

## Professional Nursing Committee Report to Members – December 2022

1. This report reflects work done by the Professional Nursing Committee since the last report and an update from our most recent meetings on 17 October and 8 December 2022.
2. Unfortunately, since our October meeting Fiona Sommerville who represented the Eastern region on the Committee has resigned due to new work commitments. We are sad to see her go and thank her for all that she has done during her time on PNC.
3. We continue our monthly ‘deep dive’ sessions having met on 21 September to discuss the RCN’s work on job evaluation and national role profiles and how we can contribute. We met on 25 October to continue discussion on the professional framework project and again on 17 November to discuss some key issues for PNC including the outcome of the strike ballot, the Carr review and the upcoming EGM.
4. We continue with our monthly podcast ‘[Nursing Matters](#)’. Our most recent episode focused on recognising the invaluable contribution of Nursing Support Workers across the UK as the RCN celebrated its annual Nursing Support Workers’ Day on 23 November. In October we celebrated Black History Month, spotlighting the contributions of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic nurses across the profession.
5. In October we acknowledged publication of Bruce Carr KC’s independent review into the culture of the RCN. While this is an incredibly difficult read, we accept in full the recommendations made and are fully committed to working alongside RCN Council, the Trade Union Committee and the RCN Executive Team to achieve the required fundamental change within the College.
6. Many of us attended the EGM that took place on 29 November and listened to the views of members on the Carr review. At our December meeting we noted the outcome of the vote on the member resolution and considered next steps for RCN Council.

7. We recognised the pressing need to review the RCN's Respect Charter following the EGM and welcomed the workstreams set out by the President as part of the RCN transformation plan. We have invited Denise Chaffer to attend our next deep dive session on 5 January to discuss the plan and how we can contribute to its development in more detail.
8. We are looking forward to having sight of the RCN's 5-Year Strategy 2023-27 which we understand has now been signed off by RCN Council.
9. The report of our meetings in October and December follows.

#### Director's Update

10. At both meetings 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.
11. At our December meeting we were delighted to welcome the new Director of Nursing for the RCN, Professor Nicola Ranger, on only her second day in this critical role. Nicola introduced herself to members and told us a bit about her extensive clinical and leadership experience – most recently as Director of Nursing at Kings College Hospital in London. We look forward to working with Nicola on the professional agenda of the College. We expressed our thanks to Helen Whyley, Director for Wales, who has provided the Executive Team lead to the Nursing Department since the start of the year and has supported the work of PNC alongside her other wide-ranging responsibilities.
12. We noted that the Executive Team is currently spending a significant amount of time on the Fair Pay for Nursing campaign given the industrial action statutory ballot that was open at the time of our meeting in October and the two days of industrial action that were subsequently announced and will be taking place in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in December.
13. Helen updated us on activity across the four countries and we spent some time in December discussing our roles as members of PNC supporting country and regional strike committees. In October, we discussed how the strike benefit fund would work.
14. We heard that the key messages being promoted are around the need to ensure safe staffing and safe patient care.
15. In the run up to the opening of the ballot, we ran a 'mini series' of the PNC podcast Nursing Matters which addressed fair pay, safe staffing, and the history of industrial action in the profession.

## Introduction to the New RCN Group Director of Finance

16. In December we were joined for the first time by Gush Uppal, the new RCN Group Director of Finance. Gush gave us a helpful overview of the financial position of the RCN, which helped us to better understand the current context of business planning and resource allocation.

## Committee Work Programme

17. Following approval of our 2022/23 work programme in October, we spent some time at both our meetings discussing progress on different workstreams.
18. We also discussed our draft PNC risk register and considered the mitigating actions being taken against each risk. The next iteration of our risk register will be presented to our meeting in January.

## Education, Learning and Development Strategy Roll Out

19. In October we were briefed on progress of phase 1 and phase 2 of the Education, Learning and Development Strategy and noted that phase 1, launched in April 2021, has been extended to 31 December 2022.
20. All deliverables have been achieved and the phase 2 business case submitted for consideration outlining the work to take place to strengthen RCN Learn which was successfully launched in September.
21. Phase 2 will conduct the discovery work for the Institute of Nursing Excellence delivery of national and international education, research, leadership, and clinical expertise.

## RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence

22. In October we also received an update on plans for developing and initiating the RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence, the launch of which was announced by the General Secretary and Chief Executive at Congress 2022.
23. We heard that RCN Council has approved several recommendations including the model for the development and initiation of the Institute and its governance structure.

## Nursing Associates Scope of Practice

24. Following an in-depth discussion at our September meeting on the content of an RCN position statement on NAs scope of practice, in December we received an update on work to develop this. This follows concerns we raised previously that we are increasingly seeing NAs being used to substitute RNs in the workforce.

