Royal College of Nursing




# RCN Student Ambassador conference 2026

RCN HQ, London

Wednesday 18 November 2026

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# Welcome letter

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), welcome to the RCN Student Ambassador Conference 2026 – Breaking Boundaries: The power of the student voice.

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 213,305 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 | |
|---|---|
| 10.00 | Registration, exhibition, networking and refreshments |
| 10.30 | Chair's opening remarks<br>Ben White, Chair of Students Committee |
| 10.40 | Icebreaker<br>Will Malcher, RCN Professional Lead for Students |
| 10:50 | Breaking Boundaries: Finding Your Voice and Leading Change<br>Dr Theresa Porrett (PhD, MSc, RN, FRCN), Strategic Project Manager, Coloplast/ASCN UK |
| 11.30 | Refreshments and exhibition viewing 30mins |
| 12:00 | Q&A Panel: What I learned from being a student ambassador |
| 12:45 | Workshop 1 - Building your local student networks: how to get commitment<br>Safiah Fardin, RCN Activist Engagement Officer<br>Supported by: Hayden Miller, Student Ambassador and Chinenye Adediran, Student Ambassador |
| 13.30 | Lunch and exhibition viewing 45mins |
| 14.15 | How can I engage with the independent sector as a student nurse?<br>Rumer Gray, RCN Interim Lead Nurse for Independent Health and Social Care |
| 14:45 | Workshop 2 - What will my legacy be from being a Student Ambassador?<br>Lorna Mayles, RCN UK Head of Students and Kings Nursing Cadets |
| 15:15 | Closing remarks<br>Prof. David Clarke, RCN Associate Director of Education |
| 15.30 | 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.

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To find out more, visit LV.com/RCN




## Quilter Financial Advisers

Quilter Financial Advisers are leading industry specialists in the NHS Pension Scheme as well as all aspects of retirement and general savings and financial planning. Whether you're confused about changes to your pension, understanding your Total Reward Statement, or you are buying a house, or need advice on inheritance tax and estate planning, Quilter Financial Advisers can help.

All RCN members are entitled to a free initial private consultation with a professional financial adviser so come and see us at our stand to find out more and book your free initial consultation.

To find out more, visit, quilter.com/rcn/

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## PG Mutual

PG Mutual specialise in providing Income Protection Insurance to healthcare professionals should they be unable to work due to illness or injury. We understand the market inside out as we've been providing Income Protection for almost 100 years.

RCN members are entitled to a 20% discount on their first two years' Income Protection Plus premiums.

To find out more and to get a quote visit pgmutual.co.uk/RCN



# Acknowledgement and thanks


**RCN Events management team**

| | |
|---|---|
| Kim Hawley | Events Organiser |
| Sarah Stephenson | Events and Marketing Administrator |

**RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence**

| | |
|---|---|
| Will Malcher | Professional Lead for Students |
| Lorna Mayles | Head of Students and RCN King's Nursing Cadets |

The Institute Administration team

**RCN Governance department**

| | |
|---|---|
| Patrice Chorlette Miller | Governance Administrator |

**RCN Students committee**

| | |
|---|---|
| Allycn Omoniyi | Committee member |
| Beyonce Morris | Committee member |
| Felix Adesanya | Committee member |
| Genevieve Twining | Committee member |
| Kenechukwu Udez | Committee member |
| Lorraine Greathead | Committee member |
| Mordecai Akoh | Committee member |
| Phillip Smallcombe | Committee member |
| Victor Adedeji-Johnson | Committee member |
| Victor Plant | Committee member |

# Speaker biographies

## Ben White - Acting Chair, RCN Students Committee

**Talk Title:** Chair's opening remarks

**Summary**

A welcome from the RCN Students Committee to the RCN Student Ambassador Conference.

**Learning outcomes:**

By the end of the session, student ambassadors should be able to identify the key campaigns of the RCN Students Committee and know how to get involved.

