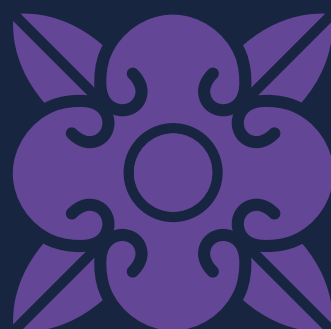
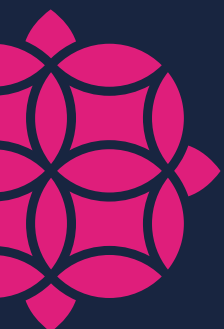




Royal College
of Nursing

ASIAN CELEBRATION

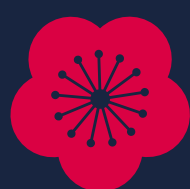
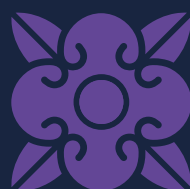
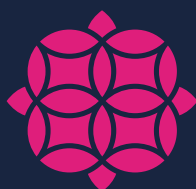
Monday 26 October 2026, 9.30am-4pm
at the Royal College of Nursing,
20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN



Your agenda

Morning session

9.30am	Registration, refreshments and networking	
10am	Welcome and opening remarks	Jeni Caguioa MBE RCN Council Member
10.10-10.55am	Cultural journeys in nursing – a bite-size view	Heesook Lee, South Korea Samten Chodon, Tibet Alyson Lam, Hong Kong
10.55-11.30am	Keynote speech ‘Evolving Threads’	Heira Lansangan-Giordanor, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Kings College Hospital
11.30am-noon	Break	
noon-12.30pm	Cultural journeys in nursing – a bite-size view	May Hagiwara, Japan Dr Ariel Lanada EdD, Philippines
12.30-12.45pm	Traditional Kerala dance display	Alliance of Senior Kerala Nurses (ASKeN)
12.45-1.45pm	Lunch, networking and explore stands	



Afternoon session

1.45-2.30pm	Panel discussion 'Building confidence, influence and leadership' Chaired by Ellen McNicholas, Regional Director, South East Region	Susie Lagrata, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, University College London Hospitals (UCLH) NHS Foundation Trust Suman Shrestha MBE, RCN Professional Lead for Critical Care Zeba Arif, Vice Chair RCN Mental Health Forum Agimol Pradeep, Agimol Pradeep BEM PhD, Senior Liver Recipient Transplant Coordinator, King's College Hospital and 2026 Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award Winner
2.30-3pm	Break	
3-3.30pm	RCN International Academy: Asian nurses in Myanmar – in partnership with the RCN	Professor Judith Ellis OBE, Deputy Chair of RCN International Committee and RCN Fellow
3.30-3.50pm	Haraya Choir	
3.50-4pm	Closing remarks	Bejoy Sebastian, RCN President



Your speakers

Zeba Arif



Zeba is a retired nurse leader who spent much of her career in forensic psychiatry, retiring as a team leader 14 years ago. She is currently Vice-Chair of the RCN Mental Health Forum and has been an active RCN member and elected representative since 1987. A recipient of the RCN Award of Merit, Zeba has consistently championed culturally appropriate, diversity-sensitive care. As a multilingual nurse of Asian heritage, she is passionate about ensuring inclusive health care and looks forward to sharing insights from her professional and personal experiences.

Jeni Caguioa MBE

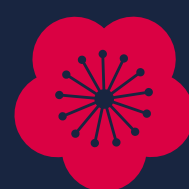
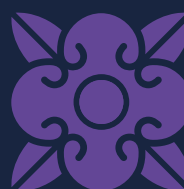
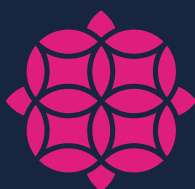
Jeni is a nursing leader and champion of diversity and inclusion, dedicated to supporting internationally educated nurses and strengthening representation in health care leadership. She is co-founder and Vice Chair of the Filipino Senior Nurses Alliance and serves on the Royal College of Nursing Council. Awarded an MBE for services to nursing, Jeni advocates for a workforce that reflects the communities it serves. Through her leadership and mentoring, she encourages others to embrace their heritage, realise their potential and help build a more inclusive, compassionate NHS.



