

**Office of the
Chief Allied Health Professions Officer
(CAHPO) - England**

**CAHPO Gold Award
For Excellence**



**Awarding Criteria
and Nominations Process**

December 2024

(amended November 2025)

1.

For Excellence

The Chief Allied Health Professions Officer (CAHPO) Gold Award for Excellence will be introduced in October 2024 to mark both national Allied Health Professions (AHPs) Day in the UK – 14 October annually, and the current CAHPO in England – Professor Suzanne Rastrick OBE – being in post for 10 years.

The CAHPO Gold Award has been developed to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence, where a significant, outstanding and exceptional contribution has been made by members of the AHP community in England in their work; consistently demonstrating strong NHS values and high levels of commitment and quality throughout their role.

We welcome inclusivity and this process is open to people from all backgrounds.

2. Allied Health Professions

Collectively, the Allied Health Professions (AHPs) are the third largest registered clinical workforce in England after doctors and nurses with over 215,000 registrants across 14 professions working across health and care.

Additionally, there are around 41,000 AHP support workers in England who provide a crucial contribution to the provision of high-quality care across health and social care providers. The AHP community extends further when including around 41,500 pre-registration AHP learners and apprentices.

There are 14 AHP professional bodies, each overseeing its own workforce. The Chief AHP Officer (CAHPO) relates to two UK wide regulators: the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC). The 14 Allied Health Professions in England are:

1. Art therapists
2. Dramatherapists
3. Music therapists
4. Podiatrists
5. Dietitians
6. Occupational therapists
7. Operating department practitioners
8. Orthoptists
9. Osteopaths
10. Paramedics
11. Physiotherapists
12. Prosthetists and orthotists
13. Radiographers (Diagnostic and Therapeutic)
14. Speech and language therapists

The AHP community works across the spectrum of health and care, education (including early years), academia, research, criminal justice system, voluntary, and private sectors. From prevention to specialist care provision, AHPs deliver care to individuals and groups across all ages including children and older adults. AHPs are critical to the delivery of some of the most important plans, strategies and agendas to improve and transform care for patients, including the current [AHP Strategy for England – AHPs Deliver](#), [NHS Long Term Plan](#), the [NHS People Plan](#), the [patient safety](#) and quality agenda and numerous recovery plans and work programmes, the [imaging transformation](#), [delivery plan for accessing primary care](#), the [urgent and emergency care recovery plan](#), along with the [new community rehabilitation and reablement model](#) etc.

3. Recognition and Reward

Whilst AHP colleagues can be nominated for the state honours system and for the annual CAHPO Awards, there are many AHPs in England whose steadfast work has made a meritorious contribution yet does not necessarily fit with either of those existing routes of recognition. The award has therefore been developed to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence, where a significant, outstanding and exceptional contribution has been made by individual members of the AHP community in England in their work; consistently leading by example, demonstrating strong NHS values and high levels of commitment and quality throughout their role.

Therefore, the CAHPO Gold Award for Excellence:

- Compliments the current annual CAHPO Awards that have been established for a number of years now. [The annual CAHPO Awards](#) recognise significant good practice, innovation, transformation, improvement and impact of exceptional care for patients by an individual or team across eight distinct categories that are aligned to the current AHP Strategy – [AHPs Deliver](#).
- Is for an individual, recognising the vast range of skills and expertise AHPs bring to their roles; the leadership and inspiration they give to their colleagues; the innovation they bring to developing new ways of delivery; and the enormous benefits of the care and compassion they offer to patients both directly and indirectly.
- Rewards those individuals who have excelled in these areas throughout their career, identifying recipients as beacons of their profession and a shining example for others to aspire to.

The awarding of the CAHPO Gold Award for Excellence is an annual event, taking place once a year, usually in spring.

4. Criteria for being awarded the CAHPO Gold Award For Excellence

The CAHPO Gold Award for Excellence can be awarded to an individual AHP who has robustly and continuously demonstrated a range of the following criteria:

- For outstanding achievement and contribution, be it in their clinical practice, education, research, or other portfolio areas; changing or influencing professional or national policy direction.
- For consistently excellent performance – delivering the highest quality of care for patients and their families. This may also include having a significant impact on addressing specific health outcomes such as health inequalities.
- For consistently excellent performance – delivering the highest quality of professional leadership; being a role model to others; multi-professional; system influencing.
- For championing the implementation of the AHP Strategy – [AHPs Deliver](#); demonstrating innovation and entrepreneurship, introducing and making changes that have significant and beneficial impacts and improvements for services, patients and colleagues.
- For championing diversity, inclusion and equity in their role, area of work and with colleagues.

