

## **RCN Nurse in Management and Leadership Forum Annual Report 2023**

The Nurse in Management and Leadership Forum (NMLF) steering committee's work aims to represent and serve our forum membership as nurse managers and leaders across the health and social care system.

The steering committee is comprised of seven members. We had 5 members for most of this year and as the year closes, we are pleased to report that we have recruited to the seven steering committee roles for 2024.

We are saying goodbye to Craig Davidson and to myself, Sally Bassett as our terms of office come to an end in December 2023. Our thanks to Craig for all his support. As the chair it has been a pleasure to serve the forum and lead the steering committee over the last eight years. Four of these years I have also served as the Forum Chairs Committee Chair. Steering committee member Rabina Tindale takes on the chair role from January 2024.

The committee held its annual strategy day in March and met a minimum of 6 times during the year and was compliant with quoracy requirements once during the year this was primarily due to work pressures. However, actions discussed at non quorate meetings was cascaded to all steering committee members via email to progress the work of the forum. Additional project and Congress planning meetings were also held.

At the strategy day in March 2022, we reviewed the committee's progress and reflected on our achievements in 2022 and explored opportunities to increase forum activity that align with the four pillars of the RCN strategic priorities which are:

- Provision of education and learning
- Setting clinical standards and supporting practice
- Active personal and workplace support
- Influencing and shaping policy

As a committee we reviewed and agreed that in accordance with our terms of reference that as a forum our purpose continues to be to:

- Formulate thinking and responses to current health care challenges.
- Interpret information to influence practice and care delivery.
- Be a conduit for management and leadership information to our members.
- Influence and challenge professional thinking and responses relating to management and leadership policy and development.
- Recognise and advance the capabilities and potential of our members to deliver excellent leadership and management.
- Connect forum members and encourage engagement across all networks.

The steering committee agreed to continue to focus on our two previously agreed priority areas:

- Contributing to cultural intelligence and inclusive leadership through equality, inclusion, and diversity
- To support the development of the emergent and the maturing of peoples of leadership regardless of role and throughout their career pathway

Key areas of focus at our strategy day were:

1. What went well for the forum steering committee and forum members in 2022. What gets in the way of us achieving our aspirations and what helped.
2. We reviewed and developed our plans to host an equality diversity and inclusion conference in the context of inclusive leadership.

3. We reviewed our plan to contribute five learning sessions and contribute to debates and the matters for discussion at Congress 2023.
4. We agreed an additional and a standing aim is to increase engagement with our members and to grow the membership to meet needs of senior and executive nurses.

#### Our objectives are:

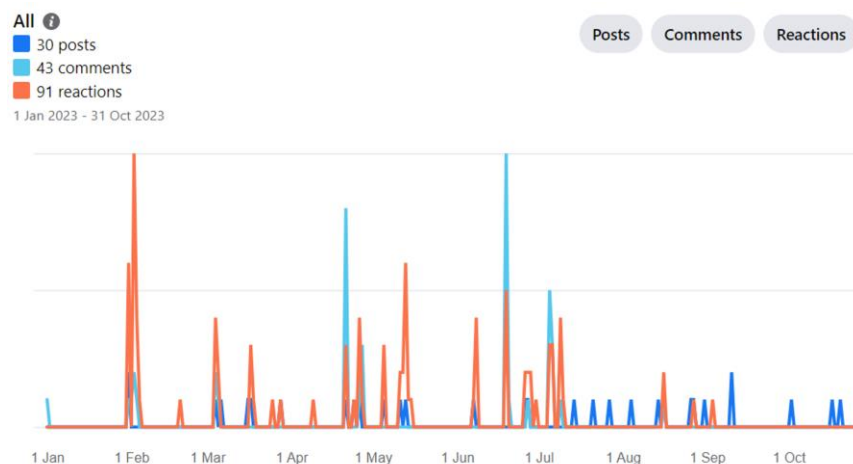
- Support members in recognising and developing capabilities to demonstrate their leadership qualities regardless of their position.
- Connect forum members and encourage collective engagement to share information and unlock their potential.
- Provide forum expertise to RCN working group and projects.
- Engaging with the forum membership to inform the 2022 forum work plan and responses to RCN policy and position on professional agenda.

