



The Nurse Staffing Levels
(Wales) Act 2016

RCN WALES REPRESENTATIVES TOOLKIT

Version 2



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INTRODUCTION

In order for nurses and healthcare support workers to continue to deliver safe and compassionate care, RCN members, representatives, activists and staff worked successfully together to lobby Welsh Government to achieve the introduction of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016, the first of its kind in Europe.

We now need to build upon this achievement by working in partnership with NHS Wales to ensure the Act is implemented effectively.

We also have a role to play in ensuring the extension of the Act is realised and will need to continue to work together in the next phase of our campaign.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide all RCN Wales Representatives with a resource to support activity in their area. We would like to encourage RCN Wales representatives to work with other RCN representatives in your area, your supervising officers and other RCN staff to ensure that, as activists, we work strategically and effectively together.


This toolkit is not prescriptive, it has been designed to support your ideas about the best way to actively engage with this agenda in your own organisations.

The RCN in Wales recognises the commitment and dedication of all the representatives in Wales, who influence locally and nationally to make a positive impact and improve the working lives of our members and the care Nurses deliver to patients they care for.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

- ✓ Familiarise yourself with the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016, the NHS Operating Manual on the Statutory Guidance (links to these documents can be found in the 'Where to find more information' section of this toolkit)
- ✓ Think about the questions you need to ask your Health Board/Trust.
- ✓ Regularly attend your Local Partnership Forum (LPF) and nurse staffing planning group
- ✓ Meet regularly with your Health Boards Nurse Staffing Lead or designated person to discuss progress. Find out who your local RCN staffing lead is.
- ✓ Speak to RCN members on the wards
- ✓ Walk around the adult acute medical and surgical wards where the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 is currently in place* and note whether information about the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 is clearly displayed for the public to see. *(Section 25b and c, Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act, 2016)
- ✓ Feedback your information to your representative colleagues, your branch, your supervising officer, at your network meeting and the Health Board Staffing Lead.
- ✓ Work in partnership with other TU's, Health Board nurse staffing leads, Senior Nurses, Ward Sisters and members.

HOW TO KEEP UP TO DATE

- ✓ Follow RCN Wales on Twitter  @RCNWales
- ✓ Keep up to date via the RCN website to understand Nurse Staffing Levels from the RCN UK Perspective
- ✓ Read the RCN Wales reps Newsletter
- ✓ Engage with the safe and effective care campaign

Every one of us has a role to play in supporting our members with this crucial area of work.

All RCN Wales stewards, safety reps and learning reps, activists and staff need to work together as a team to ensure the Act is implemented effectively.

We will also need to work together to continue to lobby Welsh Government for extensions to the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act, 2016.

TO ENSURE SAFE STAFFING LEVELS

ESCALATION	INFORMATION	HEALTH AND WELLBEING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Do staff know how to escalate any concerns about staffing / the implementation of the Act? › Are staff aware of UHB designated person / lead for safe staffing? › Encourage staff to record concerns on E-Datix › Use the RCN publication 'Raising Concerns: A guide for RCN representatives › Coach staff to how they can discuss issues with Senior managers › Raise members concerns at LDF / Nurse planning meeting / meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Are the numbers of nurses on duty clearly displayed? › Do the nursing team input into the calculation of the nurse staffing levels? › How do nurses feel about staffing levels in their area and are they happy to share their experiences? › How many vacancies are in the area? › What is the proportion of temporary staff on shift? › Are there members who are willing to become staffing levels champions / e campaigners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Encourage staff to look after themselves and to be kind to themselves › Work with members and managers to advocate the 'Rest, rehydrate, refuel' campaign › Support and coach staff to be empowered to ensure they take regular breaks and finish work on time › Highlight the support for staff available from the employer's wellbeing service › Highlight the support available to members via Member Support services (MSS) › Ensure staff are aware of Health Board policies to consider flexible working; reasonable adjustments and the support that is given to manage attendance at work