5. Eligibility

2024

To launch the CAHPO Gold Award and to mark the anniversary of her being in post for a decade, the CAHPO in England personally identified and selected the first tranche of winners who had, often in their own time or unseen by others, strengthened significantly and supported the work that the CAHPO and her wider team had undertaken during the last ten years. These inaugural 22 winners, with all 14 professions represented, were announced on 14 October 2024, on National AHPs Day, as part of the CAHPOs live webinar address.

2025 Onwards

For 2025 onwards, a nomination process has been introduced.

Nominations will only be considered based on the following:

- Members of the AHP community including support/social workers
- Only individuals can be nominated for a CAHPO Gold Award
- Individuals cannot nominate themselves
- Nominations must be submitted and approved through the process below
- All nominators and nominated individuals must be content to be subject to due diligence processes with their employers and Regional Chief AHPs.

There will only be a limited number of these Gold Awards handed out each year. The process is expected to be competitive and although it may result in some disappointment, being unsuccessful should not be regarded as failure of the nominator or nominee in any way.

6. How to nominate

Nominations can be made at any point throughout the year. The awarding of the CAHPO Gold Award for Excellence will take place once a year, usually in spring.

All nominations will also require the support of an accountable board level member at the nominee's employing organisation.

To nominate an AHP for a CAHPO Gold Award, please complete the [CAHPO Gold Award Nomination Form](#). Please note that the nomination rationale is a maximum of 750 words.

7. Process once nomination submitted

1. Nominating organisation or individual completes the [CAHPO Gold Award Nomination Form](#).
2. Nominators will receive confirmation that we have received their nomination within a few days.
3. Due diligence processes may take place with relevant employer and Regional Chief AHP.
4. The CAHPO Gold Award for Excellence panel will review each nomination at the appropriate point in the year.
5. If required, we will reach out to nominators when more information has been requested by the panel.
6. Nominators will not be informed if a nomination has been unsuccessful.
7. For successful nominations, the Office of the CAHPO will inform the nominator and the Regional Chief AHP. The nominated individual will also be notified and congratulated.

8. The Awards Panel

The process for reviewing and approving a nomination is as follows:

1. Completed nominations will be reviewed and approved by the CAHPO Gold Award for Excellence panel/committee, chaired by the CAHPO. This will include:
 - CAHPO (Chair)
 - 1x Deputy CAHPO [rotational]
 - 1x Regional Chief AHP / WTE Head of AHPs [rotational]
 - 1x service/provider board representative e.g. Chief Paramedic / Chief AHP [rotational]

9. The Award package

1. Winners of the CAHPO Gold for Excellence will receive:
 - a letter from the CAHPO
 - a certificate
 - a CAHPO Gold Badge for Excellence
2. CAHPO Gold Badges will be presented in person (when possible and if practicable) by one of the following at an appropriate/convenient time/event:
 - The CAHPO
 - Deputy CAHPO
 - Regional Chief AHP
 - Provider Chief AHP

A record will be maintained by the Office of the CAHPO of all CAHPO Gold Awards for Excellence nominations and winners.

10. AHP Support Workers

AHP support workers are at the heart of clinical settings and local communities up and down the country, making a real difference every day to the lives of patients they care for and the AHP colleagues they support. They are integral to our workforce and deserve recognition and celebration for all that they do.

We want to recognise our support workforce and the vital role they play.

11. AHP Support Worker Criteria

This award is based on their demonstration of the NHS values:

1. **Working together for patients** – those who consistently demonstrate the values of the NHS in supporting their AHP colleagues to deliver the highest possible patient care.
2. **Respect and dignity** – those who exemplify the importance of patient respect and dignity in all that they do.
3. **Commitment to quality of care** – those who contribute to the development of services for patients resulting in improvement of service provision.
4. **Compassion** – those who provide consistently outstanding care to patients and to colleagues, which is recognised by patients, service users and colleagues alike.
5. **Improving lives** – recognising those who impact the lives not just of their patients but also to their patient's loved ones. This is for AHP support workers that consistently demonstrate the NHS values to build good relationships with patients and their networks to provide outstanding patient care in their clinical setting.

6. **Everyone counts** – those who champion equality, diversity, and inclusion in everything that they do, both in clinical practice and with their colleagues

12. AHP Support Worker Eligibility

Only individual nominations should be submitted. We are keen to showcase the contribution of individual support workers and how they contribute to a wider team or organisation.

For eligibility criteria, see section 5 above.

13. How to nominate an AHP Support Worker

To nominate an AHP support worker for a CAHPO Gold Award for Excellence, see section 6 above.

Please send any queries to england.cahpo@nhs.net