



RCN Women's Health Forum Conference 2025

RCN HQ, London

Tuesday 9 December 2025

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Welcome letter

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and the RCN Women's Health Forum, welcome to the RCN Women's Health Forum Conference 2025-What is "normal"? Hormonal chaos: a life course approach.

We trust that you will find the conference stimulating and informative and that you'll have an opportunity to network with colleagues during the course of the event. We hope you will go away feeling inspired and invigorated and armed with information to share with colleagues in your workplace.

The RCN believes in life-long learning and actively promotes the continuing professional development of nurses. For this reason, certificates of attendance can be downloaded post-conference. You are encouraged to contribute attendance at RCN events towards your framework for reflection which can be included in your portfolio.

You will receive an email with a link to the online conference evaluation. We'd be grateful if you would complete this as soon as possible and within seven days of the conference. Your comments and feedback are invaluable in helping us plan future RCN conferences.

The RCN has professional forums across the diverse nursing arena and RCN members can join as many of these forums as they wish. With 202105 forum members, forum membership is set to continue to rise. Forums are a huge area of influence and direction for the RCN and are a valuable opportunity to network with colleagues around the UK and be involved in:

- consultation responses
- conferences, events and workshops
- forum-led publications.

We'd like to thank you for supporting this conference and look forward to welcoming you back to future RCN events. A full listing of future events can be found on page 11 of this brochure.

With best wishes,
RCN Events

Programme at a glance

| Programme at a glance | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 09.30 | Registration, networking and refreshments |
| 10.00 | Opening remarks <i>Ruth Bailey QN, Women's Health Forum Committee Chair; Advanced Nurse Practitioner Sexual Health, Primary Care, FSRH Council Nurse Member</i> |
| 10.15 | Women's Health Hubs and Neighbourhood Care - new models for delivering women's healthcare <i>Dr Sue Mann, National Clinical Director Women's Health, NHS England</i> |
| 10.45 | Menstrual Dysfunction and the role of the Just a Period campaign <i>Emily James, Health Education Manager, Wellbeing of Women</i> |
| 11.15 | Refreshments, exhibition viewing and networking |
| 11.45 | PCOS: The Story From Both Sides <i>Charlotte Glynn, Vice Chair of the RCN Women's Health Forum, Research and Innovation Nurse/Lead Nurse, BPAS</i> |
| 12.15 | Bridging Gaps: Women's Health and Inclusion Health in Practice <i>Kendra Schneller, Lead Kofoworola Abeni Pratt Fellow, The Nightingale Academy, Chief Nurse's Office and Kirit Sehmbi, Homeless & Inclusion Health Project Lead, The Queen's Institute of Community Nursing</i> |
| 12.45 | Lunch and exhibition viewing |
| 13.45 | Empowering Choices: The Future of Contraception <i>Simphiwe Sesane, Medical Educator, Exeltis UK, Founder and CEO: Black Nurses and Midwives UK</i> |
| 14.15 | Rewriting the Narrative: Menopause as a New Beginning <i>Debra Holloway, Retired Nurse Consultant</i> |
| 14.45 | Refreshments, exhibition viewing and networking |
| 15.15 | The Live Debate – "Should more funding for women's health be protected in the national budget, or are there other, more important priorities?" Speaking for: <i>Emma Ayling, Matron for Fertility and Gynaecology Services, Cambridge University Hospitals</i> Speaking against: <i>Michael Nevill, Clinical Director, NUPAS and RCN Women's Health Forum Steering Committee Member</i> |
| 16.00 | Closing remarks <i>Charlotte Glynn, Vice Chair of the RCN Women's Health Forum, Research and Innovation Nurse/Lead Nurse</i> |
| 16.10 | Conference close |

General information

Conference enquiries

Please ask staff on the registration desk if you have any specific requirements regarding access, lost property or have queries regarding your membership.

Delegate Badges

For security purposes, participants must wear their badges at all times. Participants will not be admitted to the conference sessions without the appropriate badge.

Programme

Please refer to the programme for details of the times and locations of all conference sessions. Staff will be on hand to guide you as necessary.

Exhibition

There is an exhibition running alongside this event. These exhibitors have chosen to exhibit at this conference as they feel their products and/or services may be of interest to you. The exhibition also supports the conference, therefore please take the time to go and visit each exhibition stand during the exhibition viewing times.