**Recommended reading list/references:**

1. The Future of Nursing: https://www.futureofnursing.uk/
2. RCN Students Committee Elections: https://www.rcn.org.uk/Get-Involved/RCN-elections-and-appointments/Current-RCN-elections-and-appointments/Students-Committee-elections

**Biography:**

Ben is a third-year Mental Health & Learning Disability Nursing student at the University of Derby. Ben has been a support worker and campaigner in mental health care since 2013, following his experiences of depression and anxiety. As a campaigner, Ben's key achievements include collecting evidence and speaking at the launch of the Future in Mind report, which led to a £1.25 billion increase in CAMHS and being a Regional Coordinator for Time to Change. Ben is passionate about improving conditions for nursing students and staff so they can provide the best possible standards of care.

## Will Malcher – Professional Lead for Students (UK)

Will is a senior nurse, associate lecturer and researcher in infectious diseases. He received the Florence Nightingale Award for his work on COVID 19. Will empowers student nurses through leadership, activism and inclusion. He amplifies student voices, supports networks and shapes strategic engagement across the UK, inspiring the next generation.

## Dr Terri Porrett - Strategic Project Manager, Coloplast/ASCN UK

**Talk Title:** Breaking Boundaries: Finding your Voice and Leading Change

### Summary

This session will explore:

- The importance and value of the voice of nursing within quality improvement and service delivery
- The impact of traditional nursing language and the oversimplification of ‘care’ which has devalued nursing
- Do we really have the confidence to 'advocate' for ourselves and our patients?
- No doesn’t mean never - I built my career on this premise
- We will explore the concept of being BRAVE and why its ok to be proud of what you and the nursing profession can do…

### Learning outcomes:

1. Describe the perceived barriers to speaking up and using your voice
2. Be aware of strategies which challenge the No culture
3. Identify ways in which you can break boundaries to challenge and lead improvement.

### Recommended reading list/references:

1. https://apollonursingresource.com/talk-to-others-about-my-work/speaking-up-for-my-service/

### Biography:

Terri was a ward sister at St. Marks Hospital London before joining Homerton University Hospital NHSFT in 1991 as a CNS in Stoma Care. Terri worked at the Homerton as Nurse Consultant and was Clinical Director of the Northeast London Bowel Cancer Screening Centre. She has co-edited two textbooks and published extensively in medical Colorectal and nursing Gastrointestinal Journals. Since 2011 Theresa has been leading educational programmes for specialist stoma care nurses and although UK based has taught and been invited to speak in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Canada, throughout Europe, Gaza and Israel. She is the immediate past Vice Chair of Council, Royal College of Nursing and was the Council member for the Eastern Region. Terri was appointed a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing in 2026.

## Safiah Fardin - Activist Engagement Officer, RCN

**Talk Title:** Building your local student networks: how to get commitment

### Summary

How do we have transformative conversations to get the commitment we need to act together on the issues that matter to us? We will play a game that demonstrates the art of securing a commitment, what makes a good and bad organising conversation and how conversations are at the core of what you need to build thriving local student networks.

### Learning outcomes:

1. https://commonslibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/Organizers_Handbook.pdf

### Biography:

Safiah (she/her), Activist Engagement Officer is working with members on how to organise to tackle equalities issues in nursing. Her background is community organising in the Northeast of England and working with nursing staff to tackle racism in the NHS.

## Hayden Miller – Adult and Mental Health Nursing Student

### Biography:

Hayden is an Adult and Mental Health Nursing Student in Southampton and is leading a project on student activism in the Southeast.

Hayden joined the RCN in his first-year, and since then has been passionate about exploring placement issues and how they affect students. He believes that placements should be a key learning opportunity for nursing students to develop their knowledge, skills and values. He is keen to get more student nurses involved in activism!