Samten Chodon

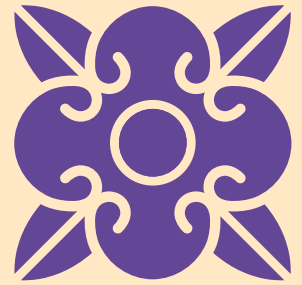


Samten is a tissue viability clinical nurse specialist at Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust, with more than 20 years' nursing experience in the UK. A proud British Tibetan nurse and founder of the UK Tibetan Nurses Group, she is passionate about patient-centred care, professional development, diversity and inclusion. Guided by kindness and compassion, Samten also works to improve health and wellbeing within the Tibetan community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she collaborated with NHS colleagues to improve access to trusted vaccine information in the Tibetan language, helping to build greater awareness and confidence within the community.



Professor Judith Ellis OBE FRCN

Judith is a Fellow of the RCN and Vice Chair of the RCN International Committee. She currently supports the work of Marcus Wootton (Associate Director of the RCN's International Academy) working with International colleagues and Myanmar nurses to deliver the Phoenix Nursing Degree programme in war-torn Myanmar. She has had the pleasure of working with colleagues from around the world and has, in previous roles, supported partnership activity in Asia, developing nursing and wider health professional education and regulation in China, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines.



May Hagiwara

May qualified as a registered nurse in Tokyo in 2015 before moving to the UK in 2017. After working as a health care assistant at University College London Hospitals and overcoming the challenges of gaining UK registration, she became a registered nurse in 2020 during the pandemic. She is now a clinical practice facilitator at UCLH, leading education and development for nurses and health care assistants in Trauma and Orthopaedics while studying for a Diploma in Clinical Education at King's College London. She is passionate about sharing her journey and experiences of cultural differences in nursing and education.

Susie Lagrata

Susie is an advanced headache nurse practitioner and lead nurse at University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Originally from the Philippines, she moved to the UK in 1999 and has completed extensive postgraduate study, including a master's in headache disorders from the University of Copenhagen. An RCN Award winner, she has pioneered nurse-led headache services in the UK and holds leadership roles with NICE, BASH, the International Headache Society and FNA-UK. Susie is a published author, international speaker, educator and co-author of the UK's first RCN headache nurses competency and education framework.



Your speakers

Dr Ariel Lanada EdD



Ariel is a nurse, educator and advocate for internationally educated nurses. Originally from the Philippines, he is Divisional Lead for Practice Development and Education at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, lectures at Oxford Brookes University and is Assistant Professor of Nursing at Central Philippine University. A registered nurse and teacher, and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Ariel is President of the Filipino Nurses Association UK, Deputy Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, and Chair of the Alliance of International Nurses and Midwives Diasporas UK. He champions culturally intelligent leadership, ethical migration and workforce inclusion.

Alyson Lam

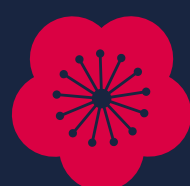
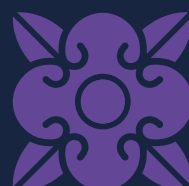
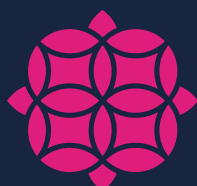
Alyson Lam, BSN, MSc Nursing, is a health equity nurse at Barts Health NHS Trust's Lung Cancer Department. Originally from Hong Kong, she began her nursing career in 2000 and has specialised in respiratory nursing throughout her career. After moving to the UK nine years ago, she worked as a respiratory nurse specialist at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust before joining Barts Health. Alyson is also the Founder and Director of the Hong Kong Nursing Association UK, established in 2021, and is passionate about improving health equity, supporting diverse communities, and promoting early cancer diagnosis.



