

RCN Wales Board

Minutes of the open meeting held on 10 September 2021
commencing at 10:50

The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams

Present via Teams	Position
Richard Jones, MBE	Chair, RCN Wales Board and Council member for Wales
Ann Taylor Griffiths	Board member
Nicola Milligan	Vice Chair, RCN Wales Board
Carolyn Middleton, MBE	Board member
Catherine Jones	Board member
Denise Llewellyn, MBE, FRCN	Welsh member on Professional Nursing Committee
Rhys Vanstone	Board member
Susan Williams	Board member
Apologies:	
Alison Magor	Board member
Ceri Dolan	Board member
Donna Mead, OBE, CSt.J, FRCN	Board member
Jackie Davies	Welsh member on Trade Union Committee
June Clark, DBE, FRCN	Board member
Steve Watson	Board member
Tristan Griffin	Board member
Presenters:	
Gill Coverdale	Professional Lead – Education (Quality Assurance)
Helen Williams	Mid & West Wales Branch Secretary
Martin Lloyd	Glamorgan Branch Chair
Observer:	
Nicholas Unwin	Graduate Trainee
In attendance:	
Helen Whyley	Director, RCN Wales
Nicky Hughes	Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) – left at 13:30

Diane Powles	Associate Director of Nursing, Policy & Professional Practice
Helen Carlyon	Associate Director of Nursing, Policy & Professional Practice
Lisa Turnbull	Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager
Katie Branch	Complaints, Quality & Admin Services Manager
Jayne Taylor	Executive Assistant to the Director, RCN Wales
Lee Anderson	Secretarial Administrator

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Open session.

The Board Chair apologised for the late start of the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Board members Alison Magor, Ceri Dolan, Jackie Davies, June Clark, Steve Watson and Tristan Griffin.

The Board agreed to record the meeting and for the recording to be used in a future development session.

1.2. Declaration of Interests

The Board Chair asked Board members to declare any possible interests with any items on the agenda, but no further declarations were made.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

2.1 Minutes from the previous meeting

Minutes of the Board meeting held on 4 June 2021 had been circulated and were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Review of Action Sheet

All actions were either noted as completed or delayed due to COVID-19.

RCN Workforce Standards

The Board was informed that the Director had shared and discuss the RCN Workforce Standards with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) and RCN Wales has been invited to an initial discussion with HEIW to discuss their nursing workforce strategy.

2.3 Matters Arising

There were no further matters arising.

3. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

3.1 RCN Wales Board Chair's Report

A report had been received and was noted including the RCN Wales Board 2021 / 2022 meeting schedule and the Board Development opportunities that had been provided for the Board in 2021.

The Board Chair thanked Board members for all their hard work on behalf of the Board.

Change of Council Date

Council had approved the 2022 calendar of meetings but had moved one of its Council meetings to 27 May 2022 to suit diary availability. In light of this change of Council meeting date, the Board was asked to move its meeting scheduled for 26/27 May 2021.

Decision: The Board agreed to move the May meeting from 26/27 May to 17/18 May.

ACTION 20: Governance to be advised of the change of date for the May 2022 Board meeting from 26/27 May to 17/18 May 2022.

3.2 Director, RCN Wales Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Director gave further information on the following:

- The introductory meeting with Eluned Morgan, MS, the new Minister for Health and Social Services on 16 June 2021.
- Continued contact with Directors of Nursing and senior nurses across Wales listed at 2.2.
- The Board was informed that Gareth Howells, who had been interim Chief Nursing Officer for Wales has been appointed as the Executive Director of Nursing in Swansea Bay University Health Board and would take up this position shortly. The Director will raise concerns around succession planning for senior positions in Wales with the Chief Nursing Officer.
- Attending Professional Nursing Committee as Executive Lead for Safe Staffing and Effective Care (SSEC).
- Meetings with Care Forum Wales looking at policy direction in social care and work of the Social Care Work Forum to promote joint working where it benefits members.

3.3 COVID-19 Update Report

A report had been circulated and was noted.

