

FOR HEALTHCARE LEADERS

**HSJ**

# BME PIONEERS

CELEBRATING THE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS FROM  
BME BACKGROUNDS

In association with



# RECOGNISING EXCEPTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ABILITY



The British Medical Association is delighted and proud to support the HSJ's BME pioneers.

We'd like to congratulate all those who have been nominated for their outstanding achievements and their contribution to a high-quality, inclusive health service.

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# Alastair McLellan



When we launched our BME Pioneers supplement last year, one of our motivations was to highlight and celebrate, first, the huge contribution people from black and minority ethnic

communities make to the NHS at all levels.

But second, and just as importantly, it was to emphasise just how far the NHS still has to go in terms of ensuring that, at a leadership level, it reflects the ethnic mix of the population it serves.

One of the most positive things to come out of last year's supplement was how it resonated with our readers. Indeed, a year on, people still talk about it.

But, in truth, on the ground little appears to have changed since last year. April's *Snowy White Peaks of the NHS* report by Roger Kline (who gets an honorary mention in this supplement) showed all too clearly how progress towards better representation at senior, and even more lowly, management levels remains "glacial".

That's why, to our mind, BME Pioneers remains one of the most important special supplements that we publish.

There are, of course, diversity initiatives and equality initiatives galore out there. There are, too, many dedicated individuals who tirelessly promote this agenda at trust and community level.

But, ultimately, improving representation comes down to a change of mindset and culture.

We fully recognise that just shining a spotlight on the reservoir of talent the NHS has at its disposal, but too often fails to draw upon, is not in itself going to change anything. But at the very least we hope it will give people pause for thought.

More than that, our hope is it will help to chip away at the ingrained (even unconscious) bias, prejudice and preconceptions that so often hold the NHS back; that it will send a powerful message about what the NHS is, isn't and yet could be.

Our list of 50 pioneers does not pretend to be definitive; a list such as this is by its nature subjective and selective. But we are very pleased to say it is (and this is just as well when you think about it) a very diverse list.

This year's pioneers are leaders, directors, managers, doctors, clinicians, nurses, academics, diversity champions, patient advocates and trade unionists.

Some of our names are well known, some have up to now been unsung. But what they are all doing is providing inspiration to those around them, inspiration that deserves to be recognised and applauded.

We hope, once again, our BME Pioneers supplement will spark reflection, engagement and debate – and please do join us online and on social media.

*Alastair McLellan is editor of HSJ.*

## THE JUDGES

**Gail Adams** Head of nursing, Unison

**Melissa Berry** Deputy head of equality and human rights, Central London Community Healthcare Trust

**Dr Kailash Chand** Deputy chair, BMA council

**Yvonne Coghill** Senior programme lead for inclusion, NHS Leadership Academy

**Paul Deemer** Head of equality, diversity and human rights, NHS Employers

**Professor Ieuan Ellis** Dean and pro vice chancellor, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, Leeds Beckett University

**Stacy Johnson** Assistant professor, School of Health Sciences, Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham University

**Alastair McLellan** Editor, *HSJ* (chair)

**Joan Myers** Nurse consultant for children and young people, North East London Foundation Trust and chair of the chief nursing officer's BME Advisory Group

**Ruth Passman** Deputy director for equality and health inequalities, NHS England

**Dr Umesh Prabhu** Medical director, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Foundation Trust

**Professor Mala Rao** Professor of international health, Institute for Health and Human Development, University of East London

**Ricky Somal** Equality and diversity lead, Southern Health Foundation Trust

**Mike Travis** Staff nurse at Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool, and Royal College of Nursing council member for the North West

**EDITOR** Nic Paton

**WRITERS** Nosmot Gbadamosi, Nic Paton

**PROJECT ASSISTANT** Rebecca Thomas

## THE JUDGING PROCESS

For our second *HSJ* BME Pioneers supplement we sought to identify individuals from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds making outstanding contributions to healthcare.

Our focus was to celebrate people working within healthcare and from BME backgrounds who, through exceptional leadership abilities or their day-to-day example, are inspiring others and helping to shape and deliver excellent care for all.

In particular, we were looking for

people whom our judges felt met one or more of the following criteria:

**Benefit.** How has this individual's work benefited patients? To what extent have his or her efforts helped enhance access to and/or the quality of care?

**Influence** To what extent has the individual been a game changer in his or her organisation, or more widely?

**Leadership** To what extent has this individual created a platform for others? Has he or she enabled greater numbers of BME staff to take

up roles at all levels of the health sector?

**Inclusivity** To what extent is the individual having a long term impact on the debate around inclusivity within the health sector?

A long list was developed during August and September through a public nomination process. Our judges met at the *HSJ* offices in September to consider the long list. Judges were not prevented from being on the list, but did not take part in conversations about their potential inclusion.

# BME Pioneers 2014

## Dr Kamran Abbasi

*International editor at the British Medical Journal*

After five years as a junior doctor, Dr Abbasi began his journalism career, having been recruited to write a review of England's 1996 Pakistani cricket tour for *Inside Edge* magazine, edited by one Alastair McLellan. Since then he has held several editorship roles within the *BMJ*. He is the current editor of the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* and is recognised as having a global outlook on health policy, having consulted for a diverse range of organisations including McKinsey, the World Health Organisation and Harvard University.