## Chinenye Adediran - Adult Nursing student and NHS Healthcare Assistant

### Biography:

Chinenye Adediran is a second-year Adult Nursing student, NHS Healthcare Assistant and RCN Student Ambassador. They support student recruitment and engagement and facilitate the RCN Ambassadors community on the activism app. As a member of the Council of Deans of Health Student Advisory Network, they also contribute to discussions on healthcare education and international student support. They are passionate about strengthening student voices and building an inclusive nursing community

## Rumer Gray - Interim Lead Nurse for Independent Health and Social Care, RCN

**Talk Title:** Independent Health and Social Care - As a Student and Beyond

### Summary

Independent Health and Social Care (IHSC) is a diverse sector that employs thousands of nursing staff across a wide range of settings, yet it is often overlooked for student placements or when considering future career opportunities. This session will introduce what IHSC is, challenge common misconceptions, and explore why the sector plays a vital role in delivering high-quality care. Participants will discover how they can engage with IHSC throughout their studies and beyond and how Student Ambassadors can work with the RCN to raise awareness, champion nursing careers, and support fellow students to explore the full range of opportunities available.

### Learning outcomes:

1. Understand more about the diverse career opportunities available in the sector
2. Recognise and challenge misconceptions
3. Identify at least 2 ways to engage with IHSC and the RCN

### Biography:

Rumer is from Sheffield and trained as Nurse in Newcastle before moving to London in 2015. Rumer worked clinically in A&E before moving to the RCN part time as a Regional Officer in 2020. Initially working across the two settings, Rumer became full time at the RCN in 2024 and is currently the Interim Lead Nurse for Independent Health and Social Care in London.

## Lorna Mayles - UK Head of Students and King's Nursing Cadets, The Royal College of Nursing

**Talk Title:** Workshop: What will my legacy be from being a Student Ambassador?

### Summary

our legacy is not defined by what you did, but by the positive difference you made to others and the lasting impact you leave behind.

This reflective and interactive workshop will encourage Student Ambassadors to consider the lasting impact they can have beyond their individual activities and achievements. Participants will explore how their actions, behaviours, leadership and support for others contribute to a personal legacy that influences future students, their university community and their own professional development.

### Learning outcomes:

1. By the end of the session, participants will be able to define their personal Student Ambassador legacy statement and set one achievable goal that contributes to this legacy, including a clear timeframe for completion before the end of the academic year.

### Biography:

Lorna Mayles is a passionate educator, nurse advocate, and strategic leader currently working as Head of Students and RCN King's Nursing Cadets at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN). With extensive experience in healthcare education and mentorship, she has been instrumental in inspiring the next generation of nurses through innovative leadership programmes and student engagement initiatives.

Under Lorna's guidance, the RCN King's Nursing Cadet Programme introduces young people to the values, skills, and opportunities within the nursing profession. Her work focuses on developing opportunities which nurture confidence, professionalism, and compassion among future healthcare leaders while promoting inclusivity and diversity across the nursing pipeline.

Lorna's career reflects a deep commitment to education, collaborative working and equality. She has held senior roles in higher education, system leadership and strategic engagement, championing collaboration between the NHS, Further Education colleges, Universities, and the voluntary sector to create accessible and meaningful career pathways in health and social care.

## Professor Dave Clarke – Associate Director for Education

Dave worked in higher education for 24 years before joining the RCN in 2022 to head up the (now) King's Cadet Scheme. He has held roles at Cardiff University, the University of West of England and the University of Leicester where, as professor, he developed the university's first nursing programme. Dave has published internationally and continues to be an editorial board member for health care journals.

# Exhibitors

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

RCN Library

RCN Member Support Services

RCN Forums

IHSC

RCN Learn

Activism Academy

# Future RCN Events

| Date | Event | Location |
|---|---|---|
| 23 November | RCN Nursing Support Workers' Day Conference 2026 | London, RCN HQ |
| 27 November | Occupational Health Conference | Online/London, RCN HQ |
| 8 December | Women's Health Conference | London, RCN HQ |
| 23 February | RCN Perioperative Care Conference 2027 | London, RCN HQ |
| 8 March | International Womens Day | RCN HQ/Virtual |
| 13 March | Flight Nurse Conference | RCN HQ |
| 18-19 March | UK Joint Reps' Conference | Queens Leeds |
| 10-April | Ophthalmic Conference | RCN HQ |
| 24-27-May | Congress 2027 | ACC Liverpool |
| June | Student Festival | Date & Location TBC |

For the latest information please visit:

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