

Professional Nursing Committee Report to Members – June 2022

1. This report reflects work done by the Professional Nursing Committee since the last report to Council and an update from our most recent meeting on 28 June 2022.
2. Since my last report we have been joined by two new Committee members, Colin Baker representing the South West region and Paul Trevatt representing the London region.
3. Alison Leary took the difficult decision to step down from the Committee ahead of our June meeting. We are very grateful to her for all that she has done during her time on the Committee and are delighted that she has offered to stay involved in an advisory capacity in the work to develop the RCN Professional Framework and will also continue as a member of the Staffing for Safe and Effective Care programme Expert Reference Group (ERG).
4. We continue with our monthly podcast '[Nursing Matters](#)'. In June we focused on two Congress resolutions around ethical overseas recruitment and supporting and learning from diaspora nursing groups in the UK. The next episode is planned for August.

Report of our Meeting on 28 June

5. We were delighted at this meeting to be joined by Pat Cullen, General Secretary and Chief Executive, who provided us with an overview of progress and next steps with the KPMG and Carr reviews and updated us on the recruitment process for senior RCN posts across the UK. She also updated us on plans for implementation of the recommendations arising from the RCN Forums and Networks Review and spoke about the ongoing review of the PNC's delegated authority. We look forward to hearing back from Council soon on the review of our terms of reference.

Director's Update

6. 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.

7. We congratulated the RCN and Royal College of Physicians on winning a joint patients choice award for innovation for 'bringing ward rounds into the 21st century using interdisciplinary inpatient review'. This was awarded at the International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare which took place recently in Gothenburg.
8. We noted that the RCN will shortly be publishing its review of evidence around COVID and infection, prevention and control measures. Discussions are currently taking place with stakeholders to make them aware of that report.

UK Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC)

9. 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 and noted that the Health & Social Care Bill has now been passed into law. This does not include the RCN's proposed amendments for workforce accountability and assessment.
10. The health minister has suggested that there may be scope for our ask on a requirement to have a Lead Nurse as part of every Integrated Commissioning Board as part of secondary legislation. The RCN's work to influence legislation on safe staffing in all four UK countries continues.
11. We also received an update on the SSEC communications workstream. Safe staffing continues to be a focus for much of the RCN's communications strategy, with opportunities to reflect the member voice always being considered.
12. The Nursing Workforce Standards were the focus of a cross-platform campaign of activity during May and throughout Congress, with new video content created, a social media takeover, 1,000 copies of the Standards printed and distributed in Glasgow, and the Mona Grey Lecture which was well attended both in person and online. Congress also saw the publication of the report of the 'Last Shift' survey. This report contributed to the calling of a debate in the House of Lords on safe staffing and the unsustainable pressures on nursing staff.

2022/23 Committee Work Programme

13. We reviewed progress against our 2022/23 work programme and received detailed updates on the phased implementation of the Education, Learning and Development (ELD) Strategy and development of the RCN Professional Framework.
14. We were pleased to hear that the shared RCN/ RCNi ELD portal is on schedule to launch towards the end of the summer.

15. Work continues on the development of the RCN Professional Framework with the recent recruitment of a further Professional Lead for this critical programme. We received an update on the professional practice workstream looking at the definition of nursing, which will lead on to a review of the 'principles of nursing practice'. The other two workstreams, defining levels of practice and the development of the RCN Career Framework, will follow.
16. We were delighted that the final report of the Forums and Networks Review was agreed by Council in May 2022 and published on the RCN website in June. The report identified 15 recommendations, which were all approved by Council. Next steps will include the appointment of a lead staff member to take forward the implementation plan to optimise the effective functioning of forums and networks and raise their professional profile to greater effect. PNC and the Forums Governance Group will be regularly updated on progress.
17. We also heard that meetings were commencing, and an engagement plan was being put together, to begin the development of an RCN Research Strategy for launch in Spring 2023. We intend to use the already tried and tested programme management structure we used for development of the ELD strategy.

ELD Market Research

18. Following on from discussion on the ELD Strategy, we received an update on the market research commissioned as part of the programme to look at the current L&D landscape and possible opportunities for the RCN. The research also looked at whether the ELD offer was something members had expressed interest in and what the opportunities and potential challenges were for strategic commercial partnership and sponsorship.
19. We noted that there was a huge opportunity for the RCN to position itself as the ELD provider of choice for the health and social care nursing workforce and look forward to continuing to be involved in development of the RCN's ELD offer.

Review of the NMC Consultations on Education Standards

20. We discussed the three current/ upcoming NMC consultations on education standards (pre-registration education standards, post-registration education standards, and the English language standards - IELTS).
21. We will be feeding in our views to inform the RCN responses to these consultations, starting with a workshop on 21 July to discuss in more detail the IELTS consultation.

Congress 2022 Agenda Items

22. We reviewed the resolutions passed at RCN Congress in June which Council have delegated to PNC as the lead governance committee. We nominated Committee leads for each item to work with staff leads, proposers and seconders, entities and other key stakeholders to take the work forward.
23. We also spent some time discussing a paper setting out the complexities of one of the agenda items, the call on Council to lobby legislators to protect the title 'nurse' in the UK. We were delighted to see this item passed, and work will be taken forward in the context of proposed regulatory reform.

Next Meetings

24. Our next 'deep dive' workshop takes place on 21 July at which we will be feeding in our views to inform the RCN response to the NMC consultations noted above including the [NMC consultation on English language requirements](#) (IELTS) which is running until 12 August.
25. We have a joint meeting planned with the RCN Trade Union Committee on 25 August at which we will focus on how we can work together to progress the agenda items arising from Congress 2022. We will also be feeding into development of the RCN's next five-year strategy.
26. Our next formal PNC meeting takes place at RCN HQ and via Microsoft Teams on 7 September 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 June meeting were received from Fiona Sommerville and Mary Codling.

Rachel Hollis

Chair, Professional Nursing Committee

rachel.hollis@rcn.org.uk