**What the judges said:** "He has a huge influence on doctors."



## Oyebanji Adewumi

*Associate director for inclusion at Barts Health Trust*

Responsible for diversity and inclusion at the largest trust nationally, Ms Adewumi is described by colleagues as a fierce advocate for equality for all. Barts was recognised as a top 10 employer for the lesbian, gay and bisexual community by Stonewall back in 2013 and this was partly down to efforts made by Ms Adewumi. She has been a trailblazer in making sure equality is a board-level issue within Barts and is currently leading a change programme designed to tackle unconscious bias, harassment and bullying.

**What the judges said:** "Because Barts is such a big trust she has to battle internally to get diversity on the agenda, with a very small team. But she does a fantastic job in making sure it is very much a core issue."

## Obi Amadi

*Lead professional officer at Unite*

Described as having a real appetite for change, Ms Amadi was previously a clinical services manager at Greenwich Healthcare Trust before taking up her current role at Unite in 2000. A nurse by background, she has been involved in the campaign to end female genital mutilation (FGM) by calling for school nurses to be at the forefront of the campaign and in highlighting the need for health visitors with the knowledge and training to identify young girls at risk of FGM. She is a member of the Mary Seacole Award Steering Group and in 2013 became a Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal ambassador.

**What the judges said:** "She has been driving diversity through her organisation when it hasn't always been straightforward."

## Dr JS Bamrah

*Medical director, Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust*

Dr Bamrah has worked at the mental health trust since 2001. He is currently honorary senior lecturer at Manchester University's School of Community Based Medicine and has contributed to, and led scrutiny of, the major legislations in mental health service provision over the last two decades. He has held senior positions within the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Psychiatrists. In particular he is credited with championing the cause of service users, and is passionate about the role mental health services play in improving the health and wellbeing of the wider population.

**What the judges said:** "He has done plenty of work where BME is concerned."

## Professor Carol Baxter

*Diversity, inclusion and human rights consultant*

Professor Baxter came to the UK from Jamaica in 1970 to train as a nurse. Since then she has held a number of senior positions in the NHS and higher education sectors. She is well known and respected as a diligent campaigner for diversity. Her academic research into the discrimination and harassment encountered by black and minority ethnic and overseas nurses is widely regarded and helped to bring the issue to a national platform. Having spent several years at the heart of NHS Employers' diversity policy she was awarded a CBE in the Queen's 2009 Birthday Honours list.

**What the judges said:** "A fantastic advocate and role model for black and ethnic minority people."

## Neomi Bennett

*Managing director of Neo-Innovations*

A nurse by background, Ms Bennett is the inventor of a medical device called Neo-slip – a slippery inner sock which aids the application of elasticated anti-embolism stockings. Normally the tight-fitting stockings can be difficult to apply for both nurses and patients, especially the elderly, but Ms Bennett's creation allows them to slide easily on to the foot. Her creation has brought accolades in the nursing press and led to her involvement in a parliamentary group to prevent deep vein thrombosis.

**What the judges said:** "She is a nurse and a businesswoman and that is the 'new clinician'."

## Melissa Berry

*Deputy head of equality and human rights at Central London Community Healthcare Trust*

A BME Pioneer last year, our judges felt Ms Berry, as a senior manager, continues to be seen as a role model for other BME staff, for

example regularly giving presentations to help BME staff overcome the barriers they face in career progression. Together with her team, Ms Berry has been working with Stonewall to make sure the trust is delivering on its lesbian, gay and bisexual equality agenda.

**What the judges said:** “She works tirelessly to make sure equality is ingrained within her trust.”

## Dr Kailash Chand

Deputy chair of the British Medical Association Council

As one of the most prolific medical activists within the media, Dr Chand has been particularly outspoken on the use of statins. In an *HSJ* article he said the medicalisation of lifestyle problems “is now one of the greatest threats to the sustainability of universal healthcare model”. One of last year’s BME Pioneers, our judges felt Dr Chand merited inclusion this year because he has been taking his considerable influence beyond medicine and on to the issue of diversity within the NHS. In 2012 he told *HSJ* that his role as deputy chair represented “the highest position reached by a doctor from a black and minority ethnic background in the BMA”, which “was important given the NHS’s large BME workforce”.

**What the judges said:** “Dr Chand has consistently and persistently fought for the values of the NHS, especially in tireless campaigning through the media.”

## Yvonne Coghill

Senior programme lead for inclusion at the NHS Leadership Academy

Over the past few years Ms Coghill has been instrumental in encouraging BME staff to break through the glass ceiling. A BME Pioneer last year, our judges felt that, as a senior programme lead, Ms Coghill continues to be the key driver for many of the academy’s core training programmes, including its Breaking Through initiative. She is also renowned for forming decisive relationships with senior leaders within the NHS to bring about change around inclusion and diversity. Her background as private secretary to former NHS chief executive Sir Nigel Crisp has also stood her in good stead in terms of knowing which areas need better representation.

