

December 2009 – Issue 17

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Help make the voice of nursing heard in Scotland

Help RCN Scotland make candidates for the 2011 Scottish Parliament elections listen to the voice of nursing by taking part in our free conference in February.

The elections could have a major impact on everyone in Scotland. To prepare for them, and to make sure that we represent your views and campaign on the issues that matter most to our members, we are holding a free conference in February 2010 in Glasgow for all RCN members in Scotland. This one day conference will focus on and debate the issues you highlighted as important in the survey we carried out this Autumn and help us decide the issues we will campaign on in the run-up to the 2011 Scottish Parliament elections and beyond.

[Book your free place](#) now or call 0131 662 6173 for more information.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – plans to change nursing workforce

[NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde](#) have proposed major changes to their nursing workforce, and have suggested increasing the number of unregistered nursing assistants to replace registered nurses.

RCN Scotland has opposed the plans, and Professional Officer Anne Thomson said: “RCN Scotland would be extremely concerned about any reduction in the number of registered nurses, and we have met with the board and other unions to discuss their proposals.

“We know that health boards across Scotland are facing difficult times because of the recession, but quality patient care and frontline services must not be sacrificed for the sake of balancing the books. While nursing assistants are extremely important in supporting registered nurses to deliver safe patient care, using them to substitute large numbers of registered nurses could put patients at risk. Highly experienced, qualified nurses can make a real difference to patients and to the quality of healthcare services in hospitals and the community.

“We are firmly opposed to these proposals and will continue to put pressure on NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to rethink their plans - patient safety and quality care must remain the highest priority.”

News Round-up

New Board Chair for RCN Scotland

Borders nurse and RCN member [Eileen Frame](#) has been elected chair of the RCN Scotland Board, following a vote by board members. She takes over from Jane McCready who stepped down at RCN's AGM after completing her term of office.

RCN Board elections – acute and supportive nursing

The RCN Scotland Board has a vacant seat for a representative of 'acute and supportive nursing'. The term of office would be until 2012. [Nominations](#) can be made until 29 January 2010.

Support minimum pricing for alcohol

The Scottish Government has unveiled its new Alcohol Bill, proposing the introduction of minimum pricing for alcoholic drinks. The RCN supports minimum pricing and all members in Scotland are urged to contact to their local MSPs to ask them to support the Bill in full. [Contact us](#) to find out who your MSPs are and for any information on the RCN position on minimum pricing.

Other news

Healthcare Environment Inspectorate reports

The first wave of reports into hospital standards have been published by the new [Healthcare Environment Inspectorate \(HEI\)](#). In response to concerns from RCN members we are planning a fact sheet about what to expect from HEI visits. In the meantime, members with any concerns about their place of work or with any questions about the Healthcare Environment Inspectorate are encouraged to get in touch with the local [RCN Scotland](#) officer.

Supporting better care

The new RCN development programme for healthcare support workers and nursing assistants is flexible programme designed to enhance knowledge, practice, competence and confidence in direct care and can be flexibly delivered. [Contact us](#) to find out more.

RCN Scotland calls for nurse involvement in eHealth

Earlier this month RCN Scotland told the Scottish Parliament that nurses must be involved in developing eHealth projects if new technologies are to improve patient care. RCN Scotland also put pressure on the Scottish Government to ensure that adequate resources and time are invested in eHealth and, in particular, clinical portal technology.

Nursing student drop-out rates rise

[Figures released this week](#) show that the number of nursing students who do not complete their courses has continued to rise. RCN Scotland Associate Director Ellen Hudson said: "We are very concerned, as a shortage of nursing students now could well lead to a shortage of nurses in future. This is a serious issue and we are continuing to work to support students through their courses."



Congress 2010 places for members in Lothian

Lothian Branch is seeking nominations from those wishing to attend RCN Congress April 26th - 30th 2010. Nomination forms can be obtained from the [Branch Secretary](#) or via the [Branch page on the RCN Scotland web site](#). The closing date for nominations is Monday the 25th January 2010.

Become a student information officer

Becoming an RCN Student Information Officer is a great way to get involved with the RCN, build impressive skills for your CV and be the first to know about news affecting nursing students across the UK. Help direct your fellow students to the resources, information and events they need, and get your voice heard on issues that matter. Find out more on the [RCN website](#).

Forthcoming Events

18 January 2010

[eHealth in action](#)

An RCN Scotland and Scottish Government event looking at what eHealth means and how it can be used by all nursing staff for the benefit of patients. The one day session will be held at Victoria Quay in Edinburgh.

28 January 2010

[RCN Scotland Occupational Health Nursing Seminar](#)

Running from 12.30pm until 15.30 pm this event will take place in Edinburgh and will provide you with accurate, up to date information about how the new structures and support for occupational health nursing within the RCN are working and how occupational health nurses in Scotland can engage with the UK wide Public Health Forum.

30 January 2010

[Breakthrough Breast Cancer Event](#)

Free event in Dunblane giving you all the information you need about Breakthrough Breast Cancer and campaigning and fundraising on their behalf.

23 February 2010

[Your voice, your future](#)

A free one-day conference for all RCN Scotland members which will shape the RCN Scotland campaign in the run-up to the Scottish Parliament elections in 2011.

24 February 2010

[RCN Scotland Activist Conference](#)

Two day event for RCN Scotland stewards, learning representatives and health and safety representatives. The session will include a range of workshops to help build your skills.

24 February 2010

[Equal, connected and contributing: Research perspectives on the citizenship and human rights of people with learning disabilities](#)

The Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability, in collaboration with the Open University and the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services, is organising this one day research conference in Perth to reflect upon the contributions and participation of people with learning disabilities within our society.

25 March 2010

[Our Profession, Our Practice: responding to change in Scottish mental health nursing](#)

A one day event in Glasgow for RCN members involved in mental health. The event will look at the changes mental health nursing has faced, and will give you the chance to have your say on the future of the profession.

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