This report presents the work of the committee for 2023.

#### Membership of forum

The Forum membership increased from 13389 in 2022 to 13574 in 2023 This represents just under 1.5 % increase in forum membership in comparison to last year. Of this the number of first choice members has slightly increased to 5304, a reversal of the trend seen in 2022.

The forum has 1018 Facebook members. We sent two member communications and engaged actively on our Twitter account.



#### Forum activity

##### Influencing the College support for nurses in management and leadership

We recognised that much of the lobbying work that we have engaged in has been internally facing and won't have been visible to forum members. As a summary and an example of our internal engagement we can report that we have continued to influence the RCN to strengthen its support for nurses in management and leadership positions and contributed to meetings with Nicola Ranger the Colleges new chief nurse. We also recently met with the new Deputy Director of Nursing, Dr Lynne Ashby, to consider how we can support the evolving Leadership Academy. As Dr Ashby and Nicola continue the journey of developing the RCN Institute, we will ensure that we continue to offer our full support to the Leadership Academy as a Committee but most importantly, we hope to see the Forum as a bridge for our members to actively engage with the Academy as well.

## **Supporting RCN Policy Development**

The committee represented the forum in contributing to the Professional Nursing Committee (PNC) work programme to produce a Professional Career Framework. Specifically contributing to the levels of practice work stream in defining leadership and management practice levels guidance. It was identified through this work that there is not a clear pathway for nurses that choose to take this career direction. It is anticipated that work address this gap will for part of the ongoing work programme in 2024. The publication on the levels of practice, that now includes an enhanced, advanced and consultant level will take place in December 2023.

The forum contributed to the development of a revised definition of nursing which updates the version published in 2003 and to the revisions of the Principles of Nursing Practice. We contributed to the Mona Grey Lecture at Congress 2023 to engage and consult on the revisions to the definition of nursing. The updated guidance can be found here: <https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/news/uk-rcn-launches-new-definition-of-nursing-210923#:~:text=The%20definition%20is%3A,quality%20person-centred%20nursing%20care.>

The steering committee continued to support the work of the 'Protect the Title Nurse' a successful resolution led by the steering committee at Congress 2022. A learning event was held at Congress 2023 illustrating the importance of using the influence as a registered nurse to develop and improve practice. The steering committee will continue to support this work in 2024.

## **Forum policy work on anti-racism**

We submitted an item to Congress to discuss white privilege, supremacy, and fragility in nursing. The UK Census, 2021 shows that 81.7% of the UK population are white. The NMC permanent Register (September 2022) shows that 71% of registered professionals are white. There is a lack of comprehensive data from across UK health and social care providers. The largest employer of nursing colleagues is NHS England. Their Workforce Race Equality Standard reports from 2021 show that 73.1% of all staff in the NHS are from a white background; with 90% of staff at 8c and above from a white background; white applicants were 1.61 more likely to be appointed from shortlisting etc. - in every indicator white staff are advantaged. We were not successful in securing a debate on this issue but have fed into the colleges policy work in this area and will continue to lobby on this topic.

## **Clinical Supervision**

The steering committee continued to support the all-forum project on clinical supervision. We reported last year on the literature review and position statement that this forum led, the links are below. This year an engagement event was held at Congress 2023 with forum members from the NMLF, Forensic Nursing, Mental Health forums and the Student Committee. The engagement event and survey findings were presented to PNC in November 2023 and an RCN policy position has now been adopted on Critical Reflection, one form of which is clinical supervision. Agreement has been reached to produce a Clinical Information Page on Critical Reflection and the steering committee will continue to support this work in 2024.

- **Barriers to overcoming the barriers': A scoping review exploring 30 years of clinical supervision literature**  
<http://doi.org/10.1111/jan.15283>
- <https://www.rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Position-statements/rcn-position-on-clinical-supervision>

## **Leading for Inclusion Conference**

Unfortunately, we were not able to host our planned leadership conference for this year. We have now revised this programme and the first Forum Conference in many years will be hosted at Cavendish Square in March 2024. Titled *Leading for Inclusion, Advocating for Change*, we have worked hard this year to secure some great speakers and look forward to welcoming many of our Forum colleagues as delegates.

