

Professional Nursing Committee Report to Members – January 2023

1. This report reflects work done by the Professional Nursing Committee since our last report and an update from our most recent meeting on 26 January 2023.
2. Since our meeting in December, we are delighted to have appointed Alison Paterson to represent the Eastern region on the Committee and were pleased that she was able to attend our January meeting. I offer my sincere congratulations to Alison and look forward to working with her in the months to come.
3. We continue our monthly ‘deep dive’ sessions having met on 16 February to discuss PNC members experience of industrial action and role in regional strike oversight committees.
4. We have temporarily halted our monthly podcast ‘[Nursing Matters](#)’ while an evaluation of its reach and engagement is carried out by the Communications Team. We plan to resume recording in the Spring and are currently busy considering future content ideas.

Chair’s Update

5. We were delighted that our new President, Sheliabye Sobrany, was able to come along to our meeting to introduce herself and hear the views of members on some very topical issues. We also welcomed hearing from Sheila on her priorities as President and look forward to working alongside her in the weeks and months ahead.
6. I reported that the agenda item PNC submitted for Congress 2023 was positively received by the Agenda Committee. It has been reworded based on their feedback to turn it into a resolution: *‘that this meeting of RCN Congress affirms that the strength of the Royal College of Nursing comes from its dual function as a professional body and a trade union’*. I am delighted that the Trade Union Committee will second it.
7. We noted that the review of the RCN’s Scheme of Delegation is ongoing and look forward to receiving an update on this in due course. Once the Scheme has been revised, we will review the PNC terms of reference to ensure alignment.

Director's Update

8. On behalf of Nicola Ranger, Director of Nursing, we were updated on the work of the Nursing Department and on the key issues currently facing members across the four countries by Lisa Elliott, Deputy Director of Nursing; Workforce, Professional Practice and Quality.
9. Lisa also updated us on further changes to the Executive Team structure and we have invited Davinder Viridi, Chief Operating Officer, and Phil Ball, Director of Policy, Communications and Marketing', to our next meeting to introduce themselves and consider how we might work alongside them.
10. We were briefed on Nicola's priority areas of work over the coming year including implementation of the recommendations arising from the Forums and Networks Review and working towards the establishment of the RCN Institute for Nursing Excellence. We also heard that work continued to take forward the recommendations arising from the recent KPMG and Carr reviews.

Industrial Action Update

11. Brian Morton, Associate Director, Employment Relations, joined us to provide a comprehensive update on the ongoing industrial action. He shared details of the different situations in the four countries of the UK.
12. PNC members continue to support regional strike oversight committees and we discussed the conversations happening between the RCN and senior health leaders around our derogations process ahead of the next round of strikes on 6/7 February.
13. We recognised and are extremely grateful for the hard work of strike committees across the UK.

Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill

14. We received a detailed update on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill and discussed many of our concerns about this piece of legislation. It poses significant risks to employment rights, nursing education and staffing and we discussed what the most appropriate response to the Bill should be. We supported the proposed RCN requirements of the Bill based on existing RCN positions. We also supported the proposed influencing plan.

RCN Strategy 2023-27

15. We were pleased to receive a presentation on the RCN Strategy 2023-27 which we look forward to being published imminently.

16. PNC will work with the Executive Team and our colleagues on the Trade Union Committee on implementation of the strategy agreed by RCN Council. We were pleased to note that this will incorporate the Transformation Plan outlined by the President at the EGM last November. We will be reviewing our own work programme to ensure that it is aligned to the strategy.

Committee Work Programme

17. Following approval of our 2022/23 work programme in October, we spent some time at our meeting discussing progress on different workstreams.
18. The PNC work programme for 2023 (and beyond) will align to the RCN strategy and with this in mind we reviewed an 'end of year report' on progress against our 2022 workstreams. We were pleased to see progress against the majority of our key performance indicators.
19. Following the meeting we worked with colleagues in the Communications Team to produce a more user friendly version of this report, which is now on our [PNC webpage](#).
20. A key part of our role is to monitor and interrogate the Committee's risk register. We spent time looking at this in detail and continue to refine this approach to ensure that we can be assured of the mitigating actions in place for our key risks.

Congress 2022 Agenda Items

21. We noted a verbal update on work arising from Congress 2022 ahead of the formal report being circulated by email the following week.
22. We agreed that Martha Gill would become new PNC lead for the item on digital leadership.