**What the judges said:** “She gives her all, pushing forward BME inclusion in the NHS.”

## Maive Coley

Clinical support worker at Nottingham University Hospitals Trust

Ms Coley’s involvement with the Widening Participation group has given her the opportunity to represent the views of healthcare assistants and assistant practitioners, an often under heard but crucial part of the healthcare workforce. In her role as a Royal College of Nursing learning representative she has championed



Neomi Bennett earned her place through her invention of the Neo-slip

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**Dr Chand has consistently and persistently fought for the values of the NHS**

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lifelong learning, promoting the value of learning and training in the workplace, to influence patient care. She is also active in championing equality and diversity in neonatal services.

**What the judges said:** “It is very unusual to see healthcare assistants working at a national committee level.”

## Manjit Darby

Director of nursing and quality at Leicestershire and Lincolnshire NHS England Area Team

Ms Darby initiated a BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) leadership network steering group, which launched earlier this year. The project aims to improve the experiences, success and progression of nurses, nursing support staff and nursing students within the East Midlands. She has spent over 20 years in leadership roles across the NHS, starting her career as general nurse in 1987. Colleagues describe her as someone who puts an enormous energy into supporting and mentoring others and that she “actively role models what it means to be a great nurse”. She is also a member of the chief nursing officer’s BME Advisory Group.

**What the judges said:** “She is one of the few BME women working at a regional level. She also does a lot of mentoring, coaching and is a great role model. Very good and effective.”

## Beverley De-Gale

Co-founder and director of operations at the African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust

For the last 18 years, Ms De-Gale has taken on the mantle of raising awareness about the urgent need for donors to come forward from the black, Asian and minority ethnic community. In 1996 Ms De-Gale co-founded the ACLT together with her partner Orin Lewis, following the diagnosis of their six-year old son, Daniel, with leukaemia. Her efforts have raised the number of potential donors by motivating thousands from the BME community to join the UK register, enabling many more bone marrow transplants to take place.

**What the judges said:** “You are struck by the work she’s done over a period of time; she is someone who has taken the initiative.”

## Parul Desai

Consultant in ophthalmology and public health at Moorfields Eye Hospital Foundation Trust

Ms Desai’s research and public health practice has informed and contributed to

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**Parul Desai has endured sexism and racism but gets on with it and has held her own**

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many of the Department of Health’s recent policies and strategies for eye health services in the NHS. As chair of the Vision 2020 UK Ophthalmic Public Health Committee, her role has been in ensuring eye health is not seen as a specialist niche. She worked on the former quango Connecting for Health’s ‘Do Once and Share’ glaucoma programme from 2006-2007 and, earlier this year, became the first woman to be appointed master of the Oxford Ophthalmological Congress, which is one of the oldest and largest meetings of ophthalmologists in the UK and Europe. **What the judges said:** “She has endured quite a lot of sexism and racism but is tenacious, gets on with it, and has held her own. A great role model and very modest.”

## Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent

Director of midwifery at Imperial College Healthcare Trust

Professor Dunkley-Bent developed and led the first foundation degree for maternity support workers in London in partnership with the then London Strategic Health Authority. She also developed and validated the first masters in midwifery and excellence in practice programme at London South Bank University. She has been steadily making improvements to clinical services – as the former head of midwifery and women’s services at Guy’s & St Thomas’ Foundation Trust she established a specialist clinic for asylum seekers who had suffered sexual abuse as well as support for women who had experienced domestic violence. Our judges felt she was a fantastic role model for black and minority ethnic people.

**What the judges said:** “She is just one of two BME staff working at that level in a large trust.”

## Scott Durairaj

Head of patient experience, mental health and learning disability at NHS England

On Mr Durairaj’s watch, as head of equality, diversity and human rights at Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust, it became the highest ranking NHS trust in Stonewall’s 2012 Workplace Equality Index. He was also instrumental in driving down the health inequalities for BME mental health services at the trust as well as working to reduce BME bullying and harassment. In his current role his focus is very much on encouraging patient involvement and learning from patient experience. He was also named as one of this year’s inaugural *HSJ* LGBT Role Models.

**What the judges said:** “He has had a key focus on intelligent use of data and this year he is looking at its full use to improve equality within the NHS.”

## Professor Aneez Esmail

Professor of general practice at Manchester University

One of last year’s BME Pioneers, Dr Esmail’s pioneering research into racism is well

Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent has developed advanced qualifications in midwifery and maternity



# Dr Shreelata Datta

Consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist at King's College Hospital, London

Dr Shreelata Datta is a dedicated and ambitious young doctor who has been outspoken on the staffing shortages affecting junior doctors, as well as adequate allowances for the training of doctors.

She is the former chair of the British Medical Association's junior doctors' committee. In the role, she has contributed to the committee's guidance on handovers and the national report by Medical Education England focused on how the European Working Time Directive affects training. Colleagues say she introduced greater efficiency to the way the committee was run.

**What the judges said:** "She was a particularly effective advocate for junior doctors and launched a national campaign to highlight their working rights."



known both within the NHS and outside it, and his continuing influence warranted inclusion in this year's list, our judges felt. In 1994, he and a fellow GP submitted a series of identical job applications for various hospital posts, one with an English name, the other with an Asian name. Although both fictitious applications had the same medical experience and qualifications, the English applicants were shortlisted twice as often as the Asian candidates. In 2013 Dr Esmail led a groundbreaking investigation into the examination of the Royal College of General Practitioners' clinical skills assessment process; this and his other investigations has resulted in significant changes in recruitment, selection and monitoring of the medical profession.

