




Royal College  
of Nursing

## **A Dignity Charter for RCN members**





**Dignity has been a core theme for the RCN for some time. Members and staff should treat each other with dignity and respect, care and consideration, as well as valuing the rich diversity that everyone brings to the RCN.**

This charter sets out the rights and responsibilities of all RCN members in relation to their interaction with each other and with RCN staff. It also includes some specific rights and responsibilities of all RCN activists – for example stewards, safety and learning representatives, branch officers, board and forum committee members – and replaces the RCN Code of Conduct.

Failure to respect this charter may lead to further sanctions under the RCN's disciplinary policy.

## RCN members have the right to:

- be communicated with in an open, honest and transparent manner
- be spoken to politely, in a courteous and respectful manner
- not be stereotyped, labelled or subjected to discrimination
- be treated equitably and fairly
- have their confidentiality respected and preserved
- have their individuality recognised and their contribution acknowledged
- be given feedback in a supportive and respectful manner
- not be attacked personally (verbally or non-verbally) or insulted
- express their views and have those views listened to.

## RCN members have the responsibility to:

- communicate in an honest, polite, courteous and respectful manner
- not stereotype, label or subject people to discrimination
- value and respect other members and staff in all their diversity
- respect and preserve confidentiality
- acknowledge the contribution of others
- provide feedback in a supportive and respectful manner
- not attack anyone personally (verbally or non-verbally) or insult them
- respect and abide by organisational decisions and procedures.

## In addition

### RCN activists have the right to:

- be empowered to make appropriate decisions in line with their responsibilities
- be supported with appropriate learning and development
- have a clearly defined role and responsibilities
- expect loyalty from the RCN
- carry out their RCN role in an environment that is safe and supportive
- be given the opportunity to influence and contribute to the direction and development of the RCN

### and the responsibility to:

- be accountable, take responsibility for their actions and meet the obligations of their role, including developing required skills and knowledge
- be loyal and act in the best interests of the RCN, support corporate decisions and directions publicly, and respect and abide by organisational procedures
- engage with and participate in discussions and decision-making whilst considering the impact on other people and parts of the organisation; be open about their actions and decisions and about their part in reaching collective decisions
- ensure that where matters are held to be confidential, the reasons are within the RCN policy and that confidentiality is maintained

- not use their position to gain financial or other benefits, for example awards and honours, for themselves, family or friends
- declare personal interests, and not put themselves under obligations that may influence or affect their performance in the role – for example accepting gifts or hospitality that could influence their judgment
- when in a governance role, act and/or vote on the basis of their own judgment – taking into consideration members' views
- promote and support these principles by leadership and example.





The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies.

April 2010

Published by the  
Royal College of Nursing  
20 Cavendish Square  
London W1G 0RN

RCN Direct 0345 772 6100

RCN Online [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

Publication code 003 587