

Our shining stars, David and Becky

It took us nearly 2 years from initial facilitator training to our first Round. We hadn't found our medical and clinical facilitators to ignite the spark. We thought about staff who works at the heart of our hospitals, who could find and encourage wonderful Schwartz stories. But we also needed individuals with commitment, compassion, credibility, people-skills and indefinable magic. Through this 'lens', David Gaunt, Emergency Department Consultant and Becky Platt, Matron for Children's services came into the frame. Invites to David and Becky to be part of our Schwartz journey and be our Schwartz leaders were instantly accepted. And then the magic started.



David, Becky & Richard

We took a leap of faith and arranged our first Round in January 2016. Our concerns 'would anyone turn up?' changed to delight as 114 people filled the room. David's careful seating plan was quickly adjusted. Becky calmly smiled and settled the nerves of our first ever panel speaking about 'the patient I will never forget'.

Since then, monthly Rounds have shared heart-warming and heart-wrenching stories alike. Rounds are very well-attended by a wide mix of staff; feedback nearly always exceptional. Our Rounds are "probably the most important thing we do to support our staff".

David and Becky are a true inspirational partnership. Eye-contact and 'language' between David and Becky shows their intuitive and warm relationship. Their unique style of facilitating is not Morecambe but very Wise! It was not a conscious decision that their 'double-act' leads most Rounds; but our team of trained Schwartz facilitators are happy for our stars to do the honours when they can. Even when David was in pain, on crutches, he led our Round. Both have immensely challenging roles; yet never let their commitment slip.

Each Round is 'stand-out. This year, our January Round was for disabled staff to 'hear my voice'. With gentle encouragement, our panellists who find it difficult to be seen and heard shared their stories. David purchased our Schwartz amplifier system for this Round, used frequently since. Seeing the care with which David and Becky settled our panellists and gently clipped the microphone to their clothes was emotional. In February, our Chief Executive, Medical Director, Chief Nurse, Estates and Communications Directors were panellists with the theme 'It is tough at the top'. In October, our ward-based panel nearly pulled out as the Round was about to start, feeling exposed. David and Becky's warm and human approach meant that the story told; the audience laughed, cried and clapped at the end. Feedback from the large group of student nurses present was this Round exemplified compassionate nursing at its very best and they are proud to join the profession.