**What the judges said:** "He has done a lot on BME issues as well as on inequality in health, in this country and internationally."

## Dr Amir Hannan

GP at Houghton Thornley Medical Centres, Manchester, and long term conditions, information management and technology, and patient engagement lead, Tameside and Glossop CCG

Dr Hannan is best known for having enabled his patients to have access to their records over the internet, and a staggering 3,500 of his patients now do so. In his role at Tameside and Glossop CCG, and as a founding member of the Records Access Collaborative, Dr Hannan works tirelessly to raise awareness of the benefits of patient access to records. He was one of this year's *HSJ* Top Innovators.

**What the judges said:** "A champion of patient access to GP records, he also does a lot of work with disadvantaged groups, such as ex-armed robbers and drug addicts. He wants to engage them as leaders within the NHS, not just drawing on the usual suspects who come along to patient groups."

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**Dr Amir Hannan is a champion of patient access to GP records. He also does a lot of work with disadvantaged groups**

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## DR KAILASH CHAND ON INSPIRING OTHERS

“ The British Medical Association is proud to support this project highlighting the work of BME pioneers.

Since the inception of the NHS, BME doctors have provided a range of essential services, including care and support, for some of the most vulnerable sections of our community, often working in areas of high socioeconomic deprivation and in less popular areas of healthcare.

By the 1960s, a time of significant expansion for the NHS, the government was proactively recruiting doctors and other clinical staff from Commonwealth countries, particularly in south Asia.

Today, the contribution made by BME clinicians and others continues to grow across the NHS, with more than a third of the workforce now coming from BME backgrounds. We have seen the vital role those from overseas have played in the key services, where there has been a historic shortage of UK trained doctors, including in consultant posts in emergency care,

**‘We must continue to break down any barriers to a successful medical career for people from BME backgrounds’**

haematology and old age psychiatry.

This inspirational list of BME Pioneers reinforces how BME clinicians and others play a vital role in healthcare. By recognising such achievements, we hope to encourage and inspire others.

However, we must continue to break down any barriers that stand in the way of a successful medical career for people from BME backgrounds. It is essential we provide a health service underpinned by equality where talented professionals are given the support and development opportunities required to create a lasting impact.

The BMA is committed to equality and the elimination of unfair discrimination in all its forms, and works to ensure that medical students and doctors are treated fairly and equally in their education and career. The BMA would like to see fairness, transparency and equity regardless of whatever stage people are at in that career.

Our focus is to guarantee that all doctors have the opportunity and support to choose and progress with equity throughout their careers. We believe that talent and contribution must be valued for themselves, no matter a person's background.

*Dr Kailash Chand is deputy chair of the BMA Council.*

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Professor Anil Jain was described by judges as 'a strong contender'

## Wendy Irwin

Diversity and equalities coordinator at the Royal College of Nursing

Within her role at the RCN, Ms Irwin works relentlessly to make a difference for many BME nurses. She has led on work to promote equal opportunities for BME nurses and also for the gay, lesbian and transgender nursing community. She has criticised the restructuring practices within the NHS that have led to many senior BME nurses leaving the profession, voicing the view that BME staff get a "raw deal" when it came to career progression.

**What the judges said:** "Wendy is one of the lifebloods of the NHS and diversity. A true role model."

## Professor Anil Jain

Consultant radiologist at University Hospital of South Manchester Foundation Trust

In 2011, Professor Jain launched the Asian Breast Cancer Support Group to improve breast cancer awareness and breast screening uptake within the Asian community and also support those going through treatment. Under his leadership, the group has grown from strength to strength and provides an opportunity for patients and health professionals to work together in addressing inequalities. He is currently delivering cross-cultural communications skills training workshops for health professionals to help them understand the needs of Asian women.

**What the judges said:** "A very strong contender."

## Ludlow Johnson

Equality and human rights manager at South Central Ambulance Service Trust

Mr Johnson "is not fearful in upsetting those at the top", said the judges. He recently challenged the NHS Leadership Academy on the diversity of its award winners and their role in encouraging organisations to put forward staff more representative of their workforce. Mr Johnson sits on the national equality and diversity group, a technical group of the NHS Staff Council, which works to deliver the equality agenda.

**What the judges said:** "He has championed diversity within the ambulance service."

## Professor Praveen Kumar

Consultant gastroenterologist and professor of medicine and education, Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry

Professor Kumar has spent a large part of her career working in the East End of London mainly at Barts, Homerton and the Royal London hospitals. She was a non-executive director of the then National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence at its inception in 1999 and resigned in 2002 when she was appointed chair of the Medicines Commission UK. Our judges felt her work as a role model in encouraging women academic clinicians to enter the profession needed to be recognised.

**What the judges said:** "As far as BME is

## Dr Vivienne Lyfar-Cissé

Clinical biochemist at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Trust

It takes a brave woman to speak out against a current employer's long-standing race issues, but Dr Lyfar-Cissé has repeatedly done just that, successfully winning a legal battle and formal apology from Brighton and Sussex on race discrimination in 2007 and in 2008. As chair of her local BME network, Dr Lyfar-Cissé has been upfront in highlighting issues within her own trust and wider institutional racism. She led on the creation of a national network for BME professionals working within the NHS and this year invited CQC chair David Prior to hear how inappropriate and racist behaviour is affecting BME staff and their ability to deliver good quality patient care.

