

Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom

A Business Case for Managing *Mental Health* Nursing Knowledge

1 Introduction

- 1.1 During 1999, the RCN developed an information strategy that aimed to anticipate and respond to the information needs of RCN members. The strategy had nine inter-connected and inter-dependant objectives (see figure 1)¹.

Figure 1: RCN Information Strategy

Nine holistic strategic objectives:

- 1 **Creating effective knowledge management in the RCN**
 - 2 **Creating access to information for RCN Information services users when and where they need it**
 - 3 **Creating access to quality information on the web**
 - 4 **Creating an effective physical learning environment**
 - 5 **Promoting information literacy**
 - 6 **Creating effective information provision for subject specialisms in nursing**
 - 7 **Working collaboratively with external organisations**
 - 8 **Streamlining and targeting information**
 - 9 **Quality assuring customer care**
- 1.2 To date the strategy has delivered the following key products :-
- **Access to e-journals and e-databases on the Web**
 - **NMAP: gateway to quality assured resources on the Web**
 - **BNI Plus**
 - **Forum websites - In-group**
 - **Modernised UK LIS**
 - **Information skills training audit and online centre: Hive**
- 1.3 In July 2001, the *Information Strategy Steering Group* (ISSG) reviewed progress to date & lessons learned from each of the nine objectives. The ISSG collectively agreed to focus on five key projects over the next twelve months. This is the business case for the creation of effective systems for managing nursing knowledge within the field of mental health.

¹ The strategy development process was informed by focus groups with RCN members and RCN Institute students. Participants shared their experiences and expectations of RCN information services. Analysis of the focus groups was followed by wider RCN membership involvement in an iterative consultation process
http://www.rcn.org.uk/policy/policy_documents.html.

2 Background

2 As a result of effective lobbying by mental health nurses, the mental health field was selected as the focus of a pilot study for ***“Creating effective information provision for subject specialisms within nursing”***. (See figure 1, objective 6).

2.1 It was argued that in order to do this it was necessary to know both the information needs of nurses and current service provision within the field. From this baseline it would be possible to map out any gaps or glitches in current service provision.

2.3 Method

2.3.1 *On identifying the information needs of nurses within the field*

A cross-section of actual or potential “Information service users” were invited to keep a diary throughout January 2001. In this diary they were asked to record details of “problem situations” which led them to seek out advice or information in their professional practice. They also recorded where they sought advice and / or information from (both inside and outside the RCN) and how satisfied they were with the outcome.

2.3.2 *On identifying the current service provision within the field*

In order to examine current RCN information service provision, all RCN advice and information service providers simultaneously audited requests for information within the field.

2.3.3 *On mapping out any gaps or glitches in our current service provision.*

A symposium was held in February 2001 where the results of the above audits were presented and debated. From this event, proposals were put forward to facilitate the delivery of effective mental health nursing knowledge management systems within the RCN. Following a period of consultation, these proposals were further developed at an implementation meeting in September 2001.

2.4 Results

2.4.1 Audit data were provided by a cross section of RCN members and five RCN departments, namely

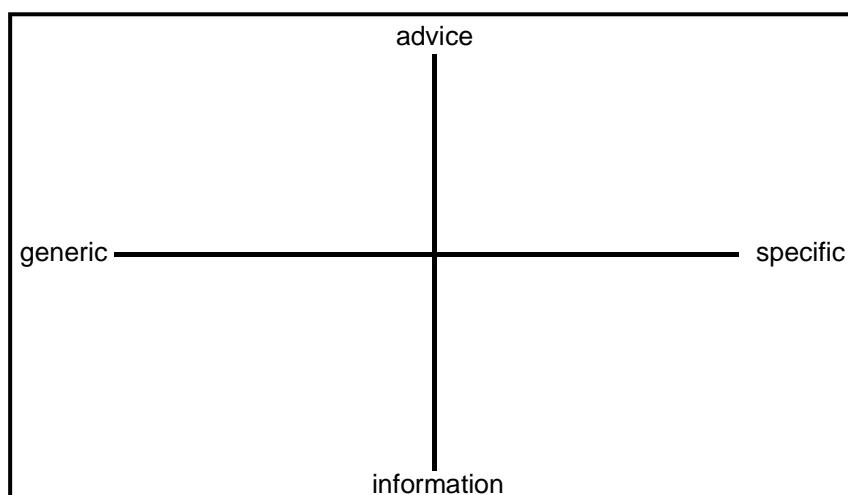
- **RCN Direct**
- **Library & Information Services**
- **Career Guidance & Welfare**
- **Mental Health Adviser**
- **Quality Improvement Programme**

