



Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026

Research and Innovation Award

Digital Pathogen Tracking Project

James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Health Innovation East

The Digital Pathogen Tracking Project at James Paget University Hospital represents an innovative and responsible approach to infection prevention and control through real-time digital contact tracing. Delivered in partnership with Health Innovation East and Addenbrooke's, the project introduced wearable tags and Real-Time Location System (RTLS) technology via Proximos Safer Care to enhance identification of exposure pathways between patients, staff and clinical environments. This strengthened traditional manual tracing by improving speed, accuracy and visibility, enabling faster and more targeted Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) responses.

A key strength of the project is its strong emphasis on trust, privacy and patient safety. From the outset, robust governance frameworks were embedded, including consent-led participation, restricted data access, anonymisation, and clear communication. The system was explicitly designed as a patient safety tool rather than a surveillance mechanism. Extensive collaboration across clinical teams, digital leads, IPC, Occupational Health, estates, unions and external partners ensured workforce confidence and safe, ethical implementation.

Implemented within a live 28-bedded ward, the project integrated seamlessly into clinical workflows while testing operational feasibility, usability, and patient acceptability. It demonstrated how digital innovation can support earlier, data-driven identification of risk while maintaining dignity and trust.

The impact has been both operational and cultural. The system supports faster outbreak response, reduces reliance on time-intensive manual tracing, and frees up clinical capacity. It also builds a scalable NHS model for digital transformation, showing how innovation can improve safety, efficiency and collaboration while protecting staff wellbeing, patient rights, and public trust.