

School Nurses Forum NEWSLETTER

www.rcn.org.uk/schoolnurses

Contents

- 2 Forum conference report
Healthy Schools criteria
Continue to lend your voice
Date for your diary
- 3 Letter from the Editor
- 4 Bits and bites – links and news
- 5 Omega 3 resource pack
A place for teens to talk
healthy
Special School Nurse Regional
Interest Group
- 6 Independent school nurses
Truth hurts – self-harm report
Every Child Matters – update
Readers' page – coming soon!

Further information

Send contributions for the next newsletter by 28 March 2007 to the Editor:

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Letter from the Chair

There has never been a better time ... to stand together

Welcome to the autumn/winter edition of our newsletter. This is my first Chair's letter and I am a little nervous to be following in Liz Allan's footsteps ...

These are times of many changes, some unsettling, some exciting. Primary care trusts (PCTs) have now amalgamated, changing many management structures for school nurses. For the first time in my NHS career I am seeing both voluntary and compulsory redundancies occurring. Some school nurses are becoming part of integrated, multi-agency teams in children and young people's directorates. These changes mean that there has never been a better time for us to work together and for all school nurses to maintain, and build on, our high profile and good practice.

The forum has also seen changes this year. My predecessor Liz Allan and Forum Vice Chair Chris Etherington have both served their terms of office and have now stepped down. I am sure they will continue to be great ambassadors for school nursing. They have represented us on national working parties and tirelessly guided the work of

the forum. We shall miss them, and wish them well in their future endeavours.

This autumn has seen elections to the RCN forums. We look forward to helping our new members settle in and begin exciting times – promoting, influencing, and supporting the role of school nurses wherever possible. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all members to access the RCN website, join in discussions on the discussion zone, see what is happening in the Children and Young People's Field of Practice Zone, generally become more vocal and share your good practice with colleagues around the four countries, and the world!

In the ever-changing workplace we can become discouraged, but remember it is not necessarily the old adage: 'your country needs you!' but 'your country's children need you!'

Joy Winks

Asthma news

Ad watch

Asthma UK is launching its first-ever TV campaign, entitled: 'Deadly serious', to raise awareness of how serious a condition asthma can be. One in five households in the UK has someone with asthma and 90 per cent of asthma deaths are preventable. For further details, visit: www.asthma.org.uk

Asthma training resource

Asthma UK is developing a

resource for school nurses to use when teaching school staff about long-term medical conditions. The idea for the resource came from feedback from school nurses, who told Asthma UK that they are getting more requests to deliver training on asthma (and other medical conditions) and that they would appreciate a central resource. The resource will aim to provide school nurses with all they need to train

school staff on long-term medical conditions and will be developed with other long-term medical condition charities, the RCN and an external advisory group. A questionnaire to help Asthma UK develop the resource is available from Patrick Ladbury at email: pladbury@asthma.org.uk. Or you can write to Patrick at: Asthma UK, Summit House, 70 Wilson Street, London, EC2A 2DB.

Child and adolescent injury prevention

A WHO plan of action 2006–2015

● www.capic.org.uk/documents/Childinjuryprevention_WHO2006_2015.pdf

School nurse forge ahead at conference

'Innovation to safe practice' was the apt title of the School Nurses Forum conference and exhibition on 31 March 2006. Outgoing Forum Chair LIZ ALLAN headed the event, which presented issues of new governmental policies and the transforming role of the contemporary school nurse.

DfES update

Gerry Egan from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) updated delegates with the new Common Assessment Framework (CAF), explaining its assimilation with the outcomes for children and young people. DfES colleagues also covered extended schools policy and arising issues affecting the school nurse profession. Chloe West explained how the new policy would work to benefit school children and parents by 'removing barriers and personalising learning and education'.

Interactive workshops

Delegates also took part in a number of interactive workshops, introducing them to new and dynamic practices within their field. These included new ways in which to tackle obesity in schools, using IT to benefit and improve current practices and the evolving multi-agency work ethic, with specific reference to Coventry's Behaviour and Education Support Team.

New publications

During the day, the forum launched two new publications. A *position statement on the role of the school nurse in supplying emergency contraception* (publication code 002 772), and *Guidance for nurses on the use of text messaging with young people* (publication code 003 035). Both of these are available through RCN Direct or you can download them at www.rcn.org.uk/publications

Where sits the modern school nurse?

Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) Professor Christine Beasley closed the day and addressed issues relating to recent government policy and the role of the modern school nurse in a changing environment. Professor Beasley emphasised the need to remain a child-focused service that is flexible and accessible to young people and parents. School nurses were described as 'a critical group of people'.

Healthy schools criteria

The Government wants every school to be participating in the Healthy School programme by 2009, with 75 per cent achieving full Healthy School status. In order to gain Healthy School status, schools now have to meet the criteria in all four core themes:

- personal, social and health education, including sex and relationship education and education on drugs (including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substance abuse)
- healthy eating
- physical activity
- emotional health and well-being (including bullying).

Babs Young, Nurse Advisor at the Department of Health (DH), is working to promote and develop the role of school nurses and public health nurses in the programme. For further details, visit the Healthy Schools website: www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk. Information about school meals can be found on: www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthyliving

New OFSTED report

Healthy schools, healthy children? The contribution of education to pupils' health and well-being is based on the best practice in 18 schools regarding health education. Download the report from: www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications

Make some noise and be heard

Farewell from Liz Allan, outgoing Forum Chair

This is a difficult time for NHS employees, including school nurses. Within 24 hours, I have heard of plans in one part of the country to employ and train 30 specialist community public health practitioner school nurses, and of the redundancy of a highly skilled senior practitioner school nursing colleague in another.

The Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) taskforce document *Looking for a school nurse* has opened the dialogue within education and where there is a truly joined-up approach we are seeing new modes of employment for school nurses.

Our independent school nursing colleagues have much to teach us regarding employment outside the NHS and the documents produced by the School Nurses Forum to address the needs of this special interest group will be supportive to the growing number of nurses employed directly by head teachers or school clusters.

I have reached the end of my tenure as Forum Chair and thank you for the privilege that it has been to serve my colleagues and school nursing. I believe that school nursing has much to offer children and young people who continue to be disenfranchised within our society. I wish my successor and her new committee well in their work. Please keep the committee informed so that they can continue to lobby on behalf of school nurses and promote school nursing wherever, whenever and to whomever they can. The RCN is 'the voice of nursing' – help them to be your voice, too.

Liz Allan

Date for your diary

- 30 March 2006 – School Nurses Forum Conference, RCN Headquarters, Cavendish Square, London. More details later.

Letter from the Editor

BARBARA RICHARDSON-TODD wants to hear from you on workload increases.

I must apologise, but due to a technical hitch, you did not receive the spring newsletter.

Throughout the summer term, many school nurses were struggling to weigh and measure reception and year 6 children in their primary schools. My team decided to work as a team and combine the data collection with our usual year 6 talk on the transition to the high school, the role of the school nurse and what, where and why a student may

wish to go to a drop-in at high school. A display of healthy eating and a drop-in at lunch time for the students was also on offer. Unfortunately, we didn't have time to hold any sessions in class, but this is something we would like to bring in at a future date, time allowing.

Let's hope next year won't be such a rush, as we have our new scales now. It would be interesting for all of us to hear of your experiences and how you dealt

with the increase in your workloads.

Let us know. Write, email or add to the discussion group on the website on any topic pertaining to school nursing, at: www.rcn.org.uk/members/dz, or send to the editor for inclusion in the next edition.

Don't forget to visit the RCN Children and Young People Zone – www2.rcn.org.uk/cyp – and keep in touch with your news and innovations!

“If you look after nurses then they will look after nursing and that, fundamentally, is what this work is all about”
former RCN President SYLVIA DENTON OBE FRCN reminded attendees at a second fruitful meeting of the Professional Membership Structures Action Group (PMSAG) on 3 October.

UPDATE: RCN Professional Membership Structure Action Group

The PMSAG was set up following RCN Council's decision in February 06 to change the RCN membership structure in order to deliver the aims of the Professional Development Framework Project. This project aims to get more members involved with the RCN and to enable more equity and better access to RCN services.

The PMSAG includes elected members – representing forums and other membership groups – along with the Council and staff leads. In July, the group clarified the original proposals and terms of reference for the Action Group as follows:

- in future members will join “divisions” as well as branches
- there will be a maximum of eight divisions
- forums will not be moved into divisions and will retain their national identity, working across divisions as and when appropriate
- networks will be developed as appropriate
- the new structures will be implemented from 2008.