2.4.2 Content analysis and categorisation of these data led to the identification of nine categories of advice and information requests (figure 2). RCN members sought advice, guidance and information of either a generic or of a specific nature. A grid was drawn up to present and interpret the data collected (see figure 3).

Figure 2: Categories of advice & Information requests

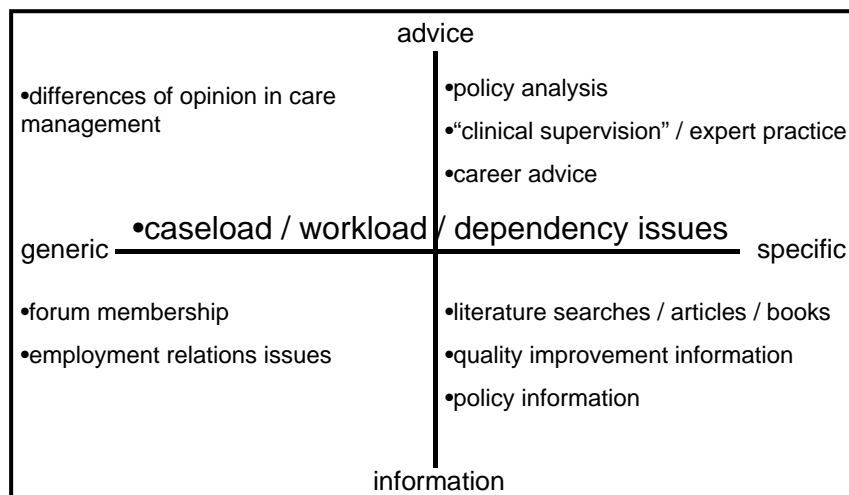
- **Forum membership**
- **Employment relations issues**
- **Quality improvement issues**
- **Policy information, analysis & development**
- **“Clinical supervision” / expert advice**
- **Career advice / personal support**
- **Care management / differences of opinion**
- **Literature searches, articles, books**
- **Caseload/ workload/ dependency issues**

Figure 3: Lessons learned...



- 2.4.3 It is possible to plot on this graph both an entry and an exit point any request for advice, guidance or information. Tracking this process helps to illustrate the complexity of the roles of advice and information providers and the importance of the development of information literacy in nursing to enable nurses to become increasingly self sufficient in identifying and locating their information requirements.
- 2.4.3 Locating the nine categories of advice and information requests (figure 2) on the grid (figure 3) serves to illustrate
- in the lower two quadrants where the RCN is currently supplying information “products” to it’s members and
 - in the upper two quadrants where “one to one”, advice guidance and information is currently supplied (figure 4).

Figure 4: locating the categories



- 2.4.5 It is possible to measure the level of demand for advice, information and guidance on issues located within the upper two quadrants of Figure 4 that currently draw largely on the tacit knowledge held by RCN staff and members. This process provides a rich source of data from which a “needs led” set of priorities can be identified and where appropriate this tacit knowledge can be translated into explicit knowledge and new RCN “products ” developed.

2.5 Discussion

2.5.1 This audit served to illustrate three key points:-

- the RCN's information strategy's nine objectives (Figure 1) are inter-connected and inter-dependent².
- the *"rich vein"* of knowledge and expertise within RCN members and staff is currently fragmented.³ Fragmentation makes some services less visible than others and poses a threat to the overall quality of service provision
- collectively auditing (or reflecting) upon and sharing the information needs of RCN members and staff (within "subject specialisms") is not an integral part of the culture of the RCN and therefore this rich source of data is not routinely accessed when members and staff identify RCN priorities.⁴.