**What the judges said:** "She deserves to be on the list."



# Jackie Lynton

Head of transformation at NHS Horizons Group, NHS Improving Quality

Ms Lynton is part of the leadership team behind NHS Change Day. The former nurse was previously a programme manager for mental health at West Midlands Strategic Health Authority as well as South Staffordshire PCT. Her ability to influence goes beyond Change Day. For example, she set up the School for Health and Care Radicals, a virtual learning programme for people who want to learn how to work in a different way.

**What the judges said:** “She is the engine behind the idea of NHS Change Day.”



concerned, her influence and example has been huge.”

## Orin Lewis

Co-founder and chief executive of the African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust

Mr Lewis joins his partner Beverly De-Gale (see profile, page 4) on our list because their work in creating the ACLT was considered by our judges to be very much a joint effort and therefore deserving of joint recognition.

**What the judges said:** “He has committed himself to the cause of raising the awareness of the urgent need for registering many more BME bone marrow, blood and organ donors. He should be on the list along with Beverly because they work together, tirelessly.”

## Joseph Lindo

Associate director of universal services children at North East London Foundation Trust

The judges felt the level of engagement Mr Lindo was able to develop within his community was unmatched. He started his career as a health visitor working in one of the most deprived areas of east London. He recognised many of the community’s issues were to do with social mobility rather than health, such as lower levels of educational attainment and housing overcrowding. This has led him to pioneer unique ways of engaging with the public. For example, he set up a parents group for fathers that offers support with childcare but also serves as a way of promoting good health and the importance of regular health checks.

**What the judges said:** “He is the only BME male health visitor I have ever come across. He deserves to be on the list for his work supporting fathers and healthcare.”

## Dr Aseem Malhotra

Honorary consultant cardiologist at Frimley Park Hospital Foundation Trust and member of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges obesity group

Dr Malhotra is best known for having ignited a debate over diagnosis, criticising

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**If nothing else, Joseph Lindo deserves to be on the list for his work supporting fathers and healthcare**

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## PAUL DEEMER ON A NEW GENERATION

“ This is the second year that NHS Employers has sponsored *HSJ*'s BME Pioneers supplement.

We applaud *HSJ* and our other partners, NHS Leadership Academy and the British Medical Association, for working with us to lead this work.

When BME Pioneers launched last year, I wrote about the valuable contribution these individuals had made and the legacy they would leave.

That was, and still is, true. However, this year's list is, I believe, even more significant and relevant to the here and now because it contains a larger proportion of what I would call the new generation of BME pioneers.

These people have benefited from the battles and struggles their predecessors fought, and are now challenging the systems and processes that sometimes cause inequality and unfairness for BME staff and patients with renewed vigour and determination.

They are encouraged and enthused by the energy and passion of their predecessors, and are able to apply fresh thinking and ideas to address challenges in a different way.

This new generation of BME pioneers are combining traditional skills of critical analysis and persuasive argument with modern theories and techniques to enhance their impact.

So, the compelling moral and legal case for equality is bolstered by a sound business case, one that places equality at the heart of organisational development and in the centre

**‘These BME pioneers are encouraged and enthused by the energy and passion of their predecessors’**

of their values-based approach.

This business case talks not just about equality, but also about diversity and inclusion and, beyond that, the power of these issues within the whole corporate social responsibility arena. These messages are then conveyed and communicated by the new generation through a variety of social media platforms, which allows them to reach a wider audience in a much quicker time.

The new generation of BME pioneers are the future leaders of our NHS – and I thank them all and wish them well.

*Paul Deemer is head of equality, diversity and human rights at NHS Employers.*

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doctors' treatment of simple cases that bring "no benefit to the patients". His list of what he described as "a culture of over-investigation" includes excessive use of antibiotics and imaging for non-sinister headaches. He has also been instrumental in catapulting the *BMJ's* "too much medicine" campaign into the media, one reason our judges argued for his inclusion in our list for a second year running.

**What the judges said:** "An upcoming star."

### **Tiritega Mawaka**

Manager, continuing healthcare at Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Groups

There is growing interest in BME dementia care, an area upon which Ms Mawaka is only too well placed to inform. Working in an inpatient unit where most patients were over 65 and living with dementia, Ms Mawaka was disheartened by how few staff were equipped to deal with this. This led to her researching the lived experiences of black people living with dementia in the UK. A Mary Seacole Leadership Award winner, she shares her research with the Alzheimer's Society to shed light on this often-overlooked cohort.

**What the judges said:** "She has inspired many people."

### **Dr Ramesh Mehta**

Principal regional examiner, South Asia, at the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Dr Mehta is president of the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin, a position of influence that means he becomes a BME Pioneer for a second year. The organisation brought forward a judicial review against the Royal College of GPs and the General Medical Council over claims the clinical skills assessment discriminates against those from a minority background. Although unsuccessful, it did highlight the need for fairness during face-to-face examinations. Dr Mehta has also been outspoken in the need to support whistle blowers.

**What the judges said:** "He is doing tremendous work."

### **Yunus Mogra**

Equality and diversity manager at North West Ambulance Service Trust

Mr Mogra has led the way in introducing pictorial multilingual communication tools to the ambulance service. He has also been involved in a national pilot working in partnership with the fire department, police, air ambulance and local youth centre organisations on a safe driving project for black and Asian males aged 19-25 years old.