Receipts

If you require a receipt or have any queries relating to your registration or payment for this event, please contact staff on the registration desk at the event. Alternatively, receipts are also available by contacting RCN Event Registrations direct on 029 2054 6460 between 9.00am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

Specific requirements

Please ask at the registration/enquiries desk if you have any specific requirements (e.g. dietary, accessibility etc.)

Electronic devices

Out of courtesy to others, delegates are requested to switch off or set to silent all electronic devices during conference sessions.

Liability

The RCN will not accept any liability for loss or damage to personal effects which may arise as a result of attendance at this event.

Continuing Professional Development

The Royal College of Nursing believes in lifelong learning and actively promotes the continuing professional development of all nurses. Authorised Royal College of Nursing certificates of attendance have been issued to all participants. This event is also subject to the RCN Events quality assurance framework. You should log what you have learnt at this event using the Framework for Reflection guidelines on the back of your certificate and keep this document in your personal professional portfolio.

Free information at your fingertips

The Royal College of Nursing offers a number of FREE online resources with all the latest information and guidance on particular nursing practice issues such as: clinical guidelines, patient safety and eHealth. Visit <http://www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice> for more information.

National conference partner

LV= General Insurance, one of the UK's largest personal lines insurers, pride themselves in putting customers at the heart of all they do. RCN members can benefit from exclusive* discounts and savings on a range of LV= insurance products, including Car and Home insurance, for a quote and more information visit LV.com/RCN.

*Exclusive RCN member discount vs general public prices on lv.com and through the call centre



Acknowledgement and thanks

Events management team

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Liz Savage | RCN Corporate Events Organiser |
| Sarah Stephenson | RCN Events Administrator |

RCN AV management team

Conference planning committee

RCN Women's Health Forum

Speaker biographies

Debby Holloway, Retired Nurse Consultant

Talk title: Rewriting the Narrative: Menopause as a New Beginning

Summary:

There is a significant amount of discussion and, at times, confusion surrounding menopause and the appropriate care women should receive during this stage of life. With the increasing influence of social media, both women and nurses are often exposed to information that may not always be accurate, current or reliable.

Social media platforms have become a common source of information about menopause. However, the quality and accuracy of this information can be questionable, leading to misunderstandings about menopause and its management among both women experiencing symptoms and the nurses who support them.

This session aims to strip away the confusion and return to the basics. The focus will be on lifestyle interventions that can offer relief from menopause symptoms and support women's health in the long term. As women now often live for 30 to 40 years after the onset of menopause, it is essential to understand how these interventions can help maintain health and wellbeing throughout these years.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the session participants should be able to

1. identify the different stages on menopause
2. Describe symptoms and long-term consequences of menopause
3. Discuss simple lifestyle interventions that may help women with symptom management and long-term health benefits

Recommended reading list/references:

1. <https://thebms.org.uk/publications/tools-for-clinicians/>
2. <https://www.imsociety.org/education/world-menopause-day-2025/resources/#whitepaper>
3. <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/rcn-menopause-rcn-guidance-uk-pub-012-073>

Biography

Debby Holloway MBE, FRCN, FRCOG) is a retired Nurse Consultant in gynaecology whose career in women's health spanned 36 years. she held the role of Nurse Hysteroscopist, managing a clinical caseload that encompassed menstrual issues, menopause, outpatient procedures, as well as supporting women experiencing bleeding disorders and various gynaecological conditions. Debby remains actively involved as a menopause specialist, offering her expertise and guidance in this area. She has led the gynaecology nursing course at KCL and has published both books and articles in relation

to women's health. She was the chair of the RCN women's health forum and still works with the forum on projects and publications

Dr Sue Mann, National Clinical Director Women's Health, NHS England

Talk title: Women's Health Hubs and Neighbourhood Care - new models for delivering women's healthcare

Summary:

This presentation will describe women's health hubs, how they have evolved and their future in relation to new neighbourhood models of care.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the session participants should be able to

1. What a women's health hub is and is not
2. Advantages, barriers and challenges of women's health hubs
3. What is needed to realise the potential

Biography

Dr Sue Mann FFPHM MRCOG MFSRH is the National Clinical Director in Women's Health for NHS England. She has previously held national roles at Public Health England and Department of Health and Social Care and in all these roles she has consistently driven a population, integrated and outcome-based approach to delivery of women's healthcare across the system. She is also a Clinical Consultant in Northeast London where she is lead for delivery of a Women's Health Hub.