2.5.2 Any solution must be sensitive to the dynamic nature of the mental health policy and practice agenda.

3 Conclusions

3.1 To effectively harness and manage mental health nursing knowledge the RCN must develop an *integrated mental health knowledge management programme* with the ability to

- enable members to help each other through liberating the deep vein of knowledge and expertise within the RCN membership**
- share best practice**
- identify service innovations**
- provide a virtual learning resource centre**
- provide a live and timely snapshot of views, issues and concerns**
- debate topical and controversial issues in mental health nursing**
- direct specialist or complex mental health enquiries and access specialist knowledge and expertise**
- enable the RCN to develop a member reflective position when new health policy containing controversial implications for nurses and service users is proposed**
- develop policy**
- disseminate policy**
- free up time and resources for the development of new products**

² In order to enable nurses to become increasingly self-sufficient in identifying and locating their information requirements, nurses information literacy needs must be identified and met (obj. 5), nurses must have access to information (obj. 2), on or via the RCN web (obj. 3), which means working collaboratively with external organisations (obj 7).

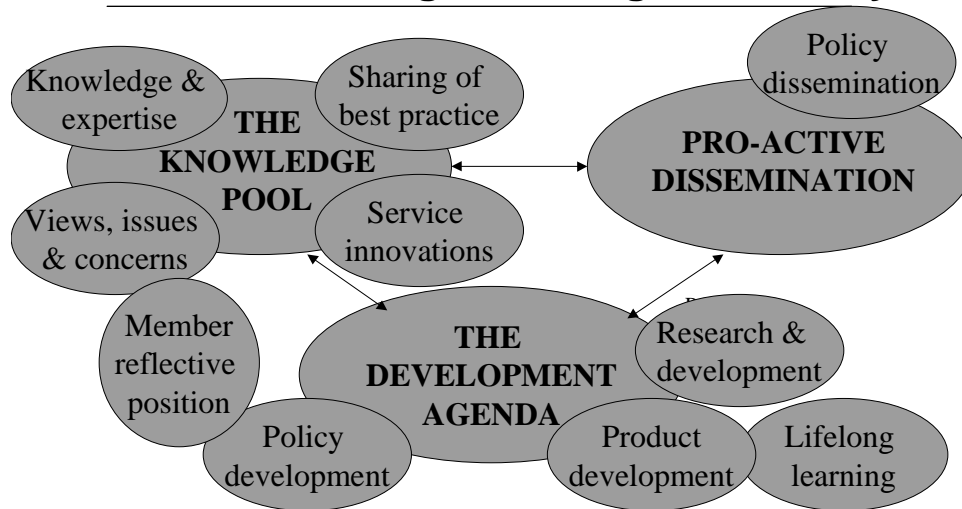
³ The audit process facilitated new insights into the breadth and depth of current service provision and of the potential of an integrated seamless service

⁴ caseload/ workload/ dependency issues clearly emerged as the major concern within mental health nursing.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 An RCN integrated mental health knowledge management programme will have three key inter-dependent elements Figure 5

Figure 5: managing mental health nursing knowledge effectively



- 4.1.1 The knowledge pool will be a web-based facility with a virtual learning resource centre at its core (see Appendix 1). A web-based discussion facility will be established in the first instance with the virtual learning resource centre proposals as its starting point to agree the functionality of the knowledge pool. Once the architecture is in place, the contents will grow organically to enable members and staff to provide a seamless service of advice, guidance and information provision to their colleagues. The knowledge pool will provide the RCN with a membership wide, real-time database of expertise within the field. There should be a named member of staff responsible for the development and subsequent management of the knowledge pool (hereafter referred to as "the mental health knowledge manager". The mental health knowledge pool architecture should be formally launched at RCN Congress 2002
- 4.1.2 The potential of the knowledge pool to realise this vision is dependant upon the active engagement of members and staff. The second element of this vision for effective management of mental health nursing knowledge is a facility for pro-active dissemination. Pro-active electronic dissemination of tailored and timely information to defined cohorts of RCN members and other appropriate stakeholders will be a key responsibility of the mental health knowledge manager.