**What the judges said:** "He has worked with seldom-heard groups across his region, highlighting services and reducing barriers, leading to diverse communities joining the ranks of the North West Ambulance Service."

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**Professor Stanley Okolo will look after people and nurture them, and that relationship continues even after they have progressed**

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### **Dr Chaand Nagpaul**

GP in north London and chair, British Medical Association GPs committee

One of last year's BME Pioneers, Dr Nagpaul had at that point only been chair of the GPs committee for a matter of months and, as such, his nomination was as much for his lifetime's dedication to medico-politics as it was for being in the GPs' hot-seat. One year on, his handling, so far, of what our judges simply termed "the whole GP crisis" drew plaudits. The fact he is in such a pivotal position made him in our judges' eyes a shoe-in for this year's supplement.

**What the judges said:** "It is one of the hardest jobs as far in the BMA. A very articulate man, a very decent person."

### **Professor Stanley Okolo**

Consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist and medical director at North Middlesex University Hospital Trust

In his eight years as medical director, Professor Okolo has guided the trust through an "enormous" period of positive transformation, his nominee argued, including making "huge improvements" in clinical quality indicators. "Always leading by example, he has inspired many medical and non-medical staff, and always encourages everyone to push boundaries," his colleague said, including ensuring strong BME representation within senior roles.

**What the judges said:** "He is outstanding when it comes to mentoring. He will look after people, he will nurture them, and that relationship continues even after they have progressed. He really deserves to be up there."

### **Yemisi Oluyede**

Assistant director, HR, at Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals, Royal Free London Foundation Trust

As well as her "day job" at Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals Trust (now part of Royal Free), Ms Oluyede is NHS England's equality lead at the trust and co-chairs NHS England's Staff Council equality and diversity group. As such she has both national reach and local influence when it comes to promoting the equality agenda and, our judges felt, was a very worthy entrant to this year's supplement.

**What the judges said:** "She champions diversity. She has also done a lot of work around pay equity. A well-deserved place."

### **Ruth Oshikanlu**

Trustee and founding director of the NU Social Health Organisation

The Nu Social Health Organisation is a charity that specialises in setting up time banks in schools, GP practices and the wider community. A parenting expert, Queen's Nurse and the charity's founding director, Ms Oshikanlu is, according to the nominations *HSJ* received, "proactive and supports nurses in delivering excellent care". It's also been a year of awards for her: the Queen's Nursing Institute's Queen Elizabeth and The Queen Mother Award for



**'Inspirational and passionate'**  
Ruth Oshikanlu

## **YVONNE COGHILL ON TALENT**

“ This is the second year that *HSJ* along with the BMA, NHS Employers and NHS Leadership Academy, has published its BME Pioneers list, and the second year I have been privileged enough to be a judge.

There are so many talented and dedicated staff in the NHS, many from BME backgrounds, so it is fabulous and, of course, fair that we recognise their efforts to make the service one of the best healthcare systems in the world.

Having looked at the long list of nominees and the reasons why they were nominated, I can honestly say without fear of contradiction that everyone on the list deserved the title BME Pioneer: people who work for the good of patients and staff, regardless of their background and the background of others.

The NHS is becoming increasingly more complex, more challenging. There are increasing demands, as well as reduced funding and high expectations. It is more important than it's ever been that we use all the talents in the service to ensure we improve services.

**'Recognising and valuing everyone's contribution in making the NHS one of the best healthcare services in the world is the right thing to do'**

Reading through the long list also brought to my attention the fact there is a lot of unsung talent in the service; we simply need to utilise, nurture and value it. This list does exactly that. In recognising, profiling and valuing the wonderful pioneers within the system it will motivate, enthuse and inspire more people to emulate and model their behaviours.

The NHS Leadership Academy is proud to be associated with this list. We exist to identify and develop all leaders within the NHS. We believe recognising and valuing everyone's contribution in making the NHS one of the best healthcare services in the world is the right thing to do.

Many congratulations to all our wonderful colleagues named in this supplement, to all those who were on the long list and also the many thousands of unsung BME staff who work tirelessly every day to ensure our patients receive the great service they deserve.

*Yvonne Coghill is senior programme lead for inclusion at the NHS Leadership Academy.*



Dr Kiran Patel has been described as a 'role model for social mobility'

Outstanding Service to Community Nursing, The Community Practitioner of the Year Award and now, of course, becoming an *HSJ* BME Pioneer.

**What the judges said:** “Ruth is an inspirational professional who is passionate about community nursing, children and their families.”

## Dr Kiran Patel

Consultant cardiologist and associate medical director at the Good Hope Hospital, Heart of England Foundation Trust

Alongside his role at the trust, Dr Patel is a trustee of the South Asian Health Foundation, which promotes good health in the UK's south Asian communities. As one of those nominating him put it: “He leads on and tackles challenging issues, serving as the role model for social mobility himself, which inspires local youth and health professionals. He is understated and never blows his own trumpet either, so deserves

recognition.” Our judges very much agreed. **What the judges said:** “He does an awful lot of work, both in research and advocacy, on cardiovascular disease. He deserves to be on the list.”

