

Cancer Forum Annual Report - 2025

Name of Forum Chair: Hayley Leonard

Name of Professional Lead: Callum Metcalfe-O'Shea

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Forum Name & Introduction:

The Cancer Forum supports nursing staff across all clinical settings who care for individuals living with and beyond cancer. Our work spans prevention, screening, treatment, and the interface with palliative care, with representation from NHS, private, third sector, and academic professionals across all four UK nations.

In 2025, we focused on strengthening stakeholder relationships and expanding inclusive support initiatives, such as:

- Continued engagement and collaboration with key partners including Macmillan and UKONs.
- Supporting the LGBTQIA+ community through joint initiatives with OUTpatients and UCATs.
- Ensuring appropriate nursing representation at national events, including those with policy impact such as APPGs and national launch events, to strengthen the influence of the forum in shaping cancer care policy and practice.
- Initiated the discussion around creating a Core Cancer Concepts Guide to support non-specialist nurses across diverse clinical environments.

Membership of the forum:

➤ Any trends - Increase/decrease of membership on previous year with commentary on what may have attributed to the change

- Current forum count: 6,844 and first choice: 3,627.
- Last forums count 12 months ago: 6,613 and first choice 12 months ago: 3,515.
- Therefore in 12 months seen increase in forum count of 231 members with an increase in first choice of forum of 112 members – *a 3.5% increase in count overall.*
- Increase attributed to enhanced engagement with members through social media including creating a new blue-sky account, use of MCC, engaging members at congress and providing educational webinars to maximise awareness and visibility of the forum.
- Additionally, many forum committee members and the Professional Lead have attended in-person events to promote the forum and discuss the benefits with members.
- The forum has continued to build external relationships with key organisations such as Macmillan and UKONs to share widely the presence of the forum and how supporting nursing staff working in cancer care, with 2 new committee members joining next year who both work in Macmillan roles.

- Committee membership – vacancies, number of applications this year
 - Chair Continuation: The current Chair and Vice Chair will remain in post, continuing their term.
 - Vacancies and Recruitment: Two vacancies were present on the Steering Committee.
 - Applications and Appointments:
 - Six applications were received.
 - Four candidates were invited to interview.
 - Two candidates were successful and will begin terms in January 2026 (one 4-year, one 2-year).
 - One candidate was placed on the reserve list; one was deemed unsuitable.
 - Committee Status: A full committee, including Chair and Vice Chair, will be in place from January 2026.
 - Nationwide Representation:
 - In 2025, new members from Wales and Northern Ireland joined the committee.
 - As of 2026, a new member from Scotland will join, ensuring representation from all four UK nations.

Reflections on 2024 (Outputs and outcomes)

- FGG projects submitted and approved
 - No Approvals Required: No FGG projects required approval this year.
 - Core Cancer Concepts Project: The main initiative, Core Cancer Concepts, is currently undergoing QA review (with plan to review in 2026). As an online resource, it does not require FGG funding.
- Events (including webinars) and conferences
 - Pain and Palliative Conference: The Professional Lead presented on neuropathic pain in end-of-life care to over 100 attendees, representing the RCN Cancer Forum during the leadership transition (between previous chair departing and new chair starting).
 - Guy's Cancer Centre Visit: The Chair and Professional Lead met with members to explore how the RCN can better support nursing staff in cancer services.
 - APPG Prostate Cancer UK: The Professional Lead and Vice Chair Lauren attended separate APPG sessions focused on overdiagnosis and new diagnostic pathways, ensuring nursing representation in national discussions.
 - National Roundtable Event: Chair, Hayley participated in a roundtable at the Royal College of Radiologists, contributing nursing perspectives to the future NHS Cancer Plan.
 - Prostate Cancer UK Launch Event: Committee member Shannon attended the House of Commons launch of the National Prostate Cancer Audit 2025 State of the Nation Report, representing the nursing voice.
 - OUTpatients Conference: Chair and committee member Mo attended to continue collaboration on inclusive cancer care for the LGBTQIA+ community.
 - Compassionate Cancer Forum: Chair Hayley represented the RCN to ensure future collaborative work with the Compassionate Cancer Forum.
 - Trans Cancer Care Webinar: Delivered in partnership with OUTpatients and UCATs, the webinar focused on inclusive care for trans patients and received positive feedback from 20 attendees.

- C the Signs Webinar: Vice Chair and Professional Lead co-developed and delivered a primary care webinar on early cancer detection, attended by over 80 participants with good feedback.
- UKASCC 2025 Supportive Oncology Conference: Vice Chair submitted and presented a poster on “Recognising Cancer as a Long-Term Condition: The Role of Nurses in Transforming Survivorship Care.”