Simphiwe Sesane , Medical Educator, Exeltis UK, Founder and CEO: Black Nurses and Midwives UK

Talk title: Empowering Choices: The Future of Contraception

Summary:

This will be centred around what methods are currently available and how we can counsel our patients to ensure they are empowered when making decisions around their methods of choice. Also looking at the future and what is on the horizons.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the session participants should be able to

1. Identify what methods are available in the UK

2. Explore the current contraceptive landscape and how we can better support contraceptive counselling
3. Discuss what is on the horizon

Biography

Simphiwe Sesane is a Medical Educator for Exeltis UK and an experienced Contraception and Sexual Health Nurse Consultant, a College of Sexual and Reproductive Health (CoSRH) and Bayer Trainer. She is also the Founder and CEO of Black Nurses & Midwives UK.

From 2012 to date, Simphiwe has worked as a Nurse in Sexual and Reproductive Health & HIV Services, with a passion for Women's Health. She has been active in Health Advocacy, Education and Clinical Research.

She has a special interest in Contraception, Menopause, Black Maternal Health and improving Sexual and Reproductive Health access for marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Simphiwe prides herself with the ability to empower individuals with choice.

Charlotte Glynn, Vice Chair of the RCN Women's Health Forum, Research and Innovation Nurse/Lead Nurse -BPAS

Talk title: PCOS: The Story from Both Sides

Summary:

This session will provide a comprehensive overview of PCOS, highlighting the multifaceted clinical, metabolic, and psychosocial implications, from the unique perspective of someone who is both a nurse and a patient.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the session participants should be able to

1. Identify common PCOS symptoms and potential long-term complications of the condition.
2. Demonstrate effective communication and counseling strategies with patients and colleagues.
3. Appreciate emerging research and innovations on PCOS.

Biography

Charlotte is an Adult Nurse specialising in sexual and reproductive health, with over eight years' experience in abortion care, LARC provision, safeguarding, and health equity. She works as both a Lead Nurse and Research and Innovation Nurse at BPAS, supporting telemedical services, complex care pathways, and projects exploring the expanding role of nurses and midwives in abortion care.

She is Vice Chair of the RCN Women's Health Forum Steering Committee and contributes to national publications, competency frameworks, and NIHR collaborations. Awarded RCN Forum Member of the Year 2024, she regularly presents on abortion care,

vulnerability, and women's health nursing.

Emily James, Health Education Manager - Wellbeing of Women

Talk title: Menstrual dysfunction and the role of the Just a Period campaign

Summary:

Most women experience approximately monthly periods for around 40 years of their lives. Therefore, menstrual health is fundamental to overall wellbeing.

Menstrual dysfunction - for example menorrhagia, dysmenorrhoea, polymenorrhoea - is a significant health problem adversely impacting girl's and women's lives, including their ability to fully participate in education, work, family life and social life. Hence failing to recognise and resolve menstrual ill-health has consequences not limited to individual women but felt by her family, community and wider society.

Additionally, delayed diagnosis can lead to more advanced or complex cases of gynaecological conditions, which become harder to treat with associated socio-economic costs.

Despite this, research by Wellbeing of Women shows problems with menstruation have been normalised and are often ignored, tolerated or dismissed. Women are suffering in silence with shame and stigma still huge issues in menstrual health. The "Just a Period" campaign and "Period Symptom Checker" support women and girls to understand their periods and empower them to seek treatment if needed.