The terms of reference for the Action Group were agreed as:

- to determine future organisational arrangements for forums and fields of practice
- to establish the proposed divisional structure

- to develop criteria for the proposed networks
- to develop appropriate governance structures for divisions, forums and fields of practice
- to establish subgroups and work – streams to undertake specific delegated tasks.
- to undertake the work formerly undertaken by the NFCC and the former PDF Steering Group until the new structures are implemented.

Sub groups were established to undertake the next stages of the work:

- A mapping exercise based on that already begun for the Branch Review Project
- Based on this data, models of best practice will be developed
- Divisions: how many there will be and what they will be called
- The technology requirements will be identified
- Definition of what we mean by professional membership services and to set standards and benchmarks
- Governance arrangements for the new structures

In October, the group acknowledged they were part way on a journey that will, ultimately, deliver better services for members and, in turn, help them to deliver

better quality care. A vision which will be realised by creating better access to better services focussed on the needs of the nursing profession and nurses themselves.

The group heard feedback from each of its six subgroups and were unanimous in agreeing a number of recommendations which were, subsequently, approved by the PDF Management Board – which oversees the entire PDF project – at its meeting the following day. The Board approved that:

- the term “practice sector” should be used to describe the divisions within the new professional membership structure
- the following practice sectors be set up to represent members' professional interests on the RCN's boards:
 - adult (2 seats)
 - children and young people (1 seat)
 - mental health (1 seat)
 - learning disabilities (1 seat)
 - public health (1 seat)
 - midwifery (1 seat)
 - other (name to be decided but representing the interests of research/education/quality/management) (1 seat)

RCN Council agreed to the proposals on the new practice sectors at its November 06 meeting.

For more information and the latest information go to www.rcn.org.uk/pdf

BIT AND BITES

Green paper consultation on looked-after children

The foundation of this paper is that the state must act like a good parent. Key recommendations include:

- independent practices of social workers, similar to GP practices
- establishing a virtual head teacher for looked-after children in an area
- lead professionals to hold individual budgets.

For further details, visit: www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/conDetails.cfm?consultationId=1406

Domestic abuse guidance

Responding to domestic abuse: a handbook for health professionals gives practical guidance to those working with patients who may have experienced, or who are experiencing domestic abuse. For further details, visit: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/66/19/04126619.pdf

Danger lice?

Many people believe that head lice are dangerous and that they need to see a doctor, according to a survey carried out by health education charity Developing Patient Partnerships (DPP). Some people believe that head lice can jump, whilst others believe that they should use insecticides as a routine measure. DPP has produced a practical, user-friendly leaflet and A3 poster: *Head lice – what you can do*, to dispel the myths and help parents deal with this widespread issue. Find out more at: www.dpp.org.uk or telephone: 020 7383 6824.

Teenage pregnancy: accelerating the strategy to 2010

This new document sets out how the Government will develop strategies, based on evidence for what works and what are seen as the underlying causes of teenage pregnancy. Areas with high and increasing rates of teenage pregnancy will be offered greatest support. The document can be downloaded from: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/94C1FA2E9D4C9717E5D0AF1413A329A4.pdf

The BLEEP project

The Children's Hospice Research Group, University of Exeter, has investigated the experiences at mainstream school of young people aged 7–19 years with cystic fibrosis or degenerative neuromuscular conditions.

To order copies of the booklets and/or reports of the research findings, please contact Tricia Nash on telephone: 01392 263273 or email: PTSNash@exeter.ac.uk. For a limited period, there is no charge for both booklets for schools and colleges in the south west of England, or for professionals working in schools. The CF booklet is free of charge UK wide at the moment, while supplies last.

Obesity toolkit

Lightening the load: tackling overweight and obesity is available for download: www.fph.org.uk/policy_communication/publications/toolkits/obesity

What's in a snack?

