehavioural Rehabilitation Services. Nick continues to represent services in taking a leading role to positively influence development of potential new commissioning arrangements through the UK Rehabilitation Outcomes Collaborative (UK-ROC).

Nick holds honorary professorial appointments at Swansea University, Newman University College in Birmingham, University of the West of England, and the University of Glamorgan. He has authored over 60 papers and book chapters and has significantly contributed to teaching and practice in neuropsychology and behavioural rehabilitation. In 2014, Nick won the UKABIF Stephen McAleese Award for Inspiration by an individual in the field of acquired brain injury. He has been a long-standing supporter and contributor to the Division of Neuropsychology and is a very worthy winner of the Distinguished Contribution award.

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Dr Melanie George: Practitioner of the Year

Due to poor health, Dr George's award was accepted by Dr Phil Yates on her behalf. Dr George qualified as a Clinical Psychologist in the University of London, Royal Holloway course in 2006 and obtained a Diploma in Clinical Neuropsychology at the Institute of Psychiatry in 2007, becoming a Practitioner Full Member of the Division of Neuropsychology in 2009. Her first paper in the brain injury literature reported on work carried out with Tom Manly on spatial awareness, alertness and ADHD, and was published in *Brain and Cognition* in 2004.

On qualification Melanie worked in the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court, and took on a clinical lead role at Thomas Edward Mitton House, part of the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust (BIRT), working with inpatient rehabilitation clients



Dr Phil Yates accepting the Practitioner Award on behalf of Dr Melanie George

with severe and enduring cognitive and behavioural difficulties. She later joined the Kent Clinical Neuropsychology Service, continuing her work in stroke and community neuro-rehabilitation services, and in August 2017 was appointed as Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist in the Kent Clinical Neuropsychology Service, part of Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership as the lead for acquired brain injury and neurological long-term conditions for East Kent.

Melanie continued to develop skills in leadership and undertook an MSc in Health Care Leadership with the NHS leadership Academy and passed with distinction in 2016. She became an active member of the Division of Neuropsychology Executive Committee and quickly impressed colleagues as a highly driven, bright and motivated person who significantly contributed to furthering understanding of patients with brain injuries and other neurological conditions through the DoN.

Melanie's work has recently gained significant national recognition, she has been the recipient of not just this prestigious Division of Neuropsychology Practitioner of the Year award, but also the UK Acquired Brain Injury Forum Stephen McAleese Award for inspiration in raising awareness of the frontal lobe paradox and educating social workers. Melanie's paper, 'Why everyone needs to know about the frontal lobe paradox in relation to the Mental Capacity Act' significantly elevated the profile of the discipline of neuropsychology within Parliament.

In correspondence with Dr Yates, Melanie wished to thank Professor Barbara Wilson with whom she worked with at the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, and who inspired her to pursue her interest in clinical neuropsychology. She said, 'I would like to thank my lovely supportive and inspiring boss Dr Tom Manly, who was my manager when I was at the Cambridge unit, but also Dr Caroline Barry, my manager when working for BIRT, and



Professor Dorris presenting Dr Jim with the Early Career Award

also Catherine McDonagh, my manager at the Kent Clinical Neuropsychology Service.'

Dr Melanie George is a great asset to the profession in the UK and is a very worthy winner of the Practitioner of the Year Award.

Dr Jenny Jim: Early Career Award (Pre-QiCN)

Dr Jim holds current appointments as Deputy Programme Director of the Clinical Psychology training course, University of East London, and Clinical Psychologist at the Children's Trust, Surrey, where she works in paediatric neurorehabilitation. Having obtained a first class honours degree in experimental psychology from University of Sussex in 1998, Jenny obtained her DClinPsy from University College London in 2003. After developing her early clinical career within CAMHS and early intervention services in London, Dr Jim enrolled on the MSc Clinical Paediatric Neuropsychology course at University College London, where she graduated with distinction in 2014.

In 2019, Dr Jim was the BMA Patient Information Award Winner – Special Award

for User Engagement. She has developed key expertise in paediatric cognitive rehabilitation and in 2019, published a book that provides a framework for practitioners featuring a range of therapeutic models, direct and indirect work, group work and family therapy, entitled – 'innovations in psychological therapy for paediatric acquired brain injuries: Working with our children, young people and families' (Jim & Cole, 2019). Dr Jim has demonstrated the highest levels of achievement in her clinical and academic career and has already demonstrated significant commitment to teaching and training in clinical neuropsychology, and in promoting cognitive neurorehabilitation in innovative and accessible ways. She is a very worthy winner of this year's Early Career Award.

We congratulate all of the award winners and are now encouraging nominations for the 2021 Divisional awards.

Professor Liam Dorris FBPsS

Chair, Division of Neuropsychology Awards Committee

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