25. We will be receiving the first draft of the position statement for discussion at our next meeting in January.

#### Review of Position Statement on RN Role Substitution

26. We discussed the scope of the agreed revision of the [RCN position statement on the risks inherent in substitution of the role of the registered nurse](#). This will complement the work already underway on the position statement to address the scope of practice of the Nursing Associate in England.

#### Update on the Professional Framework Project

27. We received an update on the Professional Framework programme and we were pleased to hear that all three workstreams are now underway. We agreed on the final draft of the definition of the role of the Registered Nurse and the principles of nursing, the first output of the underpinning workstream on professional practice. These documents will go on for consideration by the Executive Team and we welcomed the opportunity for our new Director of Nursing to review the work before we move to final sign off.

#### RCN Forums

28. Sally Bassett, Chair of the Forum Chairs Committee, joined us to give an overview of their work this year. We recognized the exemplary leadership Sally has provided, the extensive work undertaken across the forums and the significant contribution they make to the professional work of the RCN.
29. Sally raised concerns as to the delayed implementation of the recommendations of the Forums Review, a concern shared by PNC and which we have highlighted on our risk register. We heard from Lisa Elliott, Deputy Director of Nursing, that the recommendations of the review have now been allocated to various members of ET to progress in line with their respective portfolios, with central coordination through the Nursing Department. I reported on the assurance I have received that as much as possible will be achieved ahead of Congress in May 2023. An update will be provided at our next meeting in January on each of the recommendations to give assurance that progress is underway, with a timeline now being worked on.

## Update on the Work of the RCN Fellows

30. In December, we were delighted to be joined by Professor Daniel Kelly, Convenor of the RCN Fellows, who provided an overview of the work being undertaken through the Fellows Co-ordinating Committee. He shared the work undertaken to review the role, purpose, and function of the Fellows. We agreed with Danny that the Fellows are an underutilized resource and agreed that a closer relationship with PNC would be one way to integrate their work more closely.
31. We approved the terms of reference of the Fellows Co-ordinating Committee to formalise that relationship, whilst recognising the intention to review all Committee terms of reference, including our own, in the wake of the Carr review, and the subsequent transformation plan agreed by Council. Like PNC, the Fellows look forward to contributing to the transformation plan and recognise the opportunity for positive change.
32. Finally, Danny encouraged PNC to consider nominating colleagues for RCN Fellowships (and other awards), and this led to a discussion of the importance of diversity in the community of the Fellows, as in all aspects of the RCN.

## UK Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC)

33. At every meeting, we receive 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. In October we also received an update on key activity under the policy and evidence workstream within the SSEC programme.
34. Additionally, we discussed the continuing work on dissemination of the Nursing Workforce Standards, work on member resources, and the potential to move them into the level of health and care systems. Progress was reported on the development of a process for both endorsement and adoption of the standards by organisations including regulators (such as CQC), and health and social care providers across the UK, to ensure that they become embedded in all health and care settings.

## Update on UK Government Political Polling Findings

35. We noted the findings of the IPSOS MORI 'key influencer tracking' survey of MPs that took place in Summer 2022. This provided an interesting insight into the perceptions of the RCN amongst Westminster MPs. We will be interested in any changes which may be found in the wake of planned industrial action.
36. We discussed how the RCN uses the information obtained from the survey and the opportunities for further and/ or better engagement with the political parties.

## Positioning for UK Government Legislation

37. We received an update on known UK government legislation and discussed and agreed the approach by the RCN to consider and respond to developments relevant to the UK.

## Congress 2022 Agenda Items

38. We noted the first reports on progress against the agenda items arising from Congress 2022 and look forward to receiving the second reports at our next meeting in January. Committee members discussed their involvement in the work to date.
39. Given the departure of Fiona Sommerville, we will shortly be agreeing a new PNC lead for the item on digital leadership.

## Nursing Support Workers Day 2022

40. We were joined in October by Ofrah Muflahi, Professional Lead for Nursing Support Workers, to brief us on arrangements across the four countries for celebrating [Nursing Support Workers Day](#) on 23 November.
41. This annual event is now well embedded in the RCN's calendar and is supported by all four Chief Nursing Officers as well as a number of politicians.

## Next Meetings

42. Our next formal PNC meeting takes place at RCN HQ and via Microsoft Teams on 26 January 2023.
43. We have a deep dive session taking place on 5 January at which we will hear from Denise Chaffer on the RCN transformation plan, and we are delighted that our new President Sheila Sobrany will also join us. We look forward to meeting and working with her.

## 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 – until 17 October 2022)  
Sally Young (North West)  
Colin Baker (South West)

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

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