

## **Nursing in Justice and Forensic Healthcare Forum**

### **2025 Annual Report**

The 'Nursing in Justice and Forensic Forum' steering Committee is a core group of committed nurses who are focussed on nursing within health and justice. Health and Justice nursing spans a wide range of areas from secure children's services to police custody, court services, inpatient settings, immigration removal centres, prisons and probation.

The committee composition is reflective of the UK's 4 nations; it benefits from the additional commitment from two RCN Fellows. The forum has had two members step down from the committee due to other commitments and a third whose tenure ended this year.

We thank Helen McNally, Emma Firth and Deanna Mezan for their support and wish them every success in their next ventures. Our new members bring further diversity and expertise into our group and will support us to represent the wider forum membership as their background and experience is in other areas of health and justice to those of the other members.

We are also delighted to share we have a Vice Chair for the first time in the forum, Carlos Holder. Carlos's appointment will strengthen our leadership and ensure representation of the Forum within the wider work of the RCN.

Over the previous 12 months the committee has demonstrated a real commitment to serving the needs of the forum members. They have delivered outputs and worked in collaboration with others in a visionary and creative way which has made a real impact. The strategic plan which was written in February of this year compliments the wider strategic intention of the RCN and was built upon the foundations of the Forum's outputs in 2024. To support us, we have developed a Microsoft Teams channel which helps us manage our workflow.

Nursing in Justice and Forensics is one of the smaller College forums, however, it continues to make a significant impact both professionally and politically so that the voices and needs of nurses in justice and forensic settings are understood.

## Membership of the forum

October 2024	October 2025	1 <sup>st</sup> Choice voting members
3642	3788	1658

63% of our forum membership is White British this broadly reflects the membership of other forums. 11.5% of membership identifies as Black African.

ETHNICITY PER FORUM %	Nursing in Justice and Forensic Health Care Forum
	▼ ↑
Any Other Group	0.67%
Arab	0.00%
Asian - Any Other Background	1.33%
Asian - Bangladeshi	0.24%
Asian - Indian	1.45%
Asian - Pakistani	0.30%
Black - African	11.55%
Black - Caribbean	1.69%
Black - Other	0.79%
Black British	0.54%
Chinese	0.18%
Mixed - Any Other Background	0.18%
Mixed - White & Asian	0.12%
Mixed - White & Black African	0.42%
Mixed- White & Black Caribbean	0.60%
Not Given	3.02%
Not Provided	1.57%
White	2.66%
White - British	63.66%
White - Irish	2.18%
White- Any Other Background	5.08%
Withheld by member	1.75%

## Forum Appointments

The Committee received 13 eligible applications for the three vacancies for the recent forum appointments.

## Social Media

- Facebook Members: 543
- X Members: 1285 followers: 1360 following. This account is no longer used, in line with the RCN guidance.
- BlueSky: 21 followers 7 following

## Reflections on 2025 (Outputs and Outcomes)

### 1. Better understand the profile and requirements of our forum members

Our forum membership has grown this year by over 100. We have sent eight emails via the MCC and have connected with several members as a direct result. This has resulted in the compilation of a bank of contacts to whom we can reach out to for support or to be part of specific pieces of work.

Following the Prison Nursing Unlocked exhibition, we received a particularly positive email of thanks - detailed below:

*Dear Abi,*

*I write to thank you for your email communication sent via the RCN Library & Archive Service. I was so pleased to attend the recent launch of the Prison Nursing Unlocked event at the RCN Cavendish Square on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April. Most interesting speakers and the Q & A was stimulating too. It made me reflect: I found the presentations and event helped me recall so many memories and stories.*

We recently hosted the Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) in prison group at RCN headquarters, who have self-formed and developed a community of practice within the prisons. This has enabled us to build closer connections with this group to support forum activity, and are going to share their meeting dates and website on our forum page.

Prior to Congress 2025 we sent a survey to forum members to enquire how they wanted us to vote on agenda items. 35 people responded and our 2 voting members voted accordingly. We learnt that the detail within the form we sent, asking for opinions was too great and that this year the form needs to be easier to complete to better engage members, whose time is precious.

In Liverpool this year, although we only had 2 voting members, we were able to speak to several matters for resolution and publicised this on social media to focus attention on our perspective. We had a high number of visitors to our 'Meet the Forum' event and grew our forum membership as a result.

We have requested information from the RCN enquiries team to understand what kind of questions and requests for support have come from members who work within health and justice. The data has been provided and the themes from this will be discussed in our 2026 strategy day to help guide our work.

We continue to be members of The Joint Unions in Prisons Alliance (JUPA) [UCU - Joint Unions in Prisons Alliance](#). We attended the launch of the updated Safe Inside Charter in Parliament on 8 July 2025. The charter outlines the principles of a positive health and safety culture, effective management practices, and safe working conditions that protect the long-term physical and mental wellbeing of all prison workers—regardless of their employer.

The Charter identifies key health and safety risks and sets out how JUPA will work in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) to:

- raise concerns
- share ideas and solutions
- agree on actions
- engage workers in creating safer, healthier workplaces

## **2. Build a dynamic social media profile across new platforms**

We have been building our social media profile and have a committee member whose role it is to build links with the social media team and digital nursing forum to increase our understanding of social media and the opportunities that this may offer us to share our message and develop our virtual footprint.