Education, Learning and Development Strategy Update

23. We received an update on implementation of phase 2 of the ELD strategy which will conduct the discovery work for the Institute of Nursing Excellence delivery of national and international education, research, leadership, and clinical expertise.
24. Development of the RCN Research Strategy is now underway with an excellent 'Vision Day' held at the beginning of January with the RCN Research Society and many leaders of nursing research taking part. Engagement is continuing through member webinars with a plan to launch the strategy in the autumn.

25. At our March meeting we will be reviewing the headline findings from the evaluation of the RCN's research alliance with the University of Sheffield conducted at the end of last year.

RCN Forums

26. We were joined by Bridie Kent FRCN, Chair of the Forums Governance Group (FGG), who provided both an update on the work of FGG, and an overview of the impressive work undertaken by the professional forums over the past year.
27. We noted the wide range of forum activity which leads and supports much of the professional activity of the RCN. This includes the production of clinical guidelines, learning materials and professional guidance, the organisation of learning events and representing the RCN at key national and professional policy and practice events and bodies.
28. As noted above, we received reassurance that implementation of the recommendations arising from the Forums and Networks Review was a key priority for the new Director of Nursing and appreciate that this will form part of her review of the resources and structures in the Nursing Department.

Prince of Wales Cadet Scheme

29. We received an update on the growth and progress of the Prince of Wales Cadet Scheme. The Committee was really impressed to hear of the positive impact of the Scheme on young people and their communities and the innovative examples of partnership working it involves.
30. Having started in Wales and spread to England we were delighted to hear that the Scheme is now being rolled out in Scotland and will also soon be extended to Northern Ireland.

RCN Foundation Update

31. We were delighted to be joined by Deepa Korea, Director of the RCN Foundation, and Sarah McGloin, Head of Grants and Impact, who outlined some of the current priorities of the Foundation. They told us more about the Foundation hardship grant and gave a powerful account of the impact the cost-of-living crisis was having on the nursing workforce. We were particularly struck by the work they do in 'signposting' nurses to benefits, which demonstrates a significant financial benefit from the service, but also shows in very tangible terms the impact of the erosion of nursing pay.
32. We also heard of the brilliant work the Foundation continues to support through education grants and research and practice development grants.

UK Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC)

33. At every meeting, we receive an update from Helen Whyley as Chair of the UK Programme Board for Staffing for Safe and Effective Care (SSEC) on activity across the four countries.
34. We recognised that whilst industrial action has diverted resources and capacity from some of the workstreams within this programme, the message on the critical need for safe staffing has been central to communications across this campaign.
35. We were pleased to see a comprehensive update on the work to embed our Nursing Workforce Standards in the SSEC programme. In May 2023 it will be two years since the Standards were published and work continues on a process for adoption and endorsement. As part of this work, we were delighted to see the 'Nursing Workforce Standards Checklist' produced to support nurses at all levels and in all settings in advocating for the Standards. We look forward to this tool being made available very soon on the [Nursing Workforce Standards](#) webpage – where there are already many useful resources available.
36. Our Committee meeting clashed with a meeting for RCN members with Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting MP, but we ensured that the PNC was represented through South West Committee member, Colin Baker, who joined the meeting and was able to ensure that Mr Streeting received his own copy of our Nursing Workforce Standards!

Other Items

37. Following discussion at previous meetings, we have requested an update in March on the current position with regards to reviewing the RCN's position statement on the regulation of Nursing Support Workers.
38. Following concerns we raised previously that we are increasingly seeing Nursing Associates being used to substitute RNs in the workforce, we also noted that a first draft of the RCN position statement on NAs scope of practice would be presented for discussion in March.

Next Meetings

39. Our next formal PNC meeting takes place at RCN HQ and via Microsoft Teams on 14 March 2023.
40. The following day we meet jointly with the Trade Union Committee and will be discussing the new 5-year strategy in greater detail, to ensure alignment of our respective work programmes. We will also be discussing the development of the Institute for Nursing Excellence.

Committee Membership

Rachel Hollis (Yorkshire and the Humber – CHAIR)

Siobhan Donald (Northern Ireland – VICE CHAIR)

Mary Codling (South East)

Martha Gill (Scotland)

Tracie Culpitt (Nursing Support Worker)

Tim Grace (Northern)

Ray McMorrow (West Midlands)

Sue Haines (East Midlands)

Paul Trevatt (London)

Carolyn Middleton (Wales)

Suzanne Davies (Student)

Alison Paterson (Eastern)

Sally Young (North West)

Colin Baker (South West)

Apologies for the January meeting were received from Siobhan Donald.

Rachel Hollis

Chair, Professional Nursing Committee

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