

## RCN Forum Annual Report 2021

### **Forum Name:**

**General Practice Nurse Forum**

### **Introduction:**

2021 has been an incredibly challenging year for general practice nursing. Increasing workforce recruitment and retention challenges are an increasing concern. Primary care networks are expanding the general practice workforce through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) to include various allied health care professionals such as paramedics and physiotherapists. These roles will certainly enhance services to patients, however there are key concerns that the nursing workforce lacks sufficient investment for education and career development.

There had been much optimism that 2021 would see a significant change in general practice with the introduction of the covid vaccination programme. However due to ongoing challenges many key conferences including Congress were negatively affected.

### **Membership of the forum**

The GPN Forum remains one of the larger forums at the RCN and we seek to fully represent the four Countries of the United Kingdom. The forum has had a change of professional lead during this year, from Marie Therese Massey, who has now retired to Heather Randle, who is now professional lead for Primary Care.

### **Total number of members is currently 9,722 including 1<sup>st</sup> choice 6,377**

The overall trend has been an increase in membership, from 9184 at the end of 2019. We have continued to grow and develop as a forum to 9,722 as of November 2021.

### **Committee membership**

The committee represents all areas of general practice nursing in advanced clinical practice, leadership and education as well as NHS Resolution and local medical committee. The forum is well placed to advise and support our membership in their professional and clinical roles.

Ellen Nicholson – (EN)

Katy Smyth (KS)

Sarah Hall (SH)

Joyce Pickering Chair (JP)

Elia Ferreira Carvalho Monteiro (EM)

Penny Siphthorp (PS)

Vanessa Anthony (VA)

Two vacancies became available for January 2022 onwards, and we had two applications, which resulted in two interviews for forum vacancies. Ellia Monterio was successfully interviewed and reappointed to the forum on a four-year term of office. Vanessa Anthony was successfully interviewed and appointed to the forum for a four-year term of office.

#### **Diversity:**

Current committee members are based across England and whilst there are no members of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales on the current committee, the forum chair engaged with members from NI, Scotland and Wales whilst researching for the Fringe event. The chair plans to strengthen these links.

The committee was delighted to recently appoint Vanessa Anthony from the BAME community to join the committee.

### **Achievements in 2021: (Outputs and outcomes)**

#### **FGG projects submitted and approved**

Due to covid and the increase in workload for the committee members no FGG bids were submitted; we will discuss current ideas at our strategy day in December 2021.

#### **Events and conferences**

All face-to-face events and conferences were cancelled in 2021 due to the Covid pandemic and the need for social distancing.

The RCN Fair campaign focussed on the governments NHS offer of 3%. In response to concerns from the forum members the forum chair with support from Sarah Hall, the Forum professional Lead and RCN lead Clare Jacobs organised a very successful meeting allowing the members to share their concerns. This is having a lasting impact and there are plans to have more regular engagement with the members.

### **Congress related information – resolutions/ matters for discussion submitted**

The forum successfully submitted:

Matter for discussion: Are current national programmes to support the NHS eroding the role of the registered nurse? (SH)

Matter for discussion submitted and accepted on 'Remote Consultations' (EN).

Fringe event entitled "Primary care networks get involved. Looking at leadership roles for general practice nurses (JP PS KS).

Due to the current issues and investigations within the RCN leadership it was with sadness that the committee decided to withdraw all events. We hope to resubmit for Congress 2022.

All members of the forum had registered to attend the 2021 congress.

### **Collaboration/ projects with stakeholders e.g., colleges, DOH**

- MHRA – Stakeholders Advisory (EM)
- NMC Education standards England and Scotland engagement (JP)
- NHSEI Learning Disability Symposium (JP)
- NHSEI Primary care Lead monthly meetings (JP with HR Professional Lead)
- Primary Care Round Table - RCN – UK Government -Department of Trade and South Africa Western Cape – presenting primary care nursing (Jan 2021) (EN)
- Representing Practice Nursing with RCGP, NHSE/I and NHS Resolution (EN)

### **Representation at meetings/events**

Representation of the RCN forum on the C3 Collaborating for Health Project steering group for Share the Pressure. (KS)

Representation at the AAGPNE meetings on the new NMC CSP post registration standards. (KS)

Contributed to the consultation on 'The future of General Practice' (KS,JP, SH)

Collaboration with the LD Forum and members of NHSE/NHS Improvement on creating LD clinical pages and practical resource "Top 10 Tips" for GPNs in clinic. (JP,KS,PS)

Ruth Mays Shared decision making council monthly meetings (JP)

Chair of the forum until June 30th, 2021 – stepped down due to increasing work commitments (EN)

Represented RCNGPN Forum at the RCNi careers fair through 2021 (x 6 occasions).

