



RCN UK REPRESENTATIVES AUTUMN CONFERENCE 2025

The Queens Hotel, Leeds | 30 - 31 October | Programme

Purpose of the Conference

The RCN UK Joint Reps Conference is a great opportunity to meet other reps and Committee Members that you can share ideas with, learn from and find out what is happening in your area. This learning event is for all reps, regardless of experience.

Gain the skills, knowledge and contacts you need to be active in your rep role.

DAY ONE

12.00

Registration, lunch, exhibition and networking

During this time there will be information stands and staff available to answer your questions. Members of your UK representative committees and the Trade Union Committee want to hear from you during the conference. Come and meet them, share your priorities as a rep, and let them know what support and resources you need in your rep role.

13.00

Welcome and opening remarks from the Chair

13.10

Welcome to Yorkshire & The Humber Region

Peter Davies, Vice Chair UK Stewards Committee and Steward and Health & Safety Rep - Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

13.20

Your union; your voice

A welcome and brief overview of how your experience in the workplace can support the work of the RCN rep committees.

	<p>Don't forget you can meet your committee members and find out more by visiting their stand in the exhibition area throughout the conference.</p>
13.30	<p>Update on pay across the UK</p> <p>Colin Poolman, Executive Director of RCN Scotland</p>
14.15	<p>Bank Rates Across the UK</p> <p>Brian Morton, RCN Associate Director, Employment Relations Vicky Hood, Employment Relations Officer, RCN</p> <p>This session provides guidance for reps working with and supporting members with issues arising from working on an NHS bank. Learn how to recognise when working on the bank can undermine NHS pay, terms and conditions, understand your rights and explore practical steps members and reps can take to address issues with the organisation and resolve concerns effectively.</p>
15.00	<p>Update on nursing profiles</p> <p>Daniel Heppell, RCN England Pay, Terms and Conditions Lead Kelly Andrews, Wales Pay, Terms and Conditions – Delivery Lead</p>
15.30	<p>Break with exhibition viewing</p>
16.00	<p>Employment Rights Act Update</p> <p>Dominic Trendall, Senior Public Affairs Adviser, RCN Seamus Colclough, Senior Policy Adviser, RCN</p> <p>Latest on the Employment Rights Act. Q&A</p>
16.35	<p>RCN Agenda Committee</p> <p>Linda Bailey, Chair of Congress</p>

	<p>How do we decide what to discuss and debate at RCN Congress? Hear from Linda Bailey, Chair of Congress about how to have your voice heard and shape the agenda for Congress so that we discuss the issues that matter to your members.</p>
17.10	<p>Closing remarks from the Chair</p>
17.15-18.00	<p>Optional Fringe Workplace Incivility</p> <p>Bruno Daniel, Inclusion Lead, RCN</p> <p>Get ready to dive into an interactive and hands-on experience that goes beyond the basics! In this session, we'll collaboratively unpack the nuances of workplace incivility and its effects.</p> <p>Explore the principles of compassionate leadership (West, 2021) and how fostering empathic concern can transform our work environments. Through lively discussions, and practical exercises, you'll not only enhance your understanding of incivility but also gain valuable tools to lead with compassion and create a more respectful and supportive workplace.</p>
19.00	<p>Welcome drink – pick up your complimentary soft drink</p>
19.30	<p>RCN President's Address</p> <p>Bejoy Sebastian, RCN President</p>
19.40	<p>Dinner served</p>
21.00-21.30	<p>End of dinner</p>

DAY TWO

9.00	Opening remarks from the Chair
9.10	The many faces of discrimination – RCN wins for members Discrimination in the workplace wears many faces — race, gender, disability, class, sexuality — and often, a range of different factors collide in ways that make it harder to see, prove, and stop. In this session, Michelle Cox, a former senior nurse who successfully won a landmark racial discrimination case shares 23 "missed opportunities" — moments where action could have prevented escalation. Reps will be invited to explore these turning points and rethink how they challenge discrimination in the workplace. Michelle Cox, Race Equality Consultant Emma Greenbank, RCN Senior Legal Officer
10.10	Reducing violence and aggression in the workplace Helen Metcalfe, Advanced Practitioner, Emergency Department, Salford Care Org, Northern Care Alliance Work related violence against nursing staff is a significant workplace safety issue, highlighted in the RCN report on corridor care. In this session, Helen will present the Safe HAvEn initiative to tackle work related violence in her emergency department, including increasing reporting rates and police support. You'll be invited to consider how learning from this initiative can be shared in your organisation, to ensure that your employer is being equally proactive in tackling work related violence.
11.00	Refreshment break
11.30	Activism Academy update: Supporting and Empowering RCN Reps Rhian Wheeler, Trade Union Committee and Joint Chair, RCN Reps Project George Woods, Associate Director, Activism Academy Karen Carberry, Head of Activist Learning & Development

Becki Winson, Lead for Activist Communities
Stuart McMillan, Digital Communications Officer

This session provides an update on some key work projects being led the Activism Academy, the UK Reps Committees and the Trade Union Committee, to support and empower reps to be active in winning for members in their workplace. We'll feature an update on the Reps Project; the RCN Activism Strategy; New Rep Connect and the new RCN Activism app; and new investment in reps learning and development opportunities.

12.30

Lunch and exhibition

Time for a lunch break which runs from 12.30-14.00. Visit the exhibition, meet your national committees and RCN staff to ask questions and pick up resources, then join a fringe event of your choice.

FRINGE EVENTS 13.00-13.50

Choose from the following fringe events (spaces are limited and offered on a first come first served basis):

Fringe 1

Industrial Action – focus group

Professor Sian Moore, Deputy Dean of Research and Innovation at Anglia Ruskin University, is leading a research project on the wave of public sector strikes in 2022–2023-exploring the experience and perceptions of workers involved in industrial action in rail, teaching, the civil service as well as the NHS. They are running a focus group at the conference to hear from RCN reps about their perceptions of that time.

Expressions of interest and participants will be confirmed in advance of the conference to ensure a diversity of experience is captured.

Professor Sian Moore, Deputy Dean of Research and Innovation, Anglia Ruskin University

Minjie Cai, Associate Professor in Human Resource Management, University of Birmingham

Fringe 2

Alliance in Action: Keeping Prisoner Workers ‘Safe Inside’

Working with other unions to bring about change and showcasing how the professional and trade unions arms of the RCN work together, using the Joint Unions in Prisons Alliance (JUPA) as an illustrative example.

Louise Church, Senior National Officer, Health, Safety and Wellbeing, RCN

Paul Bridges, Head of Further Education, University and College Union

Fringe 3

Organising to challenge hidden exploitation in social care

This session will explore how organising can challenge hidden exploitation in social care. Find out how RCN members organised and stopped their employer from deducting more than £2,500 from wages for skilled worker visas.

Clare Jacobs, National Officer, Employment Relations

Kam Mak, Immigration Adviser, RCN

Adam Hardman, Senior Digital Organising Co-ordinator, RCN

14.00

Chair's welcome back

14.10	Closing Address and Q&A - RCN General Secretary & Chief Executive Professor Nicola Ranger
14.50	Closing remarks from the Chair
15.00	Conference closes