The British Heart Foundation's (BHF) Food 4 Thought Campaign is taking its message into schools. The aim is to get children questioning what's in their snacks and fast foods. There are 'burger box' resource packs for schools and also a new website aimed at children: www.bhf.org.uk/food4thought

Have junk, will travel

A survey from the School Food Trust has found that children and young people eat junk food whilst travelling to and from school. Download the survey from: www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/images/downloads/Parentsattitudessurvey.pdf

A recipe for health

A healthy eating recipe book published by the Scottish community diet project is available at: www.dietproject.org.uk/publications/documents/recipe.pdf

New guidance on conduct disorders

There has been a plethora of reality TV shows telling parents how to bring up their children. NICE and SCIE have produced guidance informing of the training type and educational programmes that can help parents to improve the child's behaviour by improving their relationship with their child. Group settings are recommended to address conduct disorders in children under 12 years old. For more information, visit: www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=TA102

Teenage pregnancy and parenthood

Research on teenage pregnancy and parenthood is featured on this new CD, which discusses the role of sex education, young fathers and questions assumptions made about teenage parenthood. Other CDs available include: *Children first: disabled children and their families* (2004), and *Child and adolescent mental health* (2001). For further details, visit: www.rip.org.uk/publications/audioseries.asp

Have you checked out Teachers' TV yet?

It often features health-related topics. Available on Sky Guide 880, Telewest 240, ntl 240, HomeChoice 845, Freeview 88 (11am-1pm), and at: www.teachers.tv

Bullying on the increase

ChildLine states there has been a 12 per cent rise in calls about bullying in 2005/06, raising the overall number to approximately 37,000. It highlighted anti-gay bullying as a particular problem area. You can find a new report entitled *Calls to ChildLine about sexual orientation, homophobia and homophobic bullying* at: www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/WD_CasenotesSexualOrientation_gf37413.pdf. For a 'No bullying!' toolkit, go to: www.childline.org.uk/extra/nobullying.asp

Other links

- www.childline.org.uk/pdfs/briefingpapers-alcohol.pdf – a briefing paper concerning children and alcohol.

Special School Nurse Regional Interest Group

The Group held its termly meeting on Saturday, 7 October 2006, at Oakfield Park School, Pontefract, Yorkshire, with around twenty nurses travelling from surrounding health districts to attend.

First guest speakers were Moira Powell and Helen Ferguson from the local Jigsaw team. They told us how the Jigsaw team is made up of multi-agency specialists who provide an integrated service in the home for children and young people who are unable to access school.

The second guest speaker was Sima Haslan from an enteral feeding products company. Sima talked about best practice for enteral feeding and the role of their service. This proved very interesting and highlighted issues around equipment and infection control relevant to the role of the special school nurse.

During the open part of the meeting, other issues were shared and discussed, including:

- continence products and who is responsible for assessments for these

products within the different districts

- a care pathway developed by the school nurses and senior management at Oakfield Park School to provide guidance to school staff on the action to take when children are ill in school
- nurse prescribing
- a DVD titled: *Spotting the sick child*.

Group members Louise and Paula would like to thank all the members who attended.

This group provides support and supervision for special school nurses who can become isolated, from their peers, in special schools. If you would be interested in knowing more about this group, or if you are thinking of starting one of your own, please contact School Nurses Forum Chair Joy Winks at email: joywinks@blueyonder.co.uk

A place for teens to talk healthy

Four pilot teenage health demonstration sites will be created in Bolton, Hackney, Portsmouth and Northumberland.

These sites are being developed to show how services can better meet the needs of young people and will include primary care and specialist services in places where adolescents will be attracted, such as youth and leisure centres. Enhanced services will be offered and it is hoped that a strong evidence base will be developed. The aims of the sites are:

- to demonstrate how to ensure health improvement information, advice and guidance can be delivered to young people more effectively in non-health settings, particularly targeting the 30 per cent most vulnerable young people in each site
- to demonstrate how best to configure

health services to target and meet the health needs of all young people

- to test the Life Check online individual health assessment for 11–13 year olds, as described in *Our health, our care, our say*
- to be vehicles for testing social marketing in relation to young people and alcohol use
- to provide evidence of processes that work to support young people who have had an abortion, and teenage parents, in avoiding repeat pregnancy (a DH commitment in the DfES Teenage Pregnancy Strategy).

For more information, please contact Lily Makurah at email: lily.makurah@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Omega 3 – free resource pack

Government guidelines state that children should eat two portions of oily fish per week. It has been widely recognised, however, that many children are not eating an adequate amount to ensure healthy and optimum brain function. Some scientists claim that benefits of Omega 3 for children can include an increase in concentration, improved reading and spelling ability, better behaviour and an improvement in overall health.