The Director took the Board through the paper and highlighted the following:

- This replaces the Board briefing on COVID-19 that would have been held at this time.
- Target of vaccinating all 16 and 17 years olds was announced in the summer. Registered nurses are key to support the programme of vaccination for all eligible people in Wales.
- The Director has been invited to the Shadow Partnership Council where the First Minister briefs all trade unions. The draft Social Partnership and Procurement (Wales) Bill consultation has concluded, and the Bill should come before the Senedd in the early spring 2022. RCN Wales is hoping to see the membership of the Social Partnership Forum include non TUC affiliated trade unions.
- Section 1.8 outlines the paid hours for RCN representatives which have been impacted by representatives returning to clinical duties during the pandemic.
- Keeping a watching brief on the shortage of blood bottles which RCN Wales was alerted to by the Welsh Government.
- RCN Wales offices remain closed to members until the end of September 2021, but some members have been allowed in Ty Maeth on a booked appointment basis to support the NHS pay campaign.
- Library continues to offer a virtual service for members.

Decision: The notes of the Board COVID briefing held on 7 July 2021 had been circulated as appendix 1 to the paper and were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

The Board expressed concern that the data shows that there is reduced immunity six months following the first vaccinations and queried when health care staff on the front line will be provided with booster vaccinations.

The Director informed the Board that further information is awaited from JCVI as to what vaccine will be used for boosters.

ACTION 21: To query at the Vaccination Group and NHS Wales Partnership Forum when front line health care workers will receive booster vaccinations.

3.4 Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Impact Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager highlighted the following:

- RCN Wales had been successful in persuading new Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee to hold an inquiry into workforce planning in health and social care and to scrutinise Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW).
- Jenny Rathbone, MS has been appointed to chair and re-establish the Cross Party Group on Nursing and Midwifery and is keen to draw attention to neonatal and midwifery issues.
- The next political leadership programme will be held in December and there are two places available for Board members who have not completed this programme previously.

The Board was informed that the flexible route to registration for HCSWs has been removed from the Open University in Wales and the contract allocated to Bangor and Swansea Universities. The Board expressed concern that this may limit access to HCSWs across Wales but was informed that Bangor and Swansea Universities must ensure that there is equity and parity for students across Wales. The Board noted that students can enrol with Open University in Wales until March 2022 and will be in the system until 2025.

The Board expressed concern with the lack of investment in learning disability nursing and the lack of action following the Winterbourne View scandal ten years ago and the various initiatives that should have been implemented to significantly reduce the number of people with a learning disability or autism admitted to hospitals and assessment and treatment units (ATUs).

The Board was informed that RCN Wales planned to make a submission to the Children's Committee to lobby them to look at Learning Disability nursing. The Board also noted that RCN Wales would produce a policy paper on Learning Disability nursing for Wales later in the year.

ACTION 22: Following the discussion, the Director agreed to meet with Board member, Susan Williams to progress the learning disability agenda.

3.5 2021 RCN Wales Nurse of the Year and Alumni Network Update

A report had been received and was noted.

The Board Chair thanked Board members for their continued support for the RCN Wales Nurse of the Year awards.

3.6 RCN Congress 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

However, the Board noted that the report was out of date in that RCN Council had since agreed that Congress would be held virtually with no debates and all fringe meetings cancelled. The Board noted that the event would now consist of a series of continuing professional development opportunities for members.

4. **STRATEGIC UPDATES**

4.1 RCN Wales NHS Pay Campaign

A report had been received and was noted.

The Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) gave a verbal update as follows:

- The consultation ballot opened on 12 August 2021 and would close at noon on 13 September.
- The RCN Wales Board Pay Scrutiny and Decision-Making Sub Committee would meet regularly to monitor progress on the consultation ballot and scrutinise activities undertaken as part of the campaign.
- Following the result of the consultation ballot the Sub Committee would meet to agree recommendations to put forward immediately to the RCN Wales Board and following ratification by the Board to the RCN UK Pay Programme Board on 27 September 2021 and the Trade Union Committee on 30 September 2021.

The Board Chair thanked the Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations), Board members, activists and staff for the hard work undertaken to encourage members to engage in the pay campaign consultation ballot.

4.2 NHS Wales Partnership Forum Update

A report had been received and was noted.

The Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) gave a verbal update as follows:

- Payment for long COVID is an agenda item on the next meeting of the Business Committee.
- A presentation was received from Health Education Improvement Wales and the Board's concerns with regard to the commissioning process in 2021 were raised.

4.3 RCN Wales Engagement with the Independent and Social Care Sector Steering Group

A report had been received and the work plan was noted.