➤ Congress related information – resolutions/matters for discussion submitted

- No items were submitted for the agenda or Learning and Wellbeing Event (LWE) this year.
- Collaborative Initiatives
 - Partnered with the Oxford branch to support work around international nursing.
 - Collaborated with the Women’s Health Forum to highlight red flags in gynaecological cancer.

➤ Collaboration/ projects with stakeholders e.g. colleges, DOH

Following a strategic plan to engage a broad range of stakeholders in the cancer nursing workforce, the forum has initiated and strengthened key relationships to support integrated planning, address inequalities, and promote diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work.

Key collaborations and activities include:

- UKONs: Ongoing quarterly meetings to align on national cancer nursing priorities.
- NHS England: Participation in Royal College bimonthly meetings to contribute nursing input on cancer-related projects; forum continues to provide annual feedback.
- Macmillan: Established quarterly meetings to review professional resources and explore collaborative opportunities.
- OUTpatients and UCATs: Delivered a trans cancer care webinar and shared updates on the Supreme Court ruling, including OUTpatients’ position statement.
- Prostate Cancer UK: Engaged in national screening programme discussions, APPG sessions, CNS framework feedback, and planning for the PCUK Conference (March 26th).
- National CNS Day: Collaborated with UKONs and national cancer teams to support the event, including social media campaigns and a blog by an RCN fellow.
- Royal College of Radiologists Roundtable: Forum Chair attended to ensure nursing representation in shaping the future NHS Cancer Plan.
- Hazardous Medicinal Products Launch: Chair, Vice Chair, and Professional Lead attended the House of Commons event for the launch of the RCN resource, relevant to cancer care nursing.
- RCN Long-Term Conditions Conference: Vice Chair Lauren and committee member Mo contributed to the working group to shape the cancer stream agenda, with a particular focus on health inequalities. They will also serve as judges for abstracts and posters submitted for awards.

➤ Projects that were delivered and have closed

- RCN and OUTpatients/UCATs Webinar: Successfully delivered Cancer Care in the Trans Community – A Scenario Approach, with 20 attendees and excellent feedback.
- RCN and C the Signs Webinar: Collaborative webinar on the role of primary care nurses in early cancer diagnosis, attended by over 80 participants with positive feedback.
- Bluesky Account Launch: Created a new social media account to enhance member interaction and digital engagement.

- Humanitarian Framework Contribution: Forum committee member Mo collaborated with the RCN International Academy to support the development of its humanitarian framework, ensuring cancer care representation.
- Monthly Blog Series: Ongoing blog contributions from the Professional Lead, committee members, and forum members to share insights, updates, and professional reflections.

➤ What has been the main highlight/s of the year for the forum?

- Congress Collaboration: Partnered with the Oxford Branch and Women's Health Forum to support joint initiatives.
- Forum Recognition: Committee member Mo was awarded Forum Member of the Year.
- Trans Cancer Care Webinar: Successfully delivered in collaboration with OUTpatients and UCATs, focusing on inclusive care.
- RCN Magazine Feature: A member-authored blog on trans cancer care was published in the RCN magazine.
- Clinical Engagement: Invited to Guy's Cancer Centre to meet members and assess training needs across the cancer workforce.
- ACCEND Programme Collaboration: Engaged with the ACCEND Group, RETA Group, CNS framework development, and pre-registration support initiatives.
- Member Polling: Conducted a poll to identify learning needs across the membership with 114 responses – lead to the start of the Core Concepts for Cancer resource development
- Primary Care Webinar: Delivered the C the Signs webinar on early cancer diagnosis in primary care.
- Ongoing Communication: Maintained monthly blog contributions from the Professional Lead, forum committee members, and wider forum members.

➤ Policy Representation:

- Attended APPG sessions with Prostate Cancer UK and a House of Commons event.
- Participated in a national roundtable at the Royal College of Radiologists to contribute to the NHS Cancer Plan.

➤ What has been the impact of the work undertaken by the forum for the RCN membership (consider 4-country perspective)?

- Increased Membership and Visibility: Continued growth in forum membership (see trends – page 1).
- LGBTQIA+ Inclusion: Actively supported awareness and understanding of cancer care needs within the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Nationwide Engagement: Established contacts across all four UK nations through collaboration with UKONs and Macmillan, strengthening regional representation in cancer care.
- Resource Planning: Completed a member poll to inform the development of the *Core Cancer Concepts* resource.

- Are there any informatics or pictures of the forum activity that could be included?



