

Review of Membership Categories

MEMBER CONSULTATION



We want to find out your views as part of a review of our membership categories and subscription plans.

The aim is to make our arrangements fit for the future and make sure they reflect the changing entry routes into nursing across the UK, support equality and inclusion, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Council will use your views and ideas to build a vision of what the future membership of the RCN should be and propose changes to our current membership categories and subscription plans.

The consultation will run from Congress 2019 until the end of July 2019.

1. The Challenges

- There are many new and emerging routes into nursing.
- New nursing roles are being introduced in England, including registered nursing associates, nursing associate apprentices and pre-registration apprenticeships. The RCN is also piloting a cadet scheme in Wales.
- Some health practitioner members working in the independent sector are registered by the Scottish Health Council and the Social Care Council in Northern Ireland. In Wales registration of domiciliary care workers by Social Care Wales becomes mandatory from April 2020.
- New Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) requirements for revalidation mean that registered nurses who are retired are no longer able to remain on the NMC register.
- There are declining numbers of registered nurses meaning declining income to the College.
- There are growing numbers of health care support workers not supervised by a nurse. How would we support them if they were able to become members of the RCN?
- Many health care support workers do not know they can join the RCN and do not recognise the 'health practitioner' category of membership as being for them.
- The current definitions of membership and subscription plans do not reflect the new structure of the profession or the changing working patterns of our members and do not meet their needs.
- Our governance arrangements are directly related to our membership categories and payment plans. New roles will not be represented on our governance committees.
- Only registered nurses are eligible for key offices in the College.

We've identified a number of possible solutions and want your views:

- We have a single category of membership.
- We develop a structure which is flexible and can accommodate differences across the UK and future changes to the roles and routes into the profession.
- We consider introducing subscription plans which relate to a members' income.
- We welcome all registered nurses, registered nursing associates and members of the nursing team reporting to a registered nurse into membership, including cadets.
- We consider introducing a new affiliate membership for all those who provide aspects of nursing or personal care as part of a multi-disciplinary team but do not report directly to a nurse.
- We develop a clear strategy to ensure all our members have the standards of education, knowledge, skills and competencies they need to deliver safe and effective care.
- We generate new sources of income to sustain the growth of the organisation.
- We set out the qualifications, skills and experience members need to stand for elected governance roles in our policies and procedures –rather than align our governance arrangements to our membership categories.
- We do not link our election arrangements and voting rights to our subscriptions plans.
- We ensure that all roles are represented on our governance committees.

There might be other solutions too. What do you think?

2. Background

The routes into nursing are changing and they vary across the UK. The RCN needs a membership structure that reflects this and is flexible enough to support a changing workforce.

Key Issues

Demographic changes

Growing demand for nursing care and changes in the way it is delivered mean the nursing team has changed too.

The nursing landscape is becoming increasingly complex

There are no longer standard job titles or clear-cut distinction between nursing roles. All this makes it harder to apply our current membership categories and to resolve practical questions of whether individuals are eligible to join the RCN and on which payment plan. For example, in England we now have trainee nursing associates in the health practitioner category paying £98 a year where nurse apprentices are in the student category paying £10 a year.

Workforce changes

The number of registered nurses is falling. There are tens of thousands of nursing vacancies across the UK. Meanwhile, the number of registered nursing associates in England is set to increase over the next few years, health care support worker numbers are increasing and the working pattern of members is changing.

There are limits as to how far our current model can stretch if we are to continue to provide the standard of support and services we do today.

Questions

1. Do you recognise the challenges above? If so how do they affect you?
2. Which of the possible solutions above would you support?
3. Are there any you wouldn't support?
4. Do you see other solutions to the challenges we face?

Please send your responses to the four questions to jane.clarke@rcn.org.uk

1. Appendix

RCN Standing Order

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Council

5.2 The Council may admit to membership of the College in its discretion any persons who are:

5.2.1 on a register of persons engaged in nursing

5.2.2 studying to acquire any of the qualifications necessary for them to have their name included on any register established by an Act of Parliament or by licence

5.2.3 admitted to membership on the grounds of distinction in nursing.

5.2.4 engaged in supporting nursing in health and social care as Council may from time to time determine

Provided that the Council may at its discretion decline to admit any person to membership of the College provided that it shall state its reasons in writing and return any subscription paid by any such person.

Categories of membership

We currently have three categories of membership:

Nurse members

Those who are on the NMC register, including midwives and those whose registration is lapsed (for example retired members) unless they have been struck off.

Health practitioner members

Those who are not on a professional register (other than the Northern Ireland Social Care Council or the Scottish Social Services Council) but who work providing health or social care under the supervision of a registered nurse.

Student members

Those undertaking a pre-registration nursing or midwifery qualification leading to registration with the NMC; nurse cadets or on a return to practice course.

There are different levels of subscriptions:

Health practitioner members pay half the rate of nurse members. The subscriptions paid by both health practitioner members and nurse members are discounted depending on whether:

- You are a newly qualified nurse member or in your first year of health practitioner membership
- You have a joint membership with another union (RCM, UCU or EIS)
- Are on a voluntary break
- Are an RCN staff member.

Retired members and students pay a flat rate subscription of £10 per year.

Retired members and those on some discounted plans, such as those on voluntary breaks and staff members, are not entitled to the full range of benefits, services and rights of membership.

Subscription Plans

Type	Rate
Nurse	
First year discount	£98.43
Full	£196.65
Joint educational	£147.64
Joint RCM membership	£98.43
Retired	£10
Voluntary break	£98.43
Health practitioner	
First year discount	£49.21
Full	£98.43
Retired	£10
Voluntary break	£49.21
Student	
Full	£10

Current Member Offer

Benefit	Description
Indemnity Scheme	Cover against the financial consequences of a claim against a member's clinical negligence.
Legal Services	<p>Access to RCN's in-house specialist legal team for advice/ representation on workplace issues.</p> <p>Assistance from an expert lawyer for advice/representation on injuries sustained at work or elsewhere for compensation, such as personal injury claim.</p> <p>Access to 30 minutes free legal advice on non-work matters, including family law.</p> <p>Advice with writing a will, probate, trusts or lasting power of attorneys.</p> <p>Available free of charge to members only.</p>
Immigration Services	<p>Access to confidential support and assistance on immigration issues, such as preparing/representation on immigration appeals and visa applications.</p> <p>Available free of charge to members only.</p>
Support Services	<p>Confidential advice and support with personal or work-related issues (such as counselling, peer groups, financial assistance etc.).</p> <p>Available free of charge to members only.</p>
RCN Direct	<p>General support and advice service available over the telephone and online.</p> <p>Available free of charge to members only.</p>
Careers Service	<p>One-to-one career advice, help with writing CVs/interview skills and placement support.</p> <p>Available free of charge to members only.</p>
Learning resources	<p>Access to books in the RCN libraries, eJournals, eBooks and local learning events.</p> <p>Available free of charge to members only.</p>
Nursing Forums	<p>Specialist networking forum for nurses.</p> <p>Available free of charge to members only.</p>
Bulletin Magazine	<p>Hard copies of the magazine are available free of charge to members only (via post).</p> <p>From 1 November 2017, an electronic copy of the magazine is available to members and non-members free of charge.</p>
RCN Xtra	<p>Access to exclusive offers and discounts on shopping, cinema trips, mobile phone bills etc.</p> <p>Available to members only.</p>

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

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