We are in the process of developing a LinkTree and a LinkedIn account. BlueSky has been slow to take off, and further work is needed both within the forum and by the RCN to grow this as a platform of choice for communication.

## **3. Develop outputs from Trauma Informed events 2024**

The Trauma events have been summarised into a report. This was presented as part of the talk that was given in Winchester at the Thames Valley and Wessex Adult Secure Provider Collaborative Good Practice Conference. The outcomes and findings of the project also fed into the theme of the Health and Justice UK Summit this year – Healthy Humane Justice ([The 12th Health & Justice Summit - Portal - Health and Justice UK](#)). The Health and Justice UK Summit is a collaborative event between the RCN, RCGP and RCPsych. Work continues, with an intention to write a trauma informed practice article along with a guidance piece to be published on the forum web page.

## **4. Develop a resource to support members attending Coroners Court**

We have held a series of three webinars in collaboration with the RCN legal team, that focussed on death in state custody and presenting at a coroners court. The presentations are now available on our forum web page. We are working with the legal team to create a resource. Titles of the 3 events were:

➤ **Webinar 1: Following a death in state custody (43 members attended)**

This focussed on what to expect from an inquest or Fatal Accident Inquiry (FAI) following a death in state custody. It covers the purpose, process, and roles involved, helping to promote understanding of the nurses' responsibilities and the importance of investigations.

➤ **Webinar 2: Investigations and how they feed into the inquest process (51 members attended)**

This focused on the various investigations that flow from a death in state custody and how these investigations feature in the inquest process. The webinar provides an overview of police investigations, serious incident investigations and a Q&A session regarding the Prison and Probations Ombudsman (PPO) with Mark Judd, Assistant Ombudsman and Marjorie Goold, PPO Investigator.

➤ **Webinar 3: Common themes arising from deaths in state custody (54 members attended)**

This addressed common themes arising in inquests following a death in state custody and contains a number of case studies based on real life examples of inquests our members have been involved in.

## **5. Lobby regarding safeguarding process in prison and the need for external scrutiny**

This piece of work is in its infancy. We will be discussing it with the Head of Clinical Quality and Governance for Health and Justice at NHS England, as to how this can be progressed.

## **6. Other Work of Note**

- Prison Nursing Unlocked exhibition and the events associated with this - including the launch event where our guest speakers included Sobanan Narendhiran and Stephen Fry.
- Publishing blogs x 3
- One of our previous committee members winning the Nursing Times Nurse Leader of the Year
- Hosting a webinar with NHS England to support members working in prisons where taser use is being piloted
- Collaboration with other Royal Colleges to further develop Health and Justice UK and the annual Summit which is recognised internationally
- Creating a film with the curator of an exhibition focussed on Sexual Violence in Conflict at the Imperial War Museum, to explore the role of nurses and nursing in this area. This has a focus of specific interest to our Forensic Nurse Examiner members
- Attendance at the RCN Activism conference
- Engaging in discussions with NHS England concerning the development of guidance for prison nurses to declare 'life extinct'.
- Plans to engage in the recording of a podcast alongside the Women's Health and Public Health forums to focus on Women's inclusion health and women in prison
- Participation in the NMC review of the Code via the Breath of Practice consultation group
- Co-chairing of the Health and Justice UK Communities of Practice

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

We are wholly committed to serving all 4 nations. This can be seen in the representation in our committee and in the work we do. The Prison Nursing Unlocked exhibition is moving to Scotland, where we will be supporting events alongside, and our ongoing work regarding trauma informed care is guided by our 4 nation events completed in 2024.

We have started to build links with nurses who work in prisons in our UK Overseas Territories, including Bermuda, Montserrat and St Helena. Connecting with these people over this year and learning about their experiences as nurses has highlighted that we need to continue to work to represent them in our work.

One nurse, working in St Helena, after joining one of our online events contacted us to say thank you and that he felt part of something bigger.

*Before I leave the office to go home I just want to say that was amazing and inspiring. I have learned so much but even more importantly you have made probably the most remote prison nurse in the world feel part of the much larger prison nurse family and for that I am so grateful*

***St Helena Island, South Atlantic Ocean***

We suggest that our work over the last year has served to increase forum membership, engage more forum members in our work, and raise the profile of the justice and forensic health care, both in the wider nursing community and, through the exhibition, in the public arena.

Working with colleagues at the Imperial War Museum, August 2025



Attending the JUPA Safe Inside Charter launch event at the Palace of Westminster

July 2025



## The Prison Nursing Unlocked launch event, April 2025



Professional photos from the prison nursing unlocked open evening can be found here:

[Prison Nursing Unlocked\\_RCN](#)

## **Plans for 2026**

- We will continue to engage with our members and work to understand their needs better. We are committed to deliver work that is meaningful across all areas of forensic health care and health and justice settings, and know we need to reach into all services that members work in.
- We will work over the next couple of months to develop submissions for Congress in 2026.
- We will continue to work to grow our forum membership across the 4 nations
- We will develop our strategy for 2026 considering data from RCN Direct over the last 12 months as well as the recommendations in a recent high profile Chief Medical Officer's report [The health of people in prison, on probation, and in the secure NHS estate in England](#)

I look forward to meeting the new forum committee members in February and developing a wide-reaching strategy which represents all areas of Forensics, and Health and Justice across all 4 nations.

***Abi Bartlett***

**27/11/2025**