

RCN Forum Annual Report 2025

Forum Name: Women's Health

The Women's Health (WH) forum covers a wide range of conditions and complements the work of other forums, enabling plenty of opportunities for collaborative work. We aim to provide women's health nursing expertise to the RCN and help shape national policy. All forum activities align with the RCN strategy, including working across the UK, taking account of the requirements in each of the devolved countries.

Membership of the forum

Total forum number: 6161 an increase of 440 in the last 12 months. Social media engagement has also increased, and our Facebook page now has 1.5 k members many of whom have actively engaged with the group during the year and we have a new Instagram account with a growing following.

Committee membership

Ruth Bailey (Chair)
Charlotte Glynn (Vice Chair)
Michael Nevill
Victoria (Tori) Heppell
Esther Kuria
Emma Ayling



EDI Data

Our committee composition is currently made up of 5 white British Members and one member from the global majority.

Forum interviews this year: We invited four members to interview for 2 steering group positions, 2 from the global majority and 2 who were White British. 2 new members were appointed, 1 White British, 1 from the Global Majority, each offered a 4-year term of office.

Forum Fellows

The Forum continues to benefit from the support and expertise of RCN Fellows Debra Holloway MBE and Wendy Norton, who both undertake a significant amount of work on behalf of the forum.

Supporting the Forum:

Carmel Bagness, Professional Lead for Midwifery and Women's Health
Megan King, Project co-ordinator.

Reflections on 2025 (Outputs and outcomes)

The forum met in February 2025 to discuss strategy and agree a workplan. Guided by the strategic aims of the Governments' Women's Health Strategy, we agreed to prioritise health needs of vulnerable women, and work to embed the RCN EDI strategy and to strengthen communication with the wider forum membership.

The forum has had an incredibly productive and successful year, and the following report outlines the breadth of activities in which we have engaged.

Projects Completed in 2025

1. RCN Decriminalisation of abortion statement published December 2024
[RCN position on decriminalisation of abortion in England, Wales and Scotland | Royal College of Nursing](#)
2. Cervical Screening for physically disabled and autistic women guidance published and supported with a launch webinar and featured in the Podcast series The Cancer Professionals produced by Macmillan.
[Cervical Screening for Physically Disabled Women and Autistic Women | Publications | Royal College of Nursing](#)
3. Pregnancy Loss Guidance published and presented at Early Pregnancy Unit Providers conference by Tori Heppell
[Pregnancy Loss Guidance for Nursing | Publications | Royal College of Nursing](#)

Projects in Progress

Sexual Health and Reproductive Healthcare Nursing Career Framework	Ruth Bailey Charlotte Glynn Public Health Forum	With the Digital Team for final edits – Publication due early Jan 26
Menopause and Long Covid	Ruth Bailey Debra Holloway British Menopause Society	In Press PDF due to be published Dec/January 26
Ultrasound scanning in abortion Care	Michael Nevill, Tori Heppell, Wendy Norton	PDF Guidelines due to be published in Spring 26
Inclusion in Women's Health Podcast Series	Charlotte Glynn & Wendy Norton	Podcast series Spring 2026
Preconception Care Guidance for Nursing	Led by the Fertility Nursing Forum, and supported by WHF committee members.	PDF Guidelines due to be published in Spring 2026

Webinars and Conferences

The Women's Health Conference 2024 took place in December and was attended by nearly 100 delegates. The highly successful and well evaluated event which included excellent presentations from steering committee members, a lively debate chaired by Michael Nevill and a discussion with the Women's Health Ambassador Dame Lesley Regan- pictured with the committee above. The forum are looking forward to hosting this popular event on December 9th, which is booked to capacity. Led by Charlotte Glynn, this year's programme will include a wide range of speakers and another interactive debate and a keynote address from the Clinical Director for Women's Health Dr. Sue Mann.

[RCN Women's Health Forum Conference 2025 | Royal College of Nursing](#)



Contributions to Conferences in 2025

Committee members and Fellows have continued to contribute to 10 national conferences and events covering a broad range of Women’s Health Issues.

Month	Event	Steering Group Member
June 25	RCN Professional Activist Event	Ruth Bailey Charlotte Glynn
July 25	Women’s Health Conference Norfolk and Suffolk Branch	Ruth Bailey
August 25	Nursing in Practice Women’s Health, Prevention and Immunisation	Ruth Bailey
September 25	Nursing In Practice Women’s Health and Long Ter Conditions	Ruth Bailey
October 25	CoSRH Contraception Conference online	Ruth Bailey Charlotte Glynn
October 25	Chelsea and Westminster Gynaecology Conference	Ruth Bailey
October 25	British Society Abortion Care Providers Conference	Michael Nevill Charlotte Glynn
November 25	Nursing Live	Tori Heppell Debra Holloway
November 25	Menopause Beyond the foundations	Ruth Bailey & Debra Holloway
November 25	Association of Early Pregnancy Provider Units	Tori Heppell

Women’s Health Forum Webinars

The forum has both hosted and contributed to 7 free webinars on a wide range of topics, sharing knowledge and expertise for the benefit of RCN members and the wider profession.

