

## **Professional Nursing Committee Report to Members – April 2025**

1. This report reflects work done by the Professional Nursing Committee since the last report to Council and an update from our meeting on 3 April 2025.
2. On 1 May we held two in-person workshops. At the first, we looked forward to Congress 2025 and finalised arrangements for the Committee. Ahead of Committee elections later this year, we also discussed the importance of starting succession planning now.
3. Lynn Woolsey, our Chief Nursing Officer, led us through a wide-ranging discussion of the challenges of pre-registration nursing education. We discussed what the role of the RCN should be in attracting the right people to the profession, and ensuring that we have the right educational framework, workforce and support in place to ensure that they can be retained through their educational programmes and in the profession. We talked about many issues that (for England) were captured in the report [Fixing the Leaking Pipeline | Publications | Royal College of Nursing](#).
4. Later that afternoon, we held a workshop with the RCN UK Nursing Support Workers Committee at which we briefed Nursing Support Workers on the role and remit of PNC and learnt more about the role of the Nursing Support Workers Committee. We also spent some time building relationships between the relevant Nursing Support Workers Committee and PNC members of each country/region and we discussed next steps in the campaign for the regulation of support workers.
5. Nominations for a new student member to sit on the Committee closed on 12 May, with interviews taking place on 28 May. The appointment is for a term of office to 31 December 2025.
6. We were delighted at the beginning of our meeting to formally congratulate Lynn Woolsey on her appointment as the RCN's permanent Chief Nursing Officer. We very much look forward to continuing to work with Lynn in this role.
7. The report of our April meeting follows below.

## **Chair and Vice Chair's Update**

8. Colin Baker and I updated PNC on our recent activity as Chair and Vice Chair.
9. We noted the work that had taken place to finalise the revised [Nursing Workforce Standards](#) since our last meeting which we signed off by email in March, and we are delighted that they have now been published.

## **Chief Nursing Officer's Update**

10. The Committee received an update on the activities and current key priorities of Lynn Woolsey, Chief Nursing Officer.
11. We were briefed on the differing positions in relation to pay across the four countries and heard that the Pay Review Body had yet to deliver its report on the 2025/26 NHS pay awards.
12. We noted some of the more high profile RCN events that are shortly due to take place including the [Acute Care Symposium 2025](#) on 20 June and a joint event with Marie Curie on end of life care.
13. We also noted that the RCN was hosting an event on adult social care on 6 May bringing together a number of key stakeholders including Deborah Study, Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care, to discuss the current situation in social care and consider how nursing can lead the way for the future. We will consider how we take this forward at our meeting in September.
14. We heard that the RCN recently hosted an event in Westminster in relation to corridor care which was attended by RCN President, Bejoy Sebastian, as well as Professor Nicola Ranger.
15. Our General Secretary and Chief Executive gave evidence to the [Health and Social Care Select Committee](#) the week before our meeting. We heard that Nicola had answered questions about the abolition of NHS England, the risks and opportunities that the reorganisation could bring, as well as workforce and training issues.
16. We discussed the implications of the abolition of NHS England and were pleased to hear that the RCN is actively reaching out to its members who will be directly affected and has held listening events to hear their concerns. We also discussed the opportunity this provides for the RCN to reinforce its call for a Chief Nursing Officer at the Department of Health and Social Care.
17. We received an update on the RCN's work on developing the evidence base for ratios and noted the complexity of this. We look forward to receiving a more detailed report from Dr Kate Kirk, Associate Director: Nursing Workforce, at our next meeting following further discussion with the Executive Team.

18. Finally, the Chief Nursing Officer updated us on the progress made by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) to address the failings identified in last year's independent culture review. The RCN continues to have significant concerns as to the pace of improvement. We are looking forward to Paul Rees, NMC interim Chief Executive and Registrar, joining us when we meet in July.

### **PNC Work Programme 2025**

19. We signed off our 2025 work programme which is aligned to the RCN's 5-Year Strategy and the work of the Institute of Nursing Excellence. We shared this with RCN Council in May and will shortly be publishing it on the Committee webpage.
20. Since we met in February, we have also published our '[end of year workplan report 2024](#)'.

### **Professional Framework – Assistive and Supportive Roles**

21. We received a presentation on the professional framework workstream on assistive and supportive roles and agreed the final [definition of a Nursing Support Worker](#).
22. We also spent some time discussing the level descriptors for supportive and assistive roles and requested some amendments including additional clarifying narrative.
23. At our workshop with the Nursing Support Workers Committee on 1 May, we reviewed the draft webpages where all of this information would be published ahead of its launch at Congress 2025.

### **Position Statement on Assisted Dying**

24. Following discussion at previous meetings on the progress of work relating to the resolution passed at Congress 2024 calling on the RCN to support the principles of assisted dying, we reviewed the draft updated RCN position statement.
25. The Committee requested some amendments which were made immediately after the meeting and the RCN position statement on assisted dying was subsequently signed off by PNC via email. PNC recommended approval of the draft position statement to RCN Council in May 2025, where this was approved.

