

Professional Nursing Committee Report to Members – September 2022

1. This report reflects work done by the Professional Nursing Committee since our last report and an update from our most recent meeting on 7 September 2022.
2. On 25 August we held a joint session with the Trade Union Committee at which we discussed all the work arising from Congress 2022 and where joint working across our committees would be beneficial. We also spent some time feeding into development of the RCN's next five-year strategy.
3. We received an update on the industrial action statutory ballot and discussed the roles of our two committees in preparing for and potentially conducting industrial action. We were briefed on the UK COVID-19 Public Inquiry and considered how our committees could engage in supporting the RCN's involvement in the inquiry.
4. On 21 July we held our second 'deep dive' workshop where we fed in our views to inform the RCN response to current NMC consultations including the consultation on English language requirements (IELTS) and the consultation on pre-registration programme standards.
5. At our next 'deep dive' session on 21 September we will discuss the RCN's work on job evaluation and national role profiles and how we can contribute.
6. We continue with our monthly podcast '[Nursing Matters](#)'. Our most recent episodes have focused on the Fair Pay for Nursing campaign, the links with the campaign on Staffing for Safe and Effective Care and the upcoming industrial action ballot.

Report of our Meeting on 7 September

Director's Update

7. We were updated on the work of the Nursing Department and on the key issues currently facing members across the four countries by Helen Whyley, Executive Team Lead for the Nursing Department.

8. Helen also updated us on recent senior appointments within the College including new Group Director of Finance, Gush Uppal, and we heard that John Yates has now moved into the interim role of Director of Transformation, Innovation and Digital.
9. We were pleased to hear that the contracts of the two Deputy Directors of Nursing (Lisa Elliott and Nichola Ashby) have been extended to ensure continuity of activity when a new Director of Nursing is appointed. We heard that interviews for that role were taking place in the coming days.

Industrial Action Statutory Ballot Update

10. Helen updated us on the current position with regards to the [industrial action statutory ballot](#) which was due to open this month. Following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II this was paused as a mark of respect and will now open on 6 October.
11. We were also briefed on, and welcomed, the newly launched [public advertising campaign](#) to coincide with new Prime Minister Liz Truss's first full day in office.

Position Statement on Clinical Supervision

12. We agreed an RCN UK position statement on clinical supervision.
13. The statement outlines the RCN's current position on clinical supervision as a means of reflective practice and potential conduit for the critical advancement of a contemporary nursing and midwifery workforce. This member-led position statement was produced as a collaboration between the RCN Forum Chairs Committee, Professional Nursing Committee, and the Nursing Department. It is underpinned by an all-forum project and scoping review of clinical supervision, published earlier this year: ['Barriers to overcoming the barriers': A scoping review exploring 30 years of clinical supervision literature - Masamha - 2022 - Journal of Advanced Nursing - Wiley Online Library](#)
14. We will consider in more detail the next steps for the RCN at a future meeting.

Professional Framework: Definitions of Nursing

15. Following discussion at our last meeting, we received a further update on the professional practice workstream of the professional framework project, specifically looking at the definition of nursing.

16. Following a member engagement event on 1 September, there are now two working definitions of nursing under consideration. We spent some time discussing these and will be feeding in our further comments over the next two weeks. A final proposed definition will be presented to our next meeting in October for approval and agreement of next steps.
17. Work has also commenced on updating the Principles of Nursing Practice which will be underpinned by the new definition of nursing. We will also be feeding in our views on proposed revisions to the principles over the next couple of weeks.
18. Paul Trevatt, member for London, has now taken over as the PNC lead for the professional framework programme.

Nursing Associates Extended Scope of Practice

19. We discussed the content of a proposed RCN position statement on the role and scope of practice of Nursing Associates (NAs). We agreed that this should sit separately from the position statement published last year on role substitution but given that evidence shows Registered Nurse (RN) posts are being inappropriately substituted with NA posts, it is appropriate to review our existing position and activity around the risk and practice of RN substitution.
20. We agreed that the position statement should reinforce the RCN's previous warnings of the risk that NAs may be used to substitute RNs in the workforce; a risk that we are now seeing realised in practice.
21. We agreed that the position statement should focus on the scope of practice and proficiencies for the role of the NA as set out by the NMC. It should focus on the differences between the 6 designated platforms of the NA, and the 7 platforms of the RN.
22. We agreed that the position statement should include a demand for Health Education England to commission as a matter of urgency a formal evaluation of the NA role in England, including the role definition, scope of practice, career progression and skill mix given that this has always been promised.
23. We also discussed the RCN's role in calling for an England-wide employer code which clearly sets out the scope of practice of the role, and the need for appropriate education, training and competence assessment required for any extended role which falls within that scope of practice.
24. We agreed that this was required to ensure a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and accountability between NAs themselves, and all members of nursing teams and their managers.