The Associate Director of Nursing, Policy and Professional Practice gave a verbal update as follows:

- The following Board members were thanked for their input into this work Denise Llewellyn, June Clark and Steve Watson.
- Three listening events were held with care home nurses and their concerns were grouped into themes. The main concern identified was that care home nurses feel very isolated in their role and RCN Wales is looking at creating a network for them.
- Improved collaboration with Care Forum Wales which has raised the profile of nurses working in social care.
- The Executive Lead on the UK Independent Programme Board is Rita Devlin, Director, RCN Northern Ireland.
- The Policy, Parliamentary and Public Affairs Manager was thanked for her work in developing the RCN Wales Independent and Social Care Sector work programme, which is being adopted across the UK.
- Jacqui Neal has been appointed as a Senior Nurse - Professional Practice in RCN Scotland. Mark Bird, Transformational Lead, Independent Health and Social Care Nursing is coordinating the UK work.

4.4 Update on Mid and West Wales Branch Plan

The Board received a verbal update from Helen Williams, Secretary, Mid and West Wales Branch on the branch plans for 2021.

Concern was expressed at the difficulties encountered in recruiting representatives and activists as part of succession planning and the Board noted that this concern had been reflected in all branches.

ACTION 23: The Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) to hold a discussion at the next All Wales branch meeting to look at how to provide further support to branches in recruiting representatives and activists.

4.5 Update on Glamorgan Branch Plan

The Board received a verbal update by Martin Lloyd, Chair, Glamorgan Branch on the branch plans for 2021.

4.6 RCN Group ELD Strategy

A late report had been circulated and was noted.

Gill Coverdale, the Professional – Education (Quality Assurance) attended for this item and gave a presentation on the RCN/RCNi Education, Learning and Development Strategy.

The Board noted the following:

- Angela Andrews has been appointed as the Programme Manager within the Transformation Directorate.
- An expert reference group has been established and Board member, Carolyn Middleton sits on this group.
- The mapping of the various learning offers around the UK and an e-portal will be developed for members and non-members by June 2022.

5. ITEMS TO NOTE

5.1 RCN Foundation Wales Committee Update

The Director reminded the Board that the RCN Foundation Wales Committee had been paused due to COVID-19 and as such there was no further update.

5.2 Report from RCN Council meetings held on 19 May, 29 June and 29 July 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

5.3 Reports from the Professional Nursing Committee held on 29 April, 8 June and 21 July 2021

A tabled report had been circulated and was noted.

The Welsh Representative on the Professional Learning Committee highlighted the following:

- PNC has a position on the substitution of nursing roles.
- A petition is circulating around whether the word ‘nurse’ should be a protected title. Council’s view on this is still awaited.
- Feedback from the Nursing Matters podcast has been very positive.
- The RCN Workforce Standards will be discussed at Congress with a representative from each of the countries giving an overview.

The Board Chair thanked the Welsh representative on the Professional Nursing Committee for her hard work on the Committee. The Board noted that Denise will stand down from the Committee and, therefore, the Board on 31 December 2021. The Board expressed their gratitude to Denise for her leadership and commitment.

The candidates for the election to the Welsh seat on the Professional Nursing Committee will be announced on 27 September 2021 and the voting will conclude in November and the successful candidate announced on 22 November 2021.

ACTION 24: Letter of thanks to be sent to Denise Llewellyn as she stands down from the Board on 31 December 2021.

5.4 Report from the RCN Students Committee held on 4 July 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

5.5 Report from the Nursing Support Workers Committee held on 6 May and 14 July 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

5.6 Correspondence

A report had been received and was noted.

The Director reminded the Board that copies of the correspondence are available to view by contacting the Director's office.

The Board was informed that the Welsh Management Team reviews the correspondence log and also records and reviews the COVID-19 activity log monthly.

5.7 Property Strategy Task Update

This item had been discussed in the Closed agenda.

5.8 Report from RCN UK Reps Committees

A later report had been received and was noted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no further items of business.

The Board Chair thanked the staff for their support of the work of the Board.

The Board Chair thanked Board members for all their hard work and support and closed the meeting at 14:00.

The Board noted the dates for the next Board meeting as follows:

Board Development Day: 10 December 2021

Date of next Board Open session: 18 February 2022

ET: Helen Whyley, Director, RCN Wales

Email: helen.whyley@rcn.org.uk