

Professional Nursing Committee Report to Members – April 2022

1. This report reflects work done by the Professional Nursing Committee since the last report and an update from our most recent meeting on 28 April 2022.
2. Unfortunately, Carly Boyce, member for the South West, stepped down from the Committee ahead of our April meeting. We are grateful to her for all that she has done during her time on the Committee. Nominations for election to the South West seat closed on 10 May.
3. We continue with our monthly podcast '[Nursing Matters](#)'. Following the RCN re-joining the International Council of Nurses (ICN), in April we discussed why we left, why RCN members voted to re-join, and what role the RCN should play in a global profession transformed by COVID and by conflict. We recorded a special podcast for Nurses' Day on 12 May and plan to take an in-depth look at nursing in politics later in the year.
4. The report of our meeting on 28 April follows.

Report of our Meeting on 28 April

Director's Update

5. We were updated on the work of the Nursing Department and on the key issues currently facing members across the four countries by Lisa Elliott, Deputy Director of Nursing: Workforce, Professional Practice and Quality.
6. Since our meeting, we have learned that the post of UK Director of Nursing is now out at advert. The Committee looks forward to the recruitment of a permanent member of staff into this critical role in the coming weeks.

2022/23 Committee Work Programme

7. We reviewed and formally agreed our work programme for 2022/23 following discussion at previous meetings and at our strategy day in January. Our six areas of focus are as below:

- Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC)
 - Development of an RCN Professional Framework
 - Implementation of the Education, Learning and Development Strategy
 - Development of an RCN Research Strategy
 - Forums and Networks Review
 - National (and international) policy influencing
8. We discussed each workstream in detail and confirmed/ agreed Committee leads for each. We also discussed project milestones.

RCN Professional Framework

9. The recruitment of a project lead is the vital next step in developing the RCN Professional Framework, and we were pleased to hear of the progress of the business case for this post. The work of the 'professional practice' workstream is already underway. This is working on the definition of nursing, with a planned review of the principles of nursing practice. The outcomes of these two elements of the work will be the foundation for the remaining workstreams and important pieces to support the wider programme.

UK Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC)

10. There is an urgent need for the Staffing for Safe and Effective Care programme to consolidate the work completed last year on the RCN's Nursing Workforce Standards and to ensure they are being used within the RCN to define our position as a Royal College on safe staffing, as well as being promoted externally.
11. The recently formed expert reference group supporting the SSEC programme, which includes members with significant expertise in the nursing workforce alongside RCN staff and other elected and appointed members, has agreed to meet more regularly. It will commission work, to be agreed by PNC and by Council, enabling us to build on the Workforce Standards to take a stronger position on staffing levels and to develop a series of staffing 'red lines,' essential for our members working in this safety critical profession.
12. At our meeting we also received an update from Helen Whyley as Chair of the UK Programme Board on activity across the four countries.

Education, Learning and Development Strategy

13. Work to develop a new shared RCN/RCNi education, learning and development portal is well underway, and we look forward to seeing the first phase of this work launched later in the summer.

RCN Research Strategy

14. The development of a new RCN Research Strategy has been a priority for the Committee for some time, and we are determined that this work will be completed in 2022, working closely with the Research Society as well as the team in the Nursing Department.

RCN Forums and Networks Review

15. The RCN Forums and Networks Review took place in 2021, including a huge amount of work from many forum steering committee members and others. The need to properly support and resource the forums, and to develop a consistent model for networks is understood within the College and work is underway – in consultation with PNC and the Chairs of the Forums Governance Group and Forum Chairs Committee – to strengthen the recommendations of the review.

National and International Policy Influencing

16. The final element of our review of our work programme centred on our role in shaping the RCN's national and international policy influencing work. We agreed to trial a series of dedicated 'deep dive' discussion spaces where PNC members with expertise/ interest in particular areas will be given the opportunity to contribute to a more in-depth discussion than is possible in our business meetings.

RCN's Big Five Priority Workstream Updates

17. As part of our consideration of the RCN's 'big five' priority programmes we were given an update on the RCN's organising work, and the development of the RCN organising model. We discussed how this is as relevant to our professional work as it is to our trade union activities.
18. We received a written update on the great work being taken forward through the Independent Health and Social Care Sector Strategy.

Clinical Imaging and Nursing Associates

19. We were asked to approve suggested additional wording to the RCN publication 'Clinical Imaging Requests from Non-Medically Qualified Professionals' to provide clarity around Nursing Associates as current regulations do not preclude NAs from requesting clinical imaging.

20. We agreed that Registered Nursing Associates should not be IR(ME)R referrers as the assessment and planning of care is outside of their scope of practice, as defined by the NMC. Following earlier concerns raised by the Nursing Support Workers Committee and others on the blurring of the boundaries between Registered Nurses and Nursing Associates we confirmed our intention to develop a position statement to build on that published last year in relation to role substitution.

RCN Position Statement on Simulation-Based Education

21. We scrutinised an update to the RCN's position on simulation-based education and made suggestions for strengthening and clarifying this position ahead of expected consultation from the NMC later this year.

Update on the Work of the RCN Foundation

22. Finally, we were joined by the RCN Foundation who gave us an update on the wide-ranging work of the Foundation, as well as a 'sneak preview' of the campaign 'Here for Life' which they are supporting, which was launched on Nurses' Day and which highlights the diversity and value of the role of modern nursing and midwifery.

Our next formal meeting takes place at RCN HQ and via Microsoft Teams on 28 June 2022. The majority of Committee members will be attending RCN Congress in Glasgow and we look forward to the debates and discussions which will further shape our work in the year ahead.

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)
Alison Leary (London)
Carolyn Middleton (Wales)
Suzanne Davies (Student)
Fiona Sommerville (Eastern)
Sally Young (North West)

The South West seat on the Committee is currently vacant.

There were no apologies received for the April meeting.

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