## **Congress 2023**

In preparation for representing NMLF members in voting on resolutions at Congress we held an online open meeting for all members to discuss opinions and views on the resolutions to inform our voting position. This approach to member engagement was good practice.

The funded congress places included three forum members, the aim had been to support four forum members, but plans changed at the last minute, so we were able to fund three committee members to attend as well.

- Sally Bassett
- Liam Williams
- Rabina Tindale
- Phillip Winterbottom
- Joyce Mathews
- Goncalo Ribeiro

The forum successfully ran and supported 5 Learning & Wellbeing events working in partnership with other professional forums and supported Congress agenda item for debate including:

**That this meeting of RCN Congress affirms that the strength of the Royal College of Nursing comes from its dual function as a professional body and a trade union.**

We supported this resolution. The strength of the RCN is reinforced by being a professional body and a Trade Union, each arm should support and inform the other. As a college we have rightly expended many resources to support our industrial action. In the past, the professional arm has had less gravitas than the Trade Union arm, within the College. Significant step changes have been made and there is more progress to be made. Union representatives have justly had a right to paid time off to carry out TU activities since 1975. There is no such right for professional activity. Our medical colleagues are contractually entitled to 30 days professional, or study leave within a 3-year period. Recognising that radical changes to Agenda for Change or other employment terms and conditions are not going to happen overnight. We also asked Council to consider exploring professional leave agreements in organisations where we work in partnership.

**That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses the case for a separate nursing pay spine within Agenda for Change.**

There is no argument that Agenda for Change in the NHS is overdue a review and needs overhauling to adequately recognise and remunerate the knowledge, skills, behaviours, experience, and professionalism of nursing colleagues. As it does not currently fulfil this need. However, we do not work in isolation as a profession. We work as part of a multi-professional team for patients. Creating further division between professions serves no benefit to patients. Different pay scales for multi-professional colleagues working side by side, is not inclusive, does not foster a sense of belonging in our teams and is not in the best interests of anyone.

**Reflections on our congress contribution are shared here by Liam Williams a steering committee member:**

Attending Congress for the first time in many years was a great experience, catching up with old colleagues and meeting with new ones! I attempted to speak on several items but was only successful in talking to the Resolution on Corridor Care and was surprised to find the experience more emotive than I expected; I speak about the harm that comes to patients from ambulance delays because of ambulance crews not being able to release patients to the Emergency Department all the time, however, on this occasion, talking to a room of colleagues about the need for us to view the harm

across our NHS at a system level and knowing that we are all experiencing incredibly challenging times had a deep resonance. I also spoke on a panel as a Forum Committee member about the use of social media in your professional role and presented at the Learning event Leading change in policy - how to use your voice to influence nursing, equity, health strategy and politics, along with Sally Bassett, chair of the forum and Paul Trevatt PNC representative.

### **Forum Survey**

In line with the forum's commitment to listening and gaining the views of the forum members we conducted a short online survey to understand how we best meet the needs of our members. Whilst the response rate was not as good as we had hoped, the results were very similar to the survey undertaken in 2017.

The committee have reflected and it would seem we do meet many of the forum member's needs, however, we would like to do over the next year is to firmly deliver elements of feedback received from the two surveys which include an increase in engagement through educational activities, varying the times of delivery to reach a wider audience. We also hope to engage various speakers and stakeholders to deliver on differing elements of management and leadership pertinent to our member's needs.

### **Representing the Forum**

Apart from the work detailed above Liam Williams took part in an RCN Wales event in his role as an Executive Director of Nursing and took the time to highlight the challenges for nurses in management and leadership positions. Sally Bassett presented at several leadership conferences promoting the work of the NMLF. Many of us were active in our Branches.

### **Acknowledgments**

The work of the steering committee supported by our linked Project Co-ordinator Denise Alexis and the Professional Lead, Christine McKenzie. We wish to extend our thanks and appreciation for their support and commitment to meeting the needs of the NMLF members.

### **Conclusion**

This report has presented the work of the steering committee during 2023. The committee remains committed to provide support to its members and influence the wider nursing policy agenda by building on our current priority areas and continue to raise our profile in 2024.

**Date Prepared:** 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Prepared by Sally Bassett** with support and contributions from the steering committee.