As some children simply don't like the taste of fish, many nutritional experts suggest purified, concentrated fish oil supplements as a good alternative source. However, any supplements children take should ideally be free from additives such as aspartame, artificial colours and sugar, which may trigger behavioural problems. It is also important, particularly with fish oil supplements, that they taste good, to ensure that children enjoy taking them.

Following numerous requests for information, Healthspan's Department of Child Nutrition, has designed a comprehensive Omega 3 resource pack specifically for school nurses. The resource materials in the pack aim to educate parents and schools, via school nurses, on the benefits children receive from a regular intake of Omega 3.

The resource pack, which is provided free to school nurses, includes an Omega 3 fact card for nurses, Omega 3 information leaflets for parents and fun stickers for schoolchildren.

For your free resource pack, visit: www.omega3forchildren.co.uk

Independent School Nurses

Independent School Nurses Annual Conference

CHAIR SARAH DAY reports on a wet but wonderful August event, held at the superb Royal College of Surgeons building in London.

As my second year in chair, I aimed for a day of information around policy and practice for caring and sharing. The day was kicked off enthusiastically by John Thain, who highlighted the issues around safeguarding children and young people within independent schools.

With Every Child Matters on the tip of everyone's tongues, Patrick Agius and Lucy Ruddy updated us on implementing information sharing and the child index, whilst Christine Lenehan highlighted the issues around disability.

Helen McCarthy's talk on nutrition posed a question on obesity data collection and once again identified how independent schools are excluded.

The afternoon workshops were warmly received, with practical updates on anaphylaxis, sports injuries, acne and infestations. My thanks to all those who gave their time and energy to make it such an enjoyable day.

Patient Group Directions (PGDs) and nurses employed directly by schools

After 18 months of hard work, this document clarifies the situation between PCTs and school nurses working independently of the NHS. Copy it, email it, take to your contacts, and please let us know of the impact.

www2.rcn.org.uk/___data/assets/pdf_file/18553/pgd_statement_final.pdf

Truth hurts

Report of the national Inquiry into self-harm among young people.

Self-harm among young people is a significant and growing public health challenge. Despite this, there is almost universal misunderstanding about self-harm, even amongst those in closest contact with young people. In response to this, the Camelot Foundation and the Mental Health Foundation launched the National Inquiry Into Self-Harm Among Young People, in 2004. The Inquiry Panel has been meeting for two years, hearing evidence from a wide range of interested parties, but, most significantly, it listened to the voices of young people who have experience of self-harm. Their contributions have been vital to this work.

'Truth hurts' sets out an agenda for change, making recommendations about what needs to be done in order to fully understand the

prevalence of self-harm; the importance of commissioning services where young people feel listened to and respected; gathering evidence of what works in preventing self-harm and intervening once the behaviour is underway; and building a better understanding of why young people self-harm. Ultimately, the aim must be that those closest to young people who self-harm are better equipped to hear their disclosures without panic, revulsion or condemnation.

It is intended that the report will serve as a turning point in understanding self-harm and be a launch pad for changes in the prevention of, and response to, self-harm among young people throughout the UK. Copies of the report can also be downloaded at www.selfharmuk.org

Every Child Matters – update

Working together to safeguard children has been revised and updated to reflect legislative changes and lessons from practice in child protection and safeguarding children. The guidance maintains the present situation whereby health care staff are not automatically required to inform social services whenever a child or young person under 16 independently seeks medical assistance. The guidance, however, clearly states that where a person under the age of 16 seeks sexual health advice, a discussion must take place with a named or designated professional, for child protection.

Hard copies of the document are available by calling Prolog on telephone: 0845 602 2260, quoting reference WT2006, or download it from www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/workingtogether

Other important publications include:

- Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People – guidance aimed at managers and practitioners, plus supporting materials.
- Revised guidance on the lead professional
- *Information sharing: practitioners' guide* – cross-government guidance and supporting materials, aimed at front-line practitioners.

All publications are available at: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Readers' page – coming soon

The next newsletter will feature a section dedicated to forum members' comments, views, examples of good practice and whatever else takes your fancy. If you have something to say, a tip to share or something you just want to get off your chest, please it send in to the editor by the end of February 2007, for inclusion in the next issue. Good luck and happy writing!



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