### **RCN Congress**

26. We reviewed the draft report to members on work arising from Congress 2024 and fed in our comments. The [final report](#) was published on the RCN website ahead of Congress 2025.

27. Under this item we also noted an update on the strategic review of Congress and PNC members were encouraged to attend and contribute to the sessions being held on this topic in Liverpool, ahead of our reflections on Congress at our next meeting.
28. We also spent some time ensuring we were all prepared for (and looking forward to!) this year's Congress.

### **RCN Forums**

29. We were joined by Natalie Zara, Executive Director of Governance, who proposed amendments to the terms of reference for the Forums Governance Group and the Forum Chairs Committee to make the roles and responsibilities of both clearer.
30. We agreed the changes to both terms of reference which included amending the title of the Forums Governance Group to the [Forums Co-ordinating Committee](#) as this is a decision-making body with elected members.
31. We have also agreed to amend the title of the Forum Chairs Committee to the [Forum Chairs Group](#) as this is not a formal committee and has no decision-making powers.
32. Both revised terms of reference have been published on the RCN website. Minor amends were also made to the PNC and Forum Steering Committee terms of reference to reflect these new titles.
33. Under this item, we also received updates on the activity of both groups from Ruth Bailey, Chair of the Forum Chairs Group, and Bridie Kent FRCN, Chair of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee.

### **Credentialing Programme (Advanced Nursing Practice)**

34. Following the briefing we received at our February meeting on the proposal to stop RCN credentialing of advanced nursing practice at the end of that month, we noted that as a result of the announcement that NHS England will be abolished, a decision was made to pause until the College had more information on the implications of that decision in relation to the NHSE Centre for Advancing Practice multi-professional HEI accreditation process.
35. It has since been decided by the Executive Team to proceed with the planned closure of the RCN credentialling programme. We noted that this will be a phased stop over the coming three years.

### **RCN International Committee**

36. We were joined by Marcus Wootton, Associate Director; International, who provided us with an update on the work of the International Committee and the International Academy.

37. We discussed the items of international relevance on the Congress 2025 agenda including the matter for discussion on the 'internationally educated nurse' title and why there is concern around the use of that term.
38. Marcus updated us on the RCN's draft humanitarian crises guidance which aims to provide the RCN and its members with guidance to inform determinations and decision making regarding appropriate, ethical, consistent and timely responses to global humanitarian crises as this came from a resolution proposed by PNC at Congress 2024.
39. We heard that the draft guidance has been discussed with the Executive Team and will be taken to the next meeting of the International Committee.

### **#ProtectNurse**

40. In relation to the #ProtectNurse campaign, we heard that the second reading of the [Ten Minute Rule Bill](#) submitted by Dawn Butler MP calling for an amendment to the Professional Qualifications Act 2022 to protect the title 'nurse' in law was scheduled for 28 March but had been postponed.
41. Since our meeting, the Bill has been withdrawn following the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) announcement in May that the title *will* be given protection in law.
42. Having encouraged members to call on their MPs to support the Bill (England only), we were pleased to hear that we managed to reach 98% of MPs in the country.

### **RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence**

43. We were delighted to be joined by Professor Jane Ball FRCN, Director of the RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence, to receive an update on the work of the Institute and the Nursing Leadership, Nursing Practice, Nursing Workforce and International Nursing Academies.
44. We discussed how the Activism Academy reports differently but is very much a part of the Institute.
45. We also discussed the [RCN's position on engaging with international governments and administrations](#).

### **Next Meeting**

46. The next formal PNC meeting takes place via MS Teams on 5 June 2025.

**Rachel Hollis FRCN**  
**Chair, Professional Nursing Committee**  
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### **Committee Membership 2025**

Rachel Hollis (Yorkshire and the Humber – CHAIR)  
Colin Baker (South West – VICE CHAIR)  
Oladunni Akinbulumo (North West)  
Aquiline Chivinge (East Midlands)  
Mary Codling (South East)  
Tracie Culpitt (Nursing Support Worker)  
Donna Gallagher (Northern Ireland)  
Martha Gill (Scotland)  
Tim Grace (Northern)  
Sonia Henry (London)  
Raymond McMorro (West Midlands)  
Carolyn Middleton (Wales)  
Alison Paterson (Eastern)

Apologies for the April meeting were received from Oladunni Akinbulumo, Mary Codling and Carolyn Middleton.

The student seat on the Committee is currently vacant.

### **Staff Attendance**

Professor Jane Ball FRCN	Director, RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence
John Bryant	Head of Member Communications
Caroline Clinker	Governance Adviser
Patricia Hughes	Associate Director: Nursing Practice
Amber Jabbal	Director of Policy
Maxine Nunn	Performance, Risk and Assurance Manager
Wendy Preston	Head of Nursing Workforce
Dominic Trendall	Senior Public Affairs Adviser
Lynn Woolsey	Chief Nursing Officer
Marcus Wootton	Associate Director: International
Natalie Zara	Executive Director of Governance