Month	Topic	Members
February 25	Cancer Nursing Forum Gender Affirming Care in Cancer Outpatients	Charlotte Glynn
March 25	“Dirty Nursing” Conversations with RCN Fellows ‘Dirty nursing’ arises from shame and stigma in women’s health Royal College of Nursing	Debra Holloway Wendy Norton
June 25	Increasing access to cervical screening with the Eve Appeal	Ruth Bailey
November 25	Support while waiting: the Gynae Waiting List 1 . recording can be found here - Our Work Women's Health Forum Royal College of Nursing	Emma Ayling Ellie Stewart Debra Holloway
November 25	Support while waiting: the Gynae Waiting List 2	Emma Ayling Ruth Bailey Aysha Badat
November 25	Common Conundrums in Menopause Queen’s Institute of Community Nursing	Ruth Bailey
November 25	Putting the “Me” in Menopause RCN Independent Nursing Network	Ruth Bailey

Congress 2025

Congress 2025 was attended by Michael Nevill, Esther Kuria, Ruth Bailey and Charlotte Glynn pictured above with RCN President Bejoy Sebastian. All delegates spoke at the podium and raised the profile of the forum by networking and contributing to regional events.

The Forum also seconded a Congress agenda item on fitness to practice and with the support of Debra Holloway, delivered 3 EDLP events and hosted the popular “Meet the Forum Event”.



Forum Awards

We are delighted that Michael Nevill was recognised with a well-deserved commendation at the 2025 RCN Forum Awards.



Ongoing collaboration with other stakeholders

The forum has built strong relationships with key stakeholders within women’s health, ensuring that Nurses voices are central to policy development and that Nursing contribution is valued.

Stakeholder	Activity	Outcome
Abortion Taskforce	Michael Nevill represents RCN	Highlighting Nurse contribution to abortion care, influencing policy development and RCN position statement.
British Menopause Society	Development of RCN/BMS guidance Input into Specialist Nurse conference	Guidance in Press Conference Delivered
Cavell	Delivered joint Congress EDLP session	Invited to celebration at House of Lords Invited Cavell to Forum Chairs Meeting Planning future EDLP Session
Eve Appeal	PL and Chair meet every quarter with Eve Appeal to update on activity and plan collaborative events.	Delivered joint Webinar in June 25 Second Webinar scheduled for Jan 26. Provided Clinical review for Eve Appeal patient information literature
College of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare	Regular Meetings with College CEO and External Affairs. Ongoing contribution to the Hatfield Vision	RCN committee members shaped CoSRH Nurse Conference Collaboration with SRH Nurse Career Framework
Menstrual Health Coalition	Forum member Esther Kuria represents RCN	Providing nursing representation and support for campaign for menstrual health
National Institute Health Services Research	2 FRCN are stakeholders on policy research unit, designing study into commissioning for women’s reproductive health	Input into national research strategy

NHSE	PL and Chair have met regularly with NHSE Lead for Women's Health.	Highlighted RCN Projects, resources Contributions. Ensured representation at forthcoming Women's Health Strategy Roundtable Events hosted by Baroness Merron
Royal College of Obstetricians and gynaecology	Ongoing engagement with Clinical Assurance Group. Forum Member Tori Heppell represents the committee on Genomics	Providing the nursing voice in developing evidence-based guidance To develop curriculum on genomics in Obs, and Gynae Identify implications for practice
TIGER Together Improving Gynaecology Experiences and Research	Charlotte Glynn represents forum at regular meetings, working with stakeholders to improve experiences for women	Highlighted Nursing Contribution to care Disseminated surveys, calls for research participants. Cross sharing of resources

Contribution to National Groups and representations

In addition to our regular stakeholder meetings and events, forum members continue to actively contribute to All Party Parliamentary Group meetings and have participated in a wide range of influential national stakeholder events summarised below.

