

 **SAFE STAFFING
SAVES LIVES**

 Royal College
of Nursing

**JOIN
THE RCN**



The voice of nursing

As the voice of nursing across the UK, we work alongside our members to campaign on the issues that matter most to our profession.

We do this by:

- lobbying and influencing governments and other organisations, ensuring that your views are heard where it counts. For example, at our March 2022 *Valuing Nursing Summit*, members met with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid) to voice what needs to change to protect the future of the profession and patient care
- campaigning on a wealth of issues to raise the profile of nursing staff, the nursing profession and our role in health and social care

- pursuing and winning landmark legal cases to improve working conditions for health care staff.

When you join the RCN, you become part of the UK's largest nursing community. Together, we are a strong and powerful voice for change. You can help make the voice of nursing louder, whether you have a few minutes or a few hours spare.

Make your voice heard by:

- speaking to colleagues, friends and family about the RCN's campaigns
- contacting decision makers and politicians using our campaign actions
- sharing our campaigns on social media and with your networks
- responding to consultations and ballots.



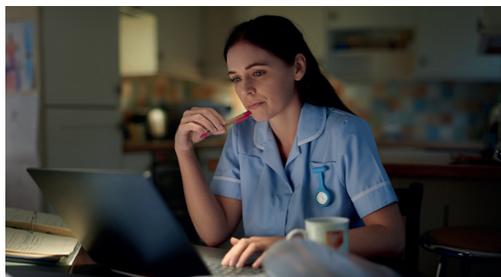
Our recent campaigns:

- **Fair pay** is about recognising the complexity of skill, responsibility and experience demonstrated every day, by nursing support workers, nursing associates, registered nurses and all members of the profession. It means making sure that a safety critical profession can reach safe staffing levels and fill tens of thousands of unfilled nursing jobs. It's about recognising that the salaries of too many nursing professionals have not kept pace with increases to their cost of living. Ultimately, the Fair Pay for Nursing campaign is about providing safe and effective care for all people of the UK. In 2021, thousands of members mobilised across the UK to challenge pay awards from their government.

Building on the success of the campaign, the RCN is influencing politicians and decision makers, winning support among the public and engaging even more members to lead action in their workplaces and communities. The campaign will not stop until nursing is protected, respected and able to deliver the safe care that patients deserve.

 **FAIR PAY
FOR NURSING**

#FairPayForNursing



- **Safe staffing** means having enough nursing staff with the right skills and knowledge, in the right place, at the right time. We're calling for safe and effective care to be enshrined in law in each UK country.

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#SafeStaffingSavesLives

- **Nurses' Day and Nursing Support Workers' Day** – two annual days where we celebrate and highlight the vital contribution and highly-skilled work of nursing staff in all roles and settings - and the fundamental, safety-critical role they make in the lives of patients every day.
- **COVID-19** – we continue to support our members as they work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Get up to date support, advice and resources on our website: rcn.org.uk/covid-19

Key milestones 1916-2021

1916

RCN incorporated.

1919

Following a successful College of Nursing campaign, the **Nurses' Act** is passed, establishing a register for nurses for the first time.

1928

Royal charter granted by George V.

1930

College of Nursing Education Department established.

1962

The Royal College of Nursing began its **first public pay campaign** in support of higher pay when public sector salaries were frozen because of an economic crisis in 1961.

1969

Raise the Roof pay campaign

This campaign saw members demonstrating in Whitehall, which gained widespread press coverage. Eventually a 22% pay increase was secured for nurses.

1976

The RCN registers as a trade union.

1978

Pay not Peanuts campaign launched.

1992

Nurse prescribing becomes law following an RCN campaign.

2001

Be Sharp, Be Safe campaign. The RCN launched its *Working Well* Initiative, which campaigned for and championed safer working practices. Key to this was