Nurses can play a crucial role in normalising conversations about menstrual health; providing medically accurate information about the physical, psychological, social and personal aspects of menstruation; and recognising symptoms of menstrual dysfunction with onward action as appropriate.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the session participants should be able to

1. List at least three common barriers that prevent women and girls from seeking help for menstrual dysfunction, and share an example you have observed in practice
2. Accurately describe the purpose and key features of the Period Symptom Checker and explain two ways it empowers women and girls to seek treatment for menstrual dysfunction
3. Identify and explain at least three practical strategies that nurses can use to support women's menstrual health

Recommended reading list/references:

1. Wellbeing of Women, 2025. "Just a Period" – Calling time on heavy and painful periods. <https://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/news/just-a-period-calling-time-on-heavy-and-painful-periods/>

2. Royal College of Nursing, 2025. Promoting Menstrual Wellbeing. Third edition.
<https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/promoting-menstrual-wellbeing-uk-pub-012-123>
3. Women and Equalities Committee, 2024. Women's reproductive health conditions.
<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/7865/womens-reproductive-health-conditions/publications/>

Biography

Emily James is the Health Education Manager at Wellbeing of Women. Emily has over 15 years healthcare experience and offers a diverse range of insights having held roles in communications, public affairs, education and as a registered nurse. Within reproductive and gynaecological health Emily previously worked within the communications teams at the RCOG and at MSI Reproductive Choices. As a nurse she worked in acute care of the elderly and complex discharges at UCLH, before moving into hospice-based palliative care. Emily is passionate about providing health information that is evidence-based, fills knowledge gaps and shows compassion for peoples lived experiences.

Krit Sehmbi, Homeless & Inclusion Health Network Lead - QICN

Talk title: Bridging Gaps: Womens Health and Inclusion Health in Practice

Summary:

An exploration of some of the challenges and barriers that women from marginalised and minoritised communities face when accessing health care services. Expect an interactive session with ideas on embedding inclusivity into your practice.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the session participants should be able to

1. Identify some social determinants of health.
2. Identify ways of improving inclusivity for patients in your workplace.

Biography

Kirit has spent 14+ years nursing in the community, specifically in organisations and projects aimed at improving accessibility to healthcare for vulnerable adults. This has included street outreach, running clinics in soup kitchens, hostels and temporary accommodation for asylum seekers.

Kirit now leads the national network for Homeless & Inclusion Health at the QICN, supporting other practitioners working in this field.

Exhibitors

The following organisations have supported the RCN Women's Health Conference but have not had any input into the agenda, content or materials of the event.

The Royal College of Nursing would like to thank the following organisations for supporting this event.

| Name | Website |
|-------------------------|--|
| Besins Healthcare | www.besinshealthcare.co.uk |
| Derma UK | www.dermauk.co.uk |
| Dermal Laboratories Ltd | www.dermal.co.uk |
| Gedeon Richter UK | www.gedeonrichter.com/uk/en |
| Procure Health | www.procurehealth.com |
| The YES YES Company Ltd | www.yesyesyes.org |

The RCN welcomes sponsorship from the health care industry to deliver educational initiatives and events for the nursing profession. Financial support is accepted where there is clear alignment in objectives and strong grounds that the collaboration will add value to the RCN's educational offer.

The RCN works to ensure that all commercial activity is ethical, mutually beneficial and complies with the Bribery Act and relevant codes of practice e.g. Association of British Pharmaceutical Industries and Association of British Healthcare Industries.

Sponsorship or exhibition led activity does not imply endorsement by the RCN of any products and services displayed by the sponsors or exhibitors at an RCN event.

Supporters

The Royal College of Nursing would like to thank the following for supporting this event.



Macey SRH provide training on Contraception, Sexual Health and Menopause for HCPs and are approved by the CoSRH to provide their Essentials courses.

Our company was founded by a GPN and we ensure that training is delivered by clinicians who value both the theoretical and practical clinical skills required to provide excellent patient care.

We make a donation to a women's health charity for every course we deliver.

Please take a look at what we can offer you at www.maceysrh.co.uk or contact us at admin@maceysrh.co.uk



- [Menopause Matters](#)
- [The British Society of Abortion Care Providers \(BSACP\)](#)

Future RCN Events

| Date | Event | Location |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 15 December | Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Conference | RCN HQ, London |
| 14 March | RCN Ophthalmic Nursing Conference | RCN HQ, London |
| 15 – 16 April | RCN Education Forum Conference | University of Exeter |
| 29 April | RCN Management and Leadership Conference | RCN HQ, London |
| 17 June | RCN Long Term Conditions Conference | Sheffield Hallam University |
| 24 June | RCN Neuroscience Forum Conference | RCN HQ, London |
| 15 – 17 September | RCN International Nursing Research Conference | Strathclyde University, Glasgow |
| 15 December | Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Conference | London, RCN HQ |

For the latest information please visit:

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/events>