Webinar with questions and answers has been very successful with thousands of views and questions over the year. Note 2022 will see a return to face-to-face careers fairs. (EN)

Representing the forum at the RCN Northern Ireland Practice Nurse Network (Nov 2021) (EN)

GP IT Futures Professional Engagement Forum with NHS Digital (EM)

Contribution to article 'Practices on the brink of collapse: nurses ask, 'how will we cope?' - Nursing in Practice (EM)

Cervical Screening Clinical Working Group with NHS Digital (EM)

### **Media, Publications and Awards**

Interviews with The Nursing standard, Nursing Times and nation Newspaper (SH)  
Discussing key GPN issues including the Covid vaccination programme, nursing morale, erosion of the role of the nurse (SH)

Judge for the Health Education England (South West) for the South West Regional Celebration of Practice Nursing Event (EN)

Judge for the General Practice Awards with Cogara (EN)

Judge for the RCNi Best Practice Nurse awards (EN)

Nursing Standard Article (July 2021) Newly qualified nurses in primary care: making sure you get the support you need (EN)

Newly qualified nurses: guidance and support in primary care (rcni.com) (EN)

### **Forthcoming in 2022:**

First General Practice Learning Disability Conference May 2022  
LD Clinical pages (KS,PS,JP)

### **Social Media**

**Facebook:** 6,200 members. Many of the steering committee are page admins and moderators requiring daily moderation and approval of posts. The page provides a platform for sharing Forum activities and RCN activities/events as well as promoting lively debate. We have reorganised the chats into themes, so that the forum members are able to identify themes and trends as well as a reference guide.

Commented [EN1]:

**Twitter:** Continued to run the Twitter @RCNGPNForum account – followers now 4787 (Dec 2021) and to moderate the Facebook page. (EN)

**Twitter chat:** The forum has contributed to many twitter chats throughout the year and co-hosted one with other practice nurses on working in a Covid pandemic.

### **Main highlight of the year for the forum**

Despite the challenges of 2021 the forum has remained strong. Regular monthly meetings have provided support for the committee members and opportunity to plan activities to support forum members. Due to increased workload, illness and family commitments the committee has dug deep to ensure that the high standards of the forum have been maintained. The Learning Disability project has grown exponentially, the collaboration with the Learning Disability forum has been very productive; the forums have spent many hours compiling what we believe to be a very comprehensive and useful resource.

### **Covid-19**

Covid continues to challenge the way the steering committee interact. It is amazing how we have adapted to “Teams” meetings and have been able to engage with the wider forum as a result, in particular the meeting on pay terms and conditions. However, the forum remains strong and focussed on supporting general practice nurses and championing change.

### **Plans for 2021:**

Project bid for LD project – printed resource “Top 10 Tips”

Continued engagement with the forum members on pay terms and conditions.

Continue to work collaboratively with stakeholders to advance opportunities for general practice nurses.

First ever general practice learning disability conference May 2021

Encourage forum “Champions” to support projects.

Pilot for Hive bright Platform. A work in progress.

### **Aspirations for possible future work (to be finalised at the strategy day)**

Forum champions to work alongside the committee on specific projects

Regular Forum podcasts

Clinical Supervision project in collaboration with all RCN Forums

Regular forum engagement via Teams meetings

Overhaul of the GPN Forum page on the website

FGG bid in collaboration with Learning Disability forum GPN 10 Top Tips

Create Job Descriptions for general practice nurses, to support recruitment.

Capture: "general practice nursing a year in pictures".

**Strategy Day organised for December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Date Prepared:** 02/12/21

**By:** Joyce Pickering - Forum Chair

### **Congress related information – resolutions/ matters for discussion submitted**

Contributed to a fringe event with other forum members on Primary Care Networks which was recorded prior to Congress.

### **Collaboration/ projects with stakeholders e.g., colleges, DOH**

Collaboration with the LD Forum and members of NHSE/NHS Improvement on creating LD clinical pages and a conference scheduled to be held in May 2022

### **Representation at meetings/events**

Representation of the RCN forum on the C3 Collaborating for Health Project steering group for Share the Pressure.

Representation at the AAGPNE meetings on the new NMC CSP post registration standards.

Contributed to the consultation on ‘The future of General Practice’.

This year the focus of the majority of my work on the GPN Forum Committee has been around Learning Disabilities. The committee felt that GPNs might not be receiving adequate support and education in order to carry out learning disability checks appropriately. A questionnaire was designed which went out to members initially via the GPN Forum Facebook page and then was shared more widely by committee members – 65% of those surveyed had received no learning disability training and only 19% felt they had the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the needs of patients with learning disabilities. We have been meeting regularly with learning disability nurse colleagues and are in the process of producing clinical pages for the RCN website to act as a resource for GPNs and others. In addition, we are finalising our “ten top tips” which will be launched at our L.D conference next May, which is aimed at nurses within general practice. Our work is ongoing, and it is our hope that the conference format can be replicated across the country.

As part of their congress fringe submission, I was due to join Joyce and Katy at congress to talk about influencing change within Primary Care Networks. We were planning to attend congress in person and then when the decision was made to go online only, we spent time preparing our presentation which was then recorded in advance in case of technical difficulties. However, in light of the developments at the RCN the decision was made not to present online, and it may be that it is resubmitted for next year instead.

Other work has included moderating the GPN forum Facebook group and responding to clinical consultations as I have felt able to. More recently, I have agreed to represent the forum in work being undertaken regarding clinical supervision.

**Congress related information**

**Media/publications**-I have spoken to reporters from Nursing Times, Nursing Standard and a newspaper but I cannot remember which one??? regarding vaccination programme, nursing morale, erosion of the role of the nurse

**Events**-I supported the recent webinar on FB re- Pay, terms and conditions

**Social Media**-I have helped to administer the FB group and occasionally Tweet