- 4.1.3 Ensuring that nurses “on the other side of the digital divide” who do not have Internet access are not marginalised from these processes will be another key feature of the knowledge manager’s role. They will regularly provide copy for RCN “hard copy” editors and work in partnership with RCN Direct and other relevant stakeholders.
- 4.1.4 The third element of this knowledge management programme , “the development agenda” will ensure that systems are developed to facilitate a regular audit of the information needs of RCN members and staff as identified within the knowledge pool and that this rich source of data is routinely accessed when members and staff are identifying RCN priorities and future work-plans.
- 4.2 A project manager will be appointed in November 2001 to work under the direction of the mental health knowledge manager with colleagues and other key stakeholders to develop the functionality of the knowledge pool in time for it’s launch at congress 2002. The project manager will also work with key stakeholders to develop protocols for facilitating engagement within the knowledge pool, pro-active dissemination through a range of media and audit processes A draft job description is appended (appendix 2).
- 4.3 A support infrastructure (appendix 3) will be implemented prior for the duration of the project manager’s appointment and an option appraisal for the sustainability and long term management of the mental health knowledge management programme will be proposed if this pilot is deemed a success.
- 4.4 A “Balanced Scorecard”⁵ of performance measures will be agreed to evaluate the success of this pilot appendix 4).
- 4.5 The Advisory Board will agree a detailed project plan for the project manager to work to deliver.

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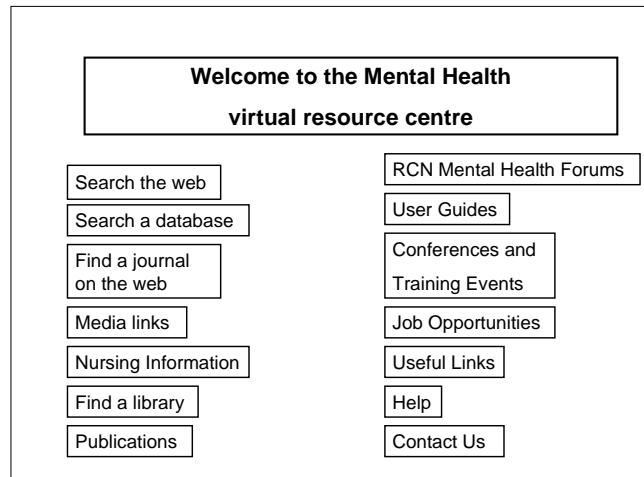
⁵ Kaplan, R. Norton, D. (1996) The Balanced Scorecard. Harvard Business School Press

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APPENDIX 1

Mental Health virtual Resource Centre (MHvRC)

Aim: to provide access to subject specialist information whenever and wherever.



The MHvRC will provide a gateway to quality approved information on the web by linking with NMAP. It will aim to be a one stop shop linking various types of information that may be of interest to nurses working in the field of mental health. The aim is to provide a nurse focussed site that is user friendly and relevant to the needs of mental health nurses. Links will be provided to various areas including:

- Searching the Internet (using NMAP). Guidance will be provided on what NMAP is and how to use it, and information on evaluating information found on the web.
- links to database: this will provide a link to BNI Plus (highlighting the fact that it is for members only); WebCat and other free databases such as sosig (Social Science Gateway)
- electronic journals: link to the e-journals project (highlight for members only), Nursing Standard and other lists such as the Exeter University list
- Media Links: the aim is to provide a current awareness service and links to other media sites such as the BBC, DoH, newspapers etc. The current awareness service would provide direct links to any relevant journal articles, government reports, RCN press releases etc.
- Nursing Information: this would link to RCN forum pages, CPNA (Community Psychiatric Nurses Association), UKCC, Boards etc
- Local library services: a link will be provided to the Libraries for Nurses website. This will provide users with access to additional resources which cannot be provided via the web.
- Publications: ideally a link will be provided to the RCN publications database and any publications which are downloadable. It will also provide links to the UKCC publications webpage and any relevant DoH publications
- RCN Mental Health Forums: a direct link will be provided to this site