1. Photo of strategy day of new cancer forum committee members, Chair and Professional Lead



2. Committee member Mo presenting at Congress LWE



3. Committee member Pauline (left), Chair Hayley (centre) and Professional Lead (right) at Forums event at Congress 2025



4. RCN Awards ceremony with Mo, committee member winning Forum Member of the Year



5. Forum Chair Hayley attending Royal College of Radiologist National Roundtable Event



6. Forum Vice Chair Lauren attending PCUK APPG at Houses of Parliament



7. Forum Chair Hayley and Vice Chair Lauren at the Hazardous Medicinal Products RCN House of Commons Event representing the voice of nursing



8. Professional Lead, Forum Chair Hayley and Vice Chair Lauren at the Hazardous Medicinal Products RCN House of Commons Event representing the voice of nursing



9. Committee member Shannon attending House of Commons for an APPG event with Prostate Cancer UK



10. Forum Chair Hayley attending the Compassionate Cancer Care Forum to represent the RCN in this multistakeholder event



11. Chair Hayley and Committee Member Shannon at UKONs National Conference in both their employed roles and for RCN representation

- How/what action has the forum committee taken to engage with the wider membership e.g. development of link nurse or expert reference group etc. Indicate any changes or developments in the way that communications take place and what has been the impact
 - Bluesky Account Creation: Established a new social media channel to enhance member engagement and visibility.
 - Social Media Activity: Maintained frequent posts and interactive polls via Bluesky and Facebook to promote forum initiatives and gather member input.
 - MCC Utilisation: Used the Member Communication Centre (MCC) to promote educational resources, webinars, and relevant RCN work.
 - Webinar Delivery: Collaborated with external organisations to deliver impactful webinars, showcasing the forum's expertise and expanding its reach.
- Highlight any changes or different ways of working that has been implemented this year
 - Direct Communication via MCC: Utilised the Member Communication Channel (MCC) to share updates and promote upcoming events directly with forum members.
 - Monthly Blog Contributions: Regular blog posts authored by forum committee members to foster engagement and share insights across the nursing community.
 - Four-Country Connectivity: Strengthened links between forum committee members and RCN offices in each of the four UK nations to enhance local engagement and ensure national representation.
- Publications (include link if possible)
 - No new publications have been created this year

- Contribution to Consultations/Policy development e.g. NICE guidelines
 - The RCN Cancer Forum Committee have contributed to the following consultations:
 - National Cancer Plan
 - NICE Kidney Cancer Guidance
 - NICE Early and locally advanced breast cancer: diagnosis and management - Neoadjuvant chemotherapy and ovarian function suppression
 - GIRFT Pancreatic and Head and Neck Cancer Guidelines
 - Prostate Cancer CNS Professional Development Framework Template development.
- Any other relevant information or highlights
 - Full Committee in Place: The forum will have a complete committee structure in place from January 2026, supporting strategic continuity and representation.
 - Core Cancer Concepts Development: Continued work on the Core Cancer Concepts resource is planned throughout 2026, aimed at supporting non-specialist nurses across clinical settings.
 - Facebook Membership Monitoring: Ongoing review of Facebook membership numbers to assess engagement trends and inform future outreach strategies – increase in members from 306 to 328 since Jan 2025.

RCN Representations:

- APPG Prostate Cancer UK: The forum committee members and Professional Lead represented the RCN Cancer Forum, contributing nursing perspectives to discussions on prostate cancer policy and care pathways.
- National Roundtable – Royal College of Radiologists: Chair Hayley attended to ensure nursing input into the development of the future NHS Cancer Plan.
- House of Commons PCUK Launch Event: Forum Committee Member Shannon represented the nursing voice at the launch of the National Prostate Cancer Screening Audit 2025 State of the Nation Report.
- Compassionate Cancer Care Forum: Chair Hayley participated to advocate for collaborative approaches and ensure alignment with RCN values in future compassionate cancer care initiatives.
- Hazardous Medicinal Products House of Commons Events: Chair Hayley, Vice Chair Lauren and Professional Lead attended for representation of the voice of nursing alongside key organisations to highlight the key risks nursing staff face when preparing Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT).
- UKONs Conference: Chair Hayley and Committee Member Shannon attended to represent the RCN, build networks, engage with members, and gain insight into the latest developments in cancer care.

Plans for 2026:

- National Conference Engagement: The Cancer Forum has been invited to speak at the Prostate Cancer UK Annual Conference and will continue to attend other national conferences, continuing to elevate the nursing voice in national cancer care discussions.
- Educational Resource Development: Ongoing development of a resource tailored for non-cancer specialist nurses, aimed at enhancing education and understanding across varied clinical settings. The resource is currently progressing through the quality assurance process.
- Collaborative Training Initiatives: Continued partnership with cancer organisations to deliver targeted education and training programmes focused on cancer care.