RCN Nursing Support Workers' Day Conference 2026
Shining a light and celebrating 25 years

Leading Through Care: Empowering the Nursing Support Workforce

Monday 23 November 2026
RCN HQ, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN and MS Teams

Learning Outcomes

1. **Explain** the principles of compassionate and inclusive leadership and their impact on the nursing support workforce.
2. **Recognise** the vital contributions of nursing support staff to patient safety, quality of care, and team performance.
3. **Demonstrate** effective communication techniques that foster trust, collaboration, and psychological safety within healthcare teams.
4. **Identify** barriers to workforce engagement and develop practical approaches to improve motivation, retention, and job satisfaction.
5. **Promote** a culture of respect, recognition, and continuous learning that empowers nursing support staff to work to the full extent of their roles.
6. **Use** reflective leadership practices to evaluate personal leadership behaviours and identify opportunities for improvement.

Please note these programme details and timings are subject to change. A final programme will be available at the event.

Programme at a glance

10.00	**Registration, networking and refreshments**
10.30	**Facilitators' introduction** Richard 'Dreadlock Alien' Grant (Lead specialist) and Alan 'Kurly' McGeachie (CEO), Memorhyme Ltd – literacy engagement specialists
10.40	**Welcome** Sharon Mitchel, Chair, RCN Nursing Support Workers Committee Ofrah Muflahi, UK Professional Lead Nursing Support Workers, RCN Launch of Nursing Support Workers' Day video

10.50	**Leading change together** Professor Nicola Ranger, General Secretary and Chief Executive, RCN Presentation of memorabilia from SJ Stock, Nursing Support Worker Committee - Eastern Representative
11.10	**Leadership starts with you** Bejoy Sebastian, President, RCN
11.20	**The Courage to Care, The Confidence to Lead** Vanessa Coelho, Head of Nursing Leadership, RCN
11.40	**Refreshments and exhibition viewing**
12.10	**Leading with compassion and courage** Ian Peate, Editor in Chief British Journal of Nursing, Consultant Editor International Journal for Advancing Practice, Consultant Editor Journal of Paramedic Practice, Editorial Board member British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, Author
12.40	**The Accidental leader: How I went from HCA to leading a National Committee Without a Magic Wand** Sharon Mitchel, Chair, RCN Nursing Support Workers Committee and HCSW Practice Educator, Milton Keynes University Hospital
13.10	**Lunch and exhibition viewing**
14.00	**More Than a Support Role: Finding Your Voice, Growing Your Confidence and Creating Impact** Sarah Omode, Care Home Assistant Practitioner/ Student Nursing Associate, The Orchard Nursing Home (Caring Homes)
14.30	**"Uncle Mike" A Brief History of Learning Disability Nursing** Dave Parry, Vice Chair, RCN Nursing Support Workers Committee and Assistant Behavioural Practitioner, Specialist Behavioural Support Service, Learning Disability Services, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
15.00	**Refreshments and exhibition viewing**
15.20	**Navigating sustainability – Enhancing nursing practice through small changes** Rose Gallagher MBE, Professional Lead for Sustainability, RCN
15.40	**Practical Nurses Association of Jamaica (via Teams)**
16.00	**Summary and closing remarks** Mark Jarnell, Member of Council and ex-officio member of the Nursing Support Workers Committee Sharon Mitchel, Chair, RCN Nursing Support Workers Committee
16.10	**Conference close**

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