Heira Lansangan-Giordanor



Heira is an advanced nurse practitioner in critical care outreach at King's College Hospital and a proud internationally educated nurse from the Philippines. Alongside her clinical focus on deteriorating patients and patient safety, she serves as co-chair of the trust's Race, Ethnicity, and Cultural Heritage (REACH) Network. Heira is passionate about creating inclusive, supportive spaces for ethnically diverse staff and promoting cultural visibility across the NHS. As a Filipino nurse leader, she brings an authentic voice to discussions on heritage, belonging, and the power of grassroots representation.



Heesook Lee

Heesook is a lead spasticity nurse specialist at University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. A proud Korean nurse, she trained and worked in South Korea before moving to the UK in 2001, where she has built a distinguished career in neuroscience and spasticity services. She holds a BSc in nursing, postgraduate neuroscience qualifications, master's-level study, and is a non-medical prescriber. Recently, she became lead author of a paper in *Neuromodulation: Technology at the neural interface*. Heesook is passionate about patient care, nursing leadership, lifelong learning, and supporting future generations of nurses.



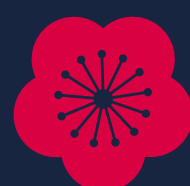
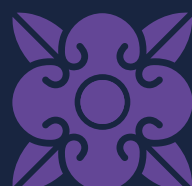
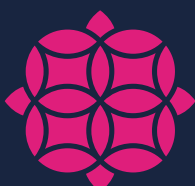
Dr Agimol Pradeep BEM

Agimol is an internationally recognised nursing leader, senior liver transplant coordinator at King's College Hospital and honorary senior lecturer at the University of Salford. A passionate advocate for health care equity, she holds leadership roles with the RCN, NMC, NHS Blood and Transplant, UPAHAAR and ASKeN. Her work focuses on improving access to organ, blood and stem cell donation, supporting internationally educated nurses and empowering ethnic minority communities. Agimol's contributions have been recognised with the 2026 Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award, a British Empire Medal and a 2023 HSJ Award for workforce innovation.



Ellen McNicholas

Ellen has held senior leadership roles across community, mental health and nursing services in the NHS, including Operations Director at Solent NHS Trust and Director of Quality and Board Nurse at NHS West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she served as clinical director for the vaccination programme and chief nurse advisor to NHS Test and Trace within the UK Health Security Agency, overseeing clinical quality assurance for mass vaccination sites. Ellen is now RCN Regional Director, leading the organisation's work across the South East of England and the Channel Islands.



Your speakers

Bejoy Sebastian

Bejoy is a senior critical care nurse at University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and current President of the Royal College of Nursing. Originally from Kerala, India, he moved to the UK in 2011 after completing his nursing studies at Kottayam Medical College. A passionate advocate for internationally educated nurses, he has led national networks to improve representation and address workplace barriers. Beyond nursing, he volunteers with DKMS and Upahaar UK, organising stem cell donor registration drives to help tackle health inequalities and increase donor diversity within underrepresented communities.



Suman Shrestha MBE

Suman is a consultant nurse in critical care at Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust and a qualified advanced critical care practitioner. Originally from Nepal, he is the RCN's UK Professional Lead for Critical Care and has held senior roles across numerous national health care bodies. Suman has led major initiatives to improve patient care, advanced practice and sepsis management, while collaborating with organisations including NHS England and NICE. He is founder of the Kalpana Foundation Nepal and was awarded the 2021 Human Rights and Nursing Award and an MBE in 2022 for services to critical care.



Please tell us your thoughts on today's event by completing our online evaluation form. Scan the QR code to access it.



RCN London
RCN South East
RCN South West



rcnlondonregion
rcnsouthwest