All Party Parliamentary Groups

- Women's Health/ menstrual Health Coalition
- Women's Health after Spinal Cord Injury
- Ovarian Cancer Awareness
- Polycystic Ovary Syndrome
- Menopause
- Muslim Women's Network UK/APPG event

Launch Events:

BPAS research and innovation strategy
Ovarian Cancer Awareness Launch
Zurawski v Texas Film Launch BPAS and Amnesty International
Apotychiophobia (Fear of Pregnancy Loss) launch RCN
RCOG Transforming Outpatients: Tacking Waiting Lists

National Stakeholder Events

Help Women Thrive: Parliament, Society of Occupational Medicine and Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development
Cavell annual celebration

Forum Members Charlotte Glynn and Micheal Nevill participated in a historic Parliamentary lobby calling for the decimalisation of abortion.



Contribution to the RCN membership

Ruth Bailey and Charlotte Glynn have contributed to member events seeking to shape the RCN Response to the High Court Judgement on the definition of the term Woman, both at Congress 25 and in member face to face meetings.

Forum Chair, Ruth Bailey was elected as Chair, of Forum Chairs group for 24-25 and has led the Forum chairs agenda over this period.

Working with the chair of PNC, Nursing Practice Academy and Activism Academy the first Professional Activist event was held in June 25 and plans to repeat this event in 2026 are underway. A monthly professional activist briefing is now delivered via WhatsApp to strengthen the communication between forum activists.



Women's Health Forum Blogs 2025

Forum Vice Chair Charlotte Glynn has successfully developed a planned programme of blog publication so that a blog on a Nursing or Women's Health issue is published at least every 2 months. The programme has included guest authors, and committee members have published the following blogs:-

Michael Nevill J	Reflecting on my experience at the last RCN Congress Blogs Royal College of Nursing
Charlotte Glynn	Measurement of pregnancy planning in abortion care Blogs Royal College of Nursing
Wendy Norton	Addressing the gender health gap Blogs Royal College of Nursing
Esther Kuria	Fibroid awareness month Blogs Royal College of Nursing
Debra Holloway	"It's just..." Blog Royal College of Nursing
Ruth Bailey Debra Holloway	Specialist Menopause Care in Nursing - Why do that? - Evidence-Based Nursing blog

New ways of working

In 2025, the forum has launched a new Instagram account with a growing following.

It has re-introduced the circulation of a quarterly newsletter that is distributed to the wider membership via Members Communication Centre (MCC).

Steering Committee members have joined the forum Activist WhatsApp group and now contribute to and receive a monthly forum activist briefing.

The chair and Vice Chair have joined NEST to contribute to the RCN Institutes growing professional community of practice.

RCN Publications:

The following publications have been updated:

- Women's Health Digital Pages - <https://www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/Womens-health>
- Menopause: RCN Guidance <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/rcn-menopause-rcn-guidance-uk-pub-012-073>

- Promoting Menstrual Wellbeing <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/promoting-menstrual-wellbeing-uk-pub-012-123>
- Transitions from Fertility to Maternity Care <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/rcn-transition-from-fertility-to-maternity-care-uk-pub-012-250>
- HPV, Cervical Screening and Cervical Cancer <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/rcn-hpv-and-cervical-screening-uk-pub-012-276>

In Press: Nurse Specialist: Menopause

Publications in Nursing Press Forum members have published the following articles:

[Providing emergency contraception in primary care | Nursing in Practice](#) Ruth Bailey
[CPD: How to put the new NICE menopause guidance into practice | Nursing in Practice](#)
Ruth Bailey

[Premature ovarian insufficiency: diagnosis and treatment | Nursing Times](#) Ruth Bailey,
Debra Holloway

[Menopause: symptoms, investigations and diagnosis | Nursing Times](#) Ruth Bailey, Debra
Holloway, Claudia Tye

[How the menopause and its symptoms are treated and managed | Nursing Times](#) Ruth
Bailey, Debra Holloway, Claudia Tye

Project Plans for 2026

- Deliver 2nd Cervical Screening Webinar 22nd January 2026
- Joint Promoting Menstrual health in mental health settings project led by Mental Health Forum
- Potential projects addressing the needs of patients with diabetes and menopause/ fibroid awareness

And much more!

Summary

The Women's Health Forum have had an incredible year. Aside from our regular commitments to stakeholder meetings, contributions to RCN projects, this year every forum steering committee member has represented the forum at a national stakeholder event in Westminster, presented at a national conference and published at least one blog.

The forum has completed 3 major projects with a further 2 imminent publications, re introduced regular newsletters and launched an Instagram account.

Committee members have been instrumental in the publication of the RCN position on Decriminalisation of abortion and will continue to play a significant role in supporting this campaign in 2026.

These impressive outputs are testament to the passion and commitment of the steering committee members, however, none of this would have been possible without the tireless encouragement and guidance of our Professional Lead, Carmel Bagness, and we remain indebted to her expert support.

Prepared by:

Ruth Bailey, Chair RCN Women's Health Forum
November 2025