Committee Work Programme

25. We reviewed progress against our 2022/23 work programme and discussed new approaches to managing our workplan, agreeing milestones and KPIs, and how we can use these across our work to best effect. We discussed the next steps in creating our PNC risk register, and our approach to the reporting of risk. The draft register will now be put together and presented to our next meeting in October.
26. We received a detailed update on implementation of the operational recommendations arising from the Forums and Networks Review.
27. We noted that progress towards implementation of these operational recommendations has steadily continued; some of the key areas of work have been completed but for those where digital, comms and web development support is required, there will be a delay in achieving full implementation due to the current organisational priorities.
28. We were pleased to hear that the business case has been approved for the appointment of a project lead for implementation of the review. Once in post, they will be carrying out a full review of all recommendations and timelines to get an accurate picture of the current position, and develop a project plan, reporting back to PNC and to the Forums Governance Group.

UK Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC)

29. We received an update from Helen Whyley as Chair of the UK Programme Board for Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC) on activity across the four countries.
30. We also received an update on activity in relation to the Nursing Workforce Standards and noted that the Programme Board had mandated an approach to developing a formal framework for organisational recognition, endorsement and adoption of the Standards.
31. We noted that country and setting specific guidance continued to be developed and that the Standards landing page on the RCN website is being reviewed to strengthen what's there and establish what's missing.
32. Work is ongoing at a national level to encourage organisations such as the CQC to endorse the Standards in the first instance but a system will be developed in due course for organisations to commit to adopt the Standards locally.

RCN Response to NMC Pre-Registration Programme Standards for Registered Nurses, Nursing Associates and Midwives

33. We discussed and agreed, with minor amendments, the RCN's proposed response to the NMC Pre-Registration Programme Standards consultation.

Congress 2022 Agenda Items

34. We received an update on the timeline for reporting on progress against the agenda items arising from Congress 2022 and noted that reporting has been scaled back slightly given other organisational priorities at the current time. We look forward to receiving the first reports in October.

Education, Learning and Development Strategy and Research Strategy

35. We noted an update on implementation of phases 1A and 2 of the ELD Strategy and plans for the launch of RCN Learn.
36. We also noted an update on steps being taken towards the development of the RCN Research Strategy which it is now anticipated will be launched at the International Research Conference in September 2023. Engagement with members is likely to commence in January/ February.
37. We heard that an independent organisation has been commissioned to undertake the evaluation of the RCN's research alliance with the University of Sheffield. The report of that evaluation should be received by 31 October.

Modern Ward Rounds

38. We noted a written update on the RCN and Royal College of Physicians (RCoP) 'Modern Ward Rounds Guidance' which was presented to PNC in June 2021.
39. At the end of the week we were saddened by the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, our Royal Patron, and I was pleased to be able to sign the book of condolence at Cavendish Square on behalf of the Professional Nursing Committee.

Next Meetings

40. Our next formal PNC meeting takes place at RCN HQ and via Microsoft Teams on 17 October 2022.

Committee Membership

Rachel Hollis (Yorkshire and the Humber – CHAIR)

Siobhan Donald (Northern Ireland – VICE CHAIR)

Mary Codling (South East)

Martha Gill (Scotland)

Tracie Culpitt (Nursing Support Worker)

Tim Grace (Northern)

Ray McMorrow (West Midlands)

Sue Haines (East Midlands)

Paul Trevatt (London)

Carolyn Middleton (Wales)

Suzanne Davies (Student)

Fiona Sommerville (Eastern)

Sally Young (North West)

Colin Baker (South West)

Apologies for the September meeting were received from Tim Grace and Carolyn Middleton.

Rachel Hollis

Chair, Professional Nursing Committee

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