



Supporting nursing, improving care





Dear friends

The RCN Foundation is now more than a year old, having been set up following a review of the RCN's legal and governance structure. We are here to support nursing to improve the health and wellbeing of the public.

We fund projects to develop clinical practice, give grants to fund training, and support those members of the nursing team who need assistance due to hardship or ill health.

You can find out more about what we do and our applications process on the opposite page.

We are very aware that nurses are under more pressure than ever. With the difficult economic climate and cuts to services, nurse-led innovations that improve patient care and cut costs really can save lives.

Nurses have always worked to push boundaries and make a difference, but sometimes they need a helping hand. That's why the RCN Foundation is here.

Best wishes,

Robert Sowney

Chair of the RCN Foundation Board of Trustees

P.S. You can find out how you can support our work on the form at the back of this leaflet.

The RCN Foundation and the RCN

The RCN Foundation was formed in April 2010 when the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) amended its legal structure. Our board of trustees is independent of the RCN, though four places are reserved for RCN Council members, enabling us to retain our very strong links and working relationship with the RCN.



What we do

We are a registered charity that supports nursing to improve the health and wellbeing of the public.

We do this through:

- benevolent funding
- education and training bursaries
- funding projects which support the development of clinical practice and the improvement of care
- developing practice to enable people and communities to make positive choices about their own health and wellbeing.

Benevolent funding

We provide funding to support nurses, midwives, HCAs and health visitors in the UK who are in need of assistance due to adversity, retirement, ill health, disability, family breakdown or changes to employment. We provide one off grants for essential outgoings such as mobility equipment, household bills and childcare costs. In addition we offer grants to support those managing personal difficulties that are impacting on quality of life. These grants can be a lifeline when times are tough.

If you are an RCN member you can find out more about eligibility and apply for assistance by contacting the Member Support Services' Welfare Rights and Guidance Service on **0345 408 4391**. The service can also provide advice about statutory benefits, debt management and other financial advice.

For non-members wishing to apply to the fund, up-to-date contact details can be found on our website at www.rcnfoundation.org.uk

RCN Foundation bursary scheme

Our bursary scheme funds a wide variety of learning, development and research opportunities.

We are developing a new bursary scheme for 2012 which will be launched later in the year. Meanwhile the existing country and regional schemes are continuing for 2011 in their current form and details of these can be found on our website.





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Benevolent Fund

“ I just wanted to express my thanks and gratitude for your assistance during this trying time. Your foundation and what you stand for are truly amazing.”

How we have helped

These are real case studies of how we have helped through benevolent funding and our awards and bursaries. Some of the names have been changed to protect the privacy of those involved.

Sarah found herself experiencing both financial and emotional difficulties when her husband was diagnosed with cancer and was forced to take time off work. Not only did Sarah have to try and support her husband and young family through the frightening and confusing physical and emotional rollercoaster that often comes with a diagnosis of cancer, she also had to deal with a drop in income that was threatening the very fabric of her stability – her home. Sarah applied to the Benevolent Fund and was awarded a grant to cover the costs of her mortgage. In Sarah’s words it “brought much relief... at a time of great worry and stress”.

Patricia applied to the fund after she had suffered an arson attack on her home. It was one of those moments when you think nothing could get any worse, but it did. Patricia had no insurance to cover the repairs leaving her property unprotected. She had suffered an illness which resulted in a loss of income and at that time insurance had been a dispensable outgoing. Left in a situation where she was physically and emotionally vulnerable, Patricia applied to the Benevolent Fund. She was able with their help to repair her windows and physically secure her home. She said that without the help of the RCN Foundation “I would never have been able to repair my windows”



Andy, an Australian nurse, had worked in the UK for four years when he lost his job. Due to his immigration status he was unable to claim public funds. What Andy needed was some breathing space while he found alternative work, however with rent due the wolf was already at the door. The Benevolent Fund assisted Andy with one month's rental payment whilst he job hunted. He described the assistance provided by the RCN Foundation as "truly amazing... during this trying time".

Katharine was left with chronic pain, fatigue and depression after an accident on her moped. One day the world was full of promise and opportunity – she had just been promoted at work and had everything to look forward to. But after her life threatening experience, her cheerful persona was replaced by someone irritable and often tearful, and her sense of worth plummeted. Throughout her ordeal, Katharine was given a wealth of free counselling, legal and employment advice from the RCN, and most significantly for her, all was given in a non-judgemental way.

She also received funding from two separate areas of the Benevolent Fund: financial assistance for crisis situations which gave her immediate support at the point of trauma, and funding for a respite break, aimed at supporting Katharine further along in the process of recovery. In providing this support she was able to start getting her life back on track. Katharine says: "The Benevolent Fund is there for nurses, and it really makes such a difference to have this support when things seem bleak."

Benevolent Fund

“Just to say thank you very much for the cheque towards my new power wheelchair. Once it arrives my independence will be guaranteed.”

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Suzanne and **Mary** are two experienced, passionate and enthusiastic community psychiatric nurses working with people with dementia in Scotland. They realised that there was a gap in services offered for people in the early and middle stages of the illness, leaving those struggling with a new diagnosis alone. Resources were limited, so they applied for a Dementia Nursing Care

Bursary and received funding to pilot a series of small workshops for patients. They found that working in a small group allowed participants to receive one-to-one attention, but also meant that they didn't feel pressurised to talk or engage with the activity, which can cause stress.

They say: "Although the project was small, the people involved saw real benefits and we hope this format can be rolled out elsewhere in future. We are sharing our findings by submitting reports to different dementia organisations and hope to get an article published. This wouldn't have been possible without funding from the bursary scheme."

Bursaries

“ I felt extremely honoured to receive this award, it has certainly helped financially, which has ultimately enabled me to reach my potential.”



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Cheryl is studying for a graduate diploma in mental health nursing, and has received an annual bursary from the Margaret Parkinson scholarship fund to help pay living expenses. She is now coming to the end of the course and hopes to work in a community team caring for those with mental health crises. Cheryl says: "I would just like to thank all involved with the scholarship for selecting me as a recipient. Not only did it help me financially, but it gave me a morale boost."



Theresa is a nurse in a community hospital in Nottingham. She wanted to improve the care offered to patients with dementia in this general setting, and so applied for funding through the Dementia Bursary programme. The grant she received meant that the hospital could develop a reusable learning programme for all staff and students to be educated about dementia and in person-centred care. The team also purchased communication tools and reminiscence materials to kick start meaningful conversations with patients. Theresa says: “With better understanding comes better care. Without the bursary we would not have been able to achieve anywhere near as much as we have, and the impact will be felt for many years to come.”

Bursaries

“*I am so grateful for the support I received. At the beginning it made embarking on my training more possible, and at the end I hope it will help me be a much better midwife!*”

Suzanne received a Trevor Clay Scholarship, which helped fund her Masters degree in Preventive Cardiology at Imperial College London. Her research looked at whether the spouses of coronary patients were at a high risk of cardiovascular disease themselves. The results suggest that this group should be screened and offered lifestyle advice. Suzanne said: “Since attaining my Masters I have been approached by a local university to help set up and lecture on a brand new course and I have also participated in a technical appraisal workshop for NICE. These are just a couple of the projects I have become involved in since graduating, and it is all thanks to the scholarship.”





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