## Nina Patel

Nurse consultant in diabetes, Ealing Hospital Trust

Ms Patel began her nursing career back in 1978, becoming a midwife and sickle cell and thalassemia counsellor. She has been instrumental in helping to develop local community education and screening services as well as antenatal counselling services. She has been committed to ensuring patients with diabetes receive the same standard of care from different clinicians, including encouraging clinical staff across primary and acute care to attend behavioural change therapy sessions. She also helped her acute care consultants set up a transitional clinic for young people with diabetes.

**What the judges said:** “She is an unsung hero. She brings an incredible diversity and appreciation to her role.”

## Beverley Powell

Equality and diversity adviser, Barnsley Hospital Foundation Trust

As her trust's equality and diversity lead, Ms Powell has shown “relentless determination that has resulted in making a difference,” the nominations *HSJ* received said. Achievements include the development of 23 “diversity champions” at the trust, who encourage staff to personalise care through more inclusive behaviour. She has also been instrumental in setting up diversity information notice boards. Her work has led this year to the trust being highly commended in NHS Employers' Personal, Fair and Diverse Awards.

**What the judges said:** “This year in particular she's really stepped up to the plate. She's also doing a lot on social media now to get the message out.”

## Dr Umesh Prabhu

Medical director at Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Foundation Trust

One of last year's pioneers, Dr Prabhu was praised by the people who nominated him for “his relentless and striving ability to galvanise positive change for all, including BME colleagues in the NHS”. He very recently wrote in *HSJ* that “time has come for us to appoint value based leaders and hold all to account and give them feedback that the NHS [has] no place for bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination. As well as being in a high-profile role at his trust, Dr Prabhu is a National Clinical Assessment Service adviser, vice-chair of the British International Doctors' Association and an adviser to the BMA.

**What the judges said:** “He has been awarded before but he continues to be an inspiration.”

Nina Patel was dubbed an ‘unsung hero’ by judges



## Shahana Ramsden

**Patient and public voice manager, NHS England**  
Ms Ramsden has dedicated her working life to supporting equality and “citizen” engagement, particularly within the NHS and social care. She led the Department of Health’s Co-production and Equalities Programme, managed the National Delivering Race Equality Programme and was joint chief executive of the Equalities National Council. At NHS England she supports the Patient Online programme, which works to get service users, patients, families and carers involved in co-producing work programmes. Her nominators specifically highlighted her work as programme manager for Think Local, Act Personal partnership’s Making it Real initiative, which encourages service users and patients to co-design the delivery of health and social care, as well as her innovative NHS Leadership Academy blog.  
**What the judges said:** “Rather than just demonstrating engagement she has really evidenced it.”

## Professor Mala Rao

**Professor of international health, Institute for Health and Human Development, University of East London**  
Professor Rao was a BME Pioneer last year but her inclusion for a second time received unanimous agreement. The reasoning of our judges? As the person who nominated her pointed out, her research document this year *Explaining Levels of Wellbeing in BME Populations in England* has been “seminal”. “She has gone from strength to strength. She is dedicated to fairness and equity and is a true leader in every sense of the word,” her colleague added.  
**What the judges said:** “She is a woman of great integrity and tenacity.”

## Joan Saddler

**Associate director of patients and communities at NHS Confederation**  
As a former national director of patient and public affairs at the Department of Health and former chair of Waltham Forest PCT, Ms Saddler has been working at the top echelons of the NHS for many years. As the person nominating her put it, she is “an experienced campaigner, manager and chief executive”. As well as her main role in the confederation, in July she was appointed an ambassador for the Mary Seacole Statue Appeal.  
**What the judges said:** “It’s wonderful to see a black woman at such a high level. Joan takes a broad perspective but you can see that commitment to diversity. You don’t mess with Joan.”

## Professor Pinki Sahota

**Professor of nutrition and childhood obesity at Leeds Beckett University**  
Professor Sahota has more than 20 years’ experience as a community dietician within the NHS. She is a regular expert adviser to the Department of Health and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, including contributing to NICE’s 2013

## Yana Richens

**Consultant midwife at University College London Hospitals Foundation Trust**  
With a career going back to 1979, Ms Richens has been a consultant midwife in public health since 2004. But that barely skims the surface of what she’s achieved. She is co-editor in chief of the *British Journal of Midwifery* and consultant editor of the *African Journal for Midwives*.  
She co-founded the national Female Genital Mutilation clinical guideline group, is an honorary senior lecturer at City University and a member of the chief nursing officer’s BME Advisory Group.  
“She also supports and develops younger and less experienced midwives,” say colleagues. Now she can add being an *HSJ* BME Pioneer to that distinguished list.

**What the judges said:** “She has national reach and has been tireless in the service of women in the NHS.”



“Joan Saddler takes a broad perspective but you can see that commitment to diversity. You don’t mess with Joan”

guidance *Managing Overweight and Obesity Among Children and Young People: lifestyle weight management services*. She is also deputy chair of the Association for the Study of Obesity. Those nominating her particularly praised her National Institute for Health Research-funded *Born in Bradford* study, which looked at the health of children in multi-ethnic communities. “Her passion and influence for making a difference for the Asian child population in Bradford and beyond is truly inspiring,” they added.  
**What the judges said:** “She is an inspirational research leader. She will not be expecting even to have been nominated but I think she is extremely deserving.”