- User Guides: a link will be provided to the Hive (which will include information about online tutorials and other training courses for internet skills and information literacy) section of the RCN website and to user guides produced by Library and Information Services including a guide to literature searching.
- Conferences and Training Events: a direct link will be provided to the RCN events database and members will be invited to submit details of events.
- Job Opportunities: a direct link will be provided to the existing RCN WebPages
- Useful links: this will be divided into sections including UK Government; mental health charities; professional organisations; Research & Development site; Electronic Library for Mental Health
- Help: a searchable help guide will be provided offering hints and tips on using the site and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section. [The FAQ section could be taken out and put as a separate heading on the front page].
- Contact us: an evaluation form will be included offering users the chance to comment on developments and suggest further websites which could be included. A questionnaire asking about information needs could also be included.

It is envisaged that the site will start off very simply and develop to include more in depth subject information over time. Links have been made with the National Electronic Library for Mental Health, this will avoid duplication of existing work and lead to a service which compliments those in existence. Initially the site will be aimed at professional but may evolve to include client information depending on the feedback received.

Evaluation will be vital for directing the development of the site. It is envisaged that the site will be promoted via the Forums, RCN media such as the Bulletin, through partnership working with other agencies and during training events. At all times users will be alerted to the section for returning comments. Hits will also be counted and note taken of popular sites.

The launch date for the site is RCN Congress 2002.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

JOB DESCRIPTION

- Job title:** Project Manager
(Managing *Mental Health* Nursing Knowledge)
- Department:** Mental Health Programme, RCN Institute
- Location:** Professional Nursing Department / RCN Institute, London
(negotiable)
- Accountable to:** Managing *Mental Health* Nursing Knowledge Programme
Advisory Board
- Responsible to:** RCN Mental Health Adviser (and RCN R & D Adviser)
- Grade:** **TBA**
- Job summary:** To lead and co-ordinate, in collaboration with other stakeholders, a fixed term project to implement Objective 6 of the RCN Information Strategy: *Managing Mental Health* Nursing Knowledge by RCN Congress 2002.

To draw upon pilot and development work already completed (captured within *A Business Case for Managing Mental Health Nursing Knowledge*), as a base from which to ensure the commissioning of an integrated mental health website and discussion facility for RCN members and staff.

To work in an iterative way amongst RCN mental health nursing forums, members, RCN staff and departments, in order to ensure that the website combines all existing RCN information provision relevant to mental health nursing, identifies and sign posts quality external knowledge and information resources and meets the identified needs of stakeholders.

Job purpose

In order to effectively harness and manage mental health nursing knowledge the post holder will lead on the development of an integrated mental health knowledge management programme with the functionality to:

- **liberate the deep vein of knowledge and expertise within the RCN membership to enable members to help each other**
- share best practice
- identify service innovations
- provide a virtual learning resource centre

- provide a live and timely snapshot of views, issues and concerns
- debate topical and controversial issues in mental health nursing
- direct specialist or complex mental health enquiries and access specialist knowledge and expertise
- enable the RCN to develop a member reflective position when new health policy containing controversial implications for nurses and service users is proposed
- develop policy
- disseminate policy
- free up time and resources for the development of new products

Main duties and responsibilities

1. To take the lead responsibility, whilst working inclusively and collaboratively with others, for designing and commissioning an integrated mental health website, which will be launched at RCN Congress 2002
2. To work within the criteria and principles set out within *A Business Case for Managing Mental Health Nursing Knowledge* and the scope and time scales of the *Project Plan*, advising the RCN Mental Health and R and D Advisers should it become necessary to either amend, or deviate from, the *Project Plan*
3. To engage in regular supervision meetings and progress reporting sessions verbally, virtually and in writing with the RCN Mental Health and R and D Advisers, the Implementation Team and others as required
4. To provide, or broker, expert mental health nursing advice to the RCN Web Manager on the content of the integrated website in line with the mental health policy, practice, education, employment, information and knowledge needs identified by stakeholders UK-wide
5. To identify quality websites and electronic resources established by other mental health organisations suitable for access from the RCN integrated mental health website
6. To identify current gaps in RCN mental health nursing products, briefing materials and publications, and commission, in partnership with the RCN Web Manager, a limited range of initial material and exemplar articles in order to commence a process of closure of such gaps
7. To establish user guidance for the navigation and use of the website and protocols for user e-behaviours on the discussion facility and determine which facilities are to be accessible solely by RCN members and staff, and those to which others may have access
8. To begin to build a database of mental health nursing individuals, teams and communities who demonstrate good practice and innovation and who

