



Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026

Supporting Young People Award

Rachel Senior

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Rachel is recognised for her exceptional ability to build trust and meaningful relationships with young people facing complex challenges, including mental health difficulties, trauma and social isolation. Working within the paediatric team at Ipswich Hospital, she supports adolescents during some of the most difficult stages of their lives, offering a level of care that goes far beyond traditional clinical practice.

What sets Rachel apart is her deeply person-centred approach. She meets young people where they are, often at their most guarded, and creates a safe, non-judgemental space where they feel genuinely heard. Rather than relying on fixed approaches, she adapts to each individual, recognising them as experts in their own experiences. Through patience, empathy and consistency, she builds trust at a pace that allows young people to open up about issues they may never have previously shared.

Rachel's work also extends to families, offering reassurance, clarity and compassionate communication to parents and carers who may feel overwhelmed or excluded. Her inclusive practice acknowledges that disengagement from services is often rooted in unmet emotional needs, and she addresses this through authentic connection rather than protocol.

Her impact is seen in powerful, everyday outcomes: young people re-engaging with support, speaking openly about their feelings, and regaining confidence in healthcare services. By fostering trust, Rachel not only improves immediate wellbeing but encourages long-term help-seeking behaviours. Her dedication and humanity transform lives, making her a truly outstanding and deserving nominee.