## Sukhvinder Sandhu

**Improving Access to Psychological Therapies service manager at South London and Maudsley Foundation Trust**  
As IAPT service manager, Ms Sandhu’s role, naturally, encompasses widening access to mental health services for the whole community. But, within this, she was recognised by our judges for her dedication to championing access for the BME community. Her contribution, and her future potential, has also been recognised by her trust, which is funding her to study for a Masters in Business Administration at the University of Westminster, which she is due to complete in 2016.  
**What the judges said:** “She is a really good champion and a BME role model.”

## Professor Laura Serrant-Green

**Professor of community and public health nursing and associate dean of research and enterprise, School of Health and Wellbeing, Wolverhampton University**  
One of this year’s *HSJ* Top Clinical Leaders and Most Inspirational Women, Professor Serrant-Green has made it the triple by

becoming a 2014 BME Pioneer. In a way it's hardly surprising, given that in May she was presented with a Queen's Nurse Award in recognition of her efforts to raise the profile of community nursing. Her research around marginalised communities, her advocacy for and commitment to a more diverse healthcare workforce and her tireless work as a mentor all made her a worthy entrant to our list, our judges felt.

**What the judges said:** "She's got a massive commitment to international work as well. For example, her work as a visiting professor in the Caribbean has helped to educate the nurse community there."

### Jagtar Singh

Chair of Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust

The retired deputy chief of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (and adviser to the Asian Fire Service Association) has, his nominators argued, "done incredibly outstanding work within the NHS and also the fire and rescue service; he has been a role model to encourage BME youngsters to take challenging roles and represent the community at large". In his role at Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust, Mr Singh has brought a passion for coaching and mentoring and a commitment to social justice and, as one of his colleagues added: "He is a committed public servant and a fantastic dedicated leader."

**What the judges said:** "He has done some amazing work, for patients, for staff, in the fire service and as a fireman himself."

“

**Dino Williams has been phenomenal. Staff have very high regard for him and he is certainly someone to watch**

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### Ricky Somal

Equality and diversity lead at Southern Health Foundation Trust

Mr Somal was a 2013 BME Pioneer for his ground breaking work at the Southampton-based trust. Our judges felt he deserved to make it on to this year's list for the fact he is now spreading and promoting this agenda, in particular working two days a week at Portsmouth Hospitals Trust. Another achievement this year has been in getting a 50 per cent reduction in BME-based disciplinarys. His nominators were equally effusive: "Equality and diversity is a difficult subject to get real enthusiasm from others, and Ricky achieves this through his leadership qualities. He has transformed equality and diversity in a very short time."

**What the judges said:** "He has created energy and enthusiasm."

### Robin Sookhan

Manager at Waltham Forest Access and Assessment and Psychiatric Liaison Team, North East London Foundation Trust

Mr Sookhan's commitment to integrated working and improving access to services caught the eyes of our judges. Our judges were particularly taken with his achievement in getting CCGs to invest in the service on the back of an audit he led of mental health service users presenting to Whipps Cross Hospital. They also liked how he has introduced parallel processing for A&E patients, which has reduced waits for mental health patients.

**What the judges said:** "He has forged strong links with the community drug and alcohol service to ensure more patients are engaging with treatment, and he has developed a psychiatric liaison service for older adults."

### Patrick Vernon

Health partnership coordinator at the National Housing Federation

Mr Vernon's nominators described him as "a tireless campaigner across health and social care for equitable access and patient experience for BME communities". And that pretty much encapsulates his dedication and commitment to equality and diversity. Before taking on his current role, Mr Vernon was chief executive of the race equality charity the Afya Trust, worked as a senior civil servant at the Department of Health and was a director of the Brent Health Action Zone, part of Brent PCT. He is a committee member for Healthwatch England and a member of the Metropolitan Police Service's independent review into police procedures in cases of people with mental health.

**What the judges said:** "He is a really strong candidate for the work he's done around mental illness."

### Dino Williams

Staff side chair and branch secretary for Unison at Guy's and St Thomas' Foundation Trust

When it comes to fostering learning and championing engagement around diversity and equality, the example of Dino Williams at Guy's and St Thomas' has been second to none. Achievements include personally championing the development of a joint learning agreement to support life-long learning for all staff, especially lower banded staff and the development of a debt and budgeting support strategy for staff at all levels. As colleagues put it: "Dino combines being a highly effective union organiser and representative with being a champion for equality, a role model to staff and a positive game changer for GSTT."

**What the judges said:** "He has been phenomenal; he's championed the learning agenda and driven forward the diversity agenda. Staff have very high regard for him and he is certainly someone to watch."

### Honorary mention

### Roger Kline

Research fellow at Middlesex University

His report, *The Snowy White Peaks of the NHS*, has had an enormous impact and helped raise equality standards. The study, covered in *HSJ*, found the proportion of senior NHS positions held by people of black and minority ethnic backgrounds had barely changed in the past eight years. Mr Kline has also written numerous articles for *HSJ* on the topic of diversity. Although not from a BME background, our judges felt the wealth of work Mr Kline has done around discrimination and equal appointment has shifted diversity faster than would otherwise have been possible, and merited a special mention within this supplement.



'Tireless campaigner'  
Patrick Vernon

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