are prepared to share their work, expertise and advice with others – and explore how such exemplars might be quality assured or accredited

9. To liaise with a wide range of information providers and users, staff and departments within the RCN, informing them of the project's progress and ensuring that their views, issues and concerns contribute to the ultimate shaping and content of the website
10. To ensure that links are established with the nominated web page co-ordinators from the four membership forums, which the Mental Health Adviser supports, in order that the particular needs of these groups are addressed within the integrated mental health website
11. To proselytise the website and disseminate information in order to alert members and staff to its development through RCN publications, presentations, workshops, conference opportunities and meetings with the RCN mental health membership groups across the UK
12. To begin the development of audit mechanisms which will assist the analysis of website use and the value of its constituent components to users; and establish what will be required, by whom, in order that the website is continuously updated and refreshed

Note

This job description provides the core elements of the Project Manger's role. Given the nature and time scale of the project this job description is not exhaustive and may require additions and alterations to be made by RCN Advisers and the Implementation Team as the project progresses.

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Appendix 3

Project Management Structure

The Project sits within the context of the Science and Art of Nursing with Professor Alison Kitson as **project sponsor**.

The project is an integral part of the RCN's Information Strategy. It is a pilot project within the field of mental health and if successful will be cascaded to other "subject specialisms". From November 2001 through to April 2002, a consultant will be employed to project manage the implementation phase of the mental health pilot. The project manager will be supported within a project management infrastructure

The Advisory Board will provide day to day support within each team members scope of expertise but will primarily focus their attention beyond this six months implementation phase and address:-

How will the mental health pilot be sustained if deemed successful?
How and when should the initiative be cascaded to other subject specialisms?

Membership: Cris Allen, Kevin Hasler, Ann Jackson, Ann Jaloba, Jackie Lord & Ann McMahon

The Technical Team will provide day to day support within the team members range of expertise. In addition to the Executive membership should include Eileen Connolly, Ron Elvins, Julia Jones, Dave O'Carroll, Vicki Orton, Michael Pointon, Ross Scrivener,

The Reference Group will be all other stakeholders i.e. members and staff who have contributed to the development of the project to date or who would wish to in the future. This could include interested parties from other subject specialism who wish to contribute to the development of the pilot within mental health prior to implementation within their area of expertise. This stakeholder reference group will be established as a virtual community for the duration of the implementation phase of this project.

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Appendix 4

The “Balanced Scorecard” approach is a multi-dimensional approach to performance measurement and management. As well as financial measures of performance attention is paid to the requirements of customers, business processes and the longer term. It is recommended that up to four measures of performance are developed within each of the performance areas defined.

It is proposed that the virtual community of stakeholders debate the performance measures before they are finalised. Here a few examples are offered for consideration:-

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE	CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost benefit analysis of current information giving practices compared and contrasted with new environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge pool infrastructure delivered as per agreed specification within timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of any savings identified through new way of working re-invested in field of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of membership and staff satisfaction with the development of member reflective policy positions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of and tailored timely knowledge dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of systems in place to facilitate the identification of RCN priorities within the specialism
BUSINESS PROCESSES	LONGER TERM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of member/ staff partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • options appraised for sustainability of pilot if deemed appropriate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of trans-organisational ownership of and participation in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project plan developed and implemented for further developed within other subject specialisms and the interface(s) between subject specialisms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of project management 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interface between virtual and non-virtual communities explicit 	