STRATEGIC INFLUENCING

What to discuss with Workforce and OD

- ? How many starters and leavers are there on the adult acute medical wards where the nurse staffing levels Act is in operation? What is the staff turnover rates? How does that compare to wards where the Act is not in operation?
- ? What is the policy/approach when offering staff retire or return contracts? What is the uptake? What pay bands are offered? Is the policy/approach applied equitably?
- ? Agency staff: how many shifts on wards subject to the Nurse Staffing Levels Act have been filled? At what financial cost?
- ? Agency staff: how many shifts on wards NOT covered by the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 have been filled? At what financial cost?
- ? How many applications for flexible working have been received and how many have been approved?
- ? How many requests for reasonable adjustments are being submitted? How many of these requests are supported?
- ? How many disciplinary hearings and grievances are there that relate to Staffing Levels?
- ? What is the workforce recruitment plan? How is this progressing?

SAFETY COMMITTEES - is Staffing Levels a standing agenda item? Is the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 reflected?

Datix reporting - identify any hot spots where RCN members may need RCN support. Ask what plans the Health Board have to address concerns raised.

Near misses - are these also being reported?

Patient Safety concerns - how are these being addressed?

What do you ask members?

- ? What are the 2 most positive things about the Nurse Staffing Levels Act?
- ? What are the 2 most significant challenges?
- ? What 2 things would you focus on to address these challenges?

You may choose to ask different questions based upon your local knowledge of your organisation.

Share the information you gather with your RCN Lead Staffing Levels Champion, your branch and your Supervising Officer

Where to find more information

RCN UK – SAFE AND EFFECTIVE CARE CAMPAIGN

Visit the RCN UK web pages to find the latest updates on the campaign activity.
www.rcn.org.uk/employment-and-pay/safe-staffing

RCN WALES WEB PAGES

Visit the RCN Wales web pages to find the latest updates on our campaign activity, access resources and view the latest information about safe staffing across the UK.
www.rcn.org.uk/wales/get-involved/safe-and-effective-care

RCN PUBLICATIONS

ASK, LISTEN, ACT

A practical guide for all RCN representatives on how to best question and influence on behalf of members in your workplace.

www.rcn.org.uk/wales/get-involved/safe-and-effective-care

WORKING TOGETHER: BEING ACTIVE ON STAFF SIDE

While your training as an RCN rep offers a great grounding in your duties and the various skills you need, many of us find ourselves taking on a role within staff side that is unexpected. As a result, you find yourself learning the job while you're doing it, widening your RCN perspective to take in the views of other unions. A need for more support was identified by those attending a joint reps conference and this document is among the results. It's been created by RCN reps and staff, working together to share their experience and expertise for the benefit of the wider rep community.

www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-007153

RAISING CONCERNS: GUIDE FOR RCN REPS

As an RCN rep, you have an important part to play in helping members raise concerns about care in their workplace. This page gives you the information you need to do this.

www.rcn.org.uk/employment-and-pay/raising-concerns/guide-for-rcn-reps

1000 LIVES IMPROVEMENT

1000 Lives Improvement is supporting the design and delivery of a national programme of work that will enable NHS Wales organisations to calculate the right number of nurses required to provide effective care for patients. Their web site provides updates on all the relevant work streams:

www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/nurse-staffing

THE OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

This document contains copies of the Statutory guidance (Appendix 1) issued by the Welsh Government; • Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 (Appendix 2); • Welsh Levels of Care - Edition 1 (Appendix 3); • Health Care Monitoring System (HCMS) How-To Guide (Appendix 4)

www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1011/Operational%20Guidance%20V2%20%28English%29%20%20April%202019%20final%20for%20dissemination.pdf



Notes

A large red header bar is positioned at the top of the page. Below it, the page is filled with a series of horizontal lines, creating a grid-like structure for taking notes. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.