

RCN Forum Annual Report 2023

District and Community Nurse Forum

Introduction

The objective of the RCN District and Community Nursing Forum (RCN D&CN Forum), led by the Chair and Steering Group, continues to be to raise the profile of care delivered outside of our hospitals, at every opportunity.

Our aim is to ensure that District and Community Nursing is visible, valued and celebrated.

The priorities for the Forum as:

1. Increase Forum membership so we have more voting places at Congress and spread the word about the forum wider
2. Engage Forum members with library activities and ways the library can support members and ensure library has up to date literature to support forum members
3. Raise awareness of the Forum Committee and the work they do with the rest of the forum membership
4. Conference for students and NQNs – the joy of working in the community
5. Create better links with other national community organisations.
6. Continue to raise the profile of community nursing to the public, our colleagues and within the RCN.

These priorities were revisited at the RCN District and Community Nursing Steering Committee and Strategy Meeting, 31st January 2023.

Membership of the forum

The RCN District Nursing Forum has **7166** members, an increase of 157 on last year but with only 5045 as their primary forum. This represents a large decrease in the past 12 months as in 2022 our figures were showing 6449. This is despite frequent calls via our social media outlets to ask members to ensure they put this forum as their primary choice.

Increasing our membership needs to be a continue to be a focus in 2024 and hopefully with the restructuring of the RCN, members will also be more enthusiastic about engaging with all aspects of the RCN.

Facebook page:

We have a total of **7100** members of our Facebook page. This an increase of 100 members since our last report.

Facebook whilst it is still an active site for professional comment and support the number of posts and responses has decreased in the past year. This is thought to be as less nurses use Facebook either for work or general use. Only being able to have one administrator of the Facebook page has put a lot of the connection with others at the mercy of time restraints for the Chair.

X:

@RCN DN Forum. We currently have **5189** followers on **X** this has increased since last year.

Twitter provides useful links, information and updates to share with interested followers. There are regular updates and re tweets on key issues. This is particularly thanks to Gail Goddard who does a sterling job in keeping us active on **X**. Once again this is administered by mainly one person.

Steering Group Committee membership:

Carrie Doyle our PL left in December 2022 and was replaced with Deb Evans. Sadly Deb leaves the role in November 2023, she has provided much support to the Forum over the past year.

Julie Green, a committee member and former Chair left in April 2023 to take up a position on the PNC.

The position of Chair undertaken from January 2022, by Sue Hill, is to be advertised shortly as Sue has completed her 8 years maximum appointment time.

We have interviewed and appointed to 3 vacancies in our Steering Group. Five applications were received and careful discussion of the strengths of the committee were discussed at length by the panel before a decision was made.

Following interviews, we welcomed the reappointment of Marysia Graffin for a 2nd term of office. Also appointed were Charlene Smith from Liverpool and Marie Rogers from Cumbria.

Reflections on 2023

The forum strategy day was held online in January 2023. There were 6 areas that were agreed to be worked on throughout the year. Some of these actions have been implemented more fully than others: -

1. Increase Forum membership so we have more voting places at Congress and spread the word about the forum wider.

Committee members have raised the profile where possible; having a stand for a time at Congress and interacting on Facebook and Twitter. There have been no national meetings over the last 12 months to which we have been invited.

We had a presentation from Paul Trevatt, PNC London Member Presentation about the Protect Nurse campaign and activism.

He asked us to think about effecting change and keeping the message simple. With the messages what are you trying to achieve. Whatever you want to change – be passionate about it!

2. Engage Forum members with library activities and ways the library can support members and ensure library has up to date literature to support forum members.

Nothing specific has been undertaken with regard to this point, apart from a discussion with our professional Lead

3. Raise awareness of the Forum Committee and the work they do with the rest of the forum membership

Information has been put onto Social Media and the committee have attended Congress. Apart from this ideas on how to engage with the membership further have not been developed. This was partly due to the fair pay campaign being a priority for the RCN and so some of our planned activities were not able to be taken forward.

4. Conference for students and NQNs – the joy of working in the community

This has been discussed at length and various meetings with parts of the RCN. Eventually it was decided that charging students for a conference was not feasible at this time and despite asking if we could get sponsorship, we were told no so have put this on hold. We are however working an alternative plan to give the information in an alternative format which would not involve costs.

5. Create better links with other national community organisations.

Talk given at QNI Midlands online meeting. Members of the committee are also members of the QNI, ADNE, We Community Nurses, CNO Policy Network, Practice Educators Network and the Community Nursing Practitioners Network so we are hoping to work with these groups in the next year.

Congress 2023

All members of the committee were present for Congress. Some for the entire time and the rest for part of the time. All voting places were utilised for those agenda items and the committee members took an active part in the debates to raise the voice of community nursing.

A Learning and Wellbeing event was run by the Steering Committee at Congress entitled 'Promoting self-care in the community.' We had 3 external speakers, and it was a very well attended event. The feedback from the event was very positive.

The forum members also took part in the World Café to promote the forum.

For Congress 2024 we have submitted a resolution and a proposal for a Learning and Wellbeing event and are looking forward to again raising the profile of community nursing.

Other activity

One committee member has been part of the judging panel for Community placement of the year Nursing Times Student Awards.

One committee member has continued to be on the editorial board of the Journal of Community Nursing and regularly writes about community matters.

We have produced a District and Community Nursing Committee Forum and Expert Member Charter. This is now ready for distribution and sharing and putting onto our webpage.

Recognising the number of questions asked on the Facebook page about interviews we are recording a series of webinars to give people ideas, hints and tips about interview preparation and questions that may be asked from different perspectives. The first is being recorded on 27th November. More webinars are planned, there have been some challenges in organising them which has slowed our progress, but we now have a plan and the opportunity to complete this.

Date Prepared: November 2023

By: District and Community Forum Chair

Sue Hill