

## **RCN Joint Reps conference, Spring 2025**

### **Your mental health and signposts to support**

As RCN reps, you will be hearing and dealing with distressing, traumatic and difficult conversations daily. Reflecting the challenges faced by nursing staff across the UK, the joint reps conference will often include sensitive topics on the programme which may be difficult and emotionally charged for some.

**Your wellbeing is important, please do seek help any time you need it.**

This guidance offers practical advice on dealing with difficult emotions and feelings in the moment. It also details how you can access the RCN counselling service if needed. There are signposts to more specialist support and organisations, some of which also provide emotional or counselling support, along with others that offer advice and advocacy.

#### **Who can help if I am struggling with difficult feelings and emotions?**

- In the first instance speak to someone you can trust, a colleague, friend, loved one.
- If you need support at the conference, visit the registration desk – staff there will be able to signpost you to assistance.

#### **How can I calm myself if needed?**

- **Stop whatever you are doing** - don't act immediately, wait.
- **Take a breath** - slowly breath in and out a couple of times.
- **Scan your body** - for tension, breath into the tension while allowing your muscles to relax
- **Observe** - What am I thinking about? What am I reacting to? What am I feeling in my body?
- **Pull back** - put in some perspective, see the bigger picture. Is this fact or opinion? How would someone else see this?
- **Practise what works** - What's the best thing to do for me, for other, for this situation?

#### **Where can I access counselling if needed?**

As a member of the RCN, you are entitled to Brief Therapy over the phone providing you haven't had a course of counselling with us in the last 6 months. And if you did, then we

would still be happy to assess your situation and explore your options to access talking therapy elsewhere if appropriate.

To request this, please send an email to [counselling@rcn.org.uk](mailto:counselling@rcn.org.uk) and quote 'RCN Reps Conference' in the subject and tell us in a few words what you would like support for.

### **What if I need more specialist support?**

You can either contact one of the services listed below and/or make an appointment with the RCN Counselling Service. We will be happy to provide a therapeutic consultation to discuss onward referral options if Brief Therapy, via the RCN, is deemed unsuitable.

Email us at [counselling@rcn.org.uk](mailto:counselling@rcn.org.uk) quote 'RCN Reps Conference' in the subject and tell us in a few words what you would like support for.

### **RCN mental health and wellbeing resources**

There is a collection of resources on the RCN website to support you with your mental health and wellbeing:

[www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/counselling-services/mental-health-and-wellbeing](https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/counselling-services/mental-health-and-wellbeing)

[www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/managing-stress](https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/managing-stress)

### **Moral distress**

Corridor care has a huge impact on nursing staff and patient care. Moral distress occurs when you know the ethically correct action to take but you are constrained from taking it. An article published in the RCN Bulletin explores moral distress in more detail and emphasises the importance of accessing formal and informal services that support your mental health and wellbeing.

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/magazines/Bulletin/2021/May/Moral-distress>

### **Organisations offering specialist support**

#### **The Survivors Trust**

Free, confidential helpline for any survivor of sexual abuse anywhere in the UK or Ireland

Tel: 08088 010 818

Text Service: 07860 022 956

Email: [helpline@thesurvivorstrust.org](mailto:helpline@thesurvivorstrust.org)

Website: <https://thesurvivorstrust.org/>

## Bereavement Support

Service	Area covered	Contact Tel
Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide Helps those bereaved by suicide to support each other	England, Wales and Scotland	0300 111 5065
Cruse Bereavement Support	England, Wales, and Northern Ireland	0808 808 1677
	Scotland	0808 802 6161
	Isle of Man	01624 668191
Guernsey Bereavement Service	Guernsey	01481 257778
Community Bereavement Service	Jersey	01534 285144.

## Domestic Abuse

Women's Aid - <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Support for Men - <https://refuge.org.uk/i-need-help-now/other-support-services/support-for-men/>

## Racism and hate crime

The following organisations do not directly provide emotional or counselling support, but can offer advice, advocacy and signposting to further help.

Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS) advises and assists individuals on issues relating to equality and human rights across England, Scotland and Wales.

Phone: 0808 800 0082

<https://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com>

The Monitoring Group is a UK organisation that provides support to victims of race and religious hate crime through the provision of information, advice, advocacy, and representation.

<https://tmg-uk.org>

Stop Hate UK provides independent and confidential support to people affected by hate crime and discrimination based on identity.

[www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)

Mind provides advice and support on a range of topics including types of mental health problems, legislation and details of local help and support in England and Wales.

Phone: 0300 123 3393 (weekdays 9am - 6pm)

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/racism-and-mental-health>

Liberate is an organisation providing a safe and inclusive space for people to meet across the Channel Islands, services include provision of mental health and wellbeing support.

<https://liberate.je>

### **Who should I contact if I need more immediate support?**

If you or someone is at immediate risk of harm:

- Call 999
- Go to or ask someone to take you to your nearest Accident and Emergency department (A&E)
- Call your GP to set up an emergency appointment, when booking an appointment, you must advise the surgery that you are feeling suicidal.
- Also contact someone you trust once you have taken one of the above steps, if possible don't suffer on your own.

For non-emergency situations:

- Speak to your GP
- England, Wales and Scotland can also call NHS 111
- Northern Ireland call Lifeline 0808 808 8000
- Jersey [www.gov.je/Health/Mental/pages/mentalhealthnetwork.aspx](http://www.gov.je/Health/Mental/pages/mentalhealthnetwork.aspx)
- Guernsey [www.gov.gg/article/160426/Mental-Health](http://www.gov.gg/article/160426/Mental-Health)
- Alderney [www.imc-alderney.com/2021/11/05/mental-health](http://www.imc-alderney.com/2021/11/05/mental-health)
- Isle of Man [www.gov.im/categories/caring-and-support/mental-health-service/](http://www.gov.im/categories/caring-and-support/mental-health-service/)
- For emotional support call the Samaritans on freephone 116 123 available 24/7

### **Who can I turn to if I was a victim of a crime and/or if I am unsure about reporting it?**

Contact Victim Support who are dedicated to support people affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

- England and Wales <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>
- Northern Ireland <https://www.victimsupportni.com/>
- Scotland <https://victimsupport.scot/>
- Guernsey <https://www.victimsupport.gg/>
- Jersey <https://www.victimfirst.je/>
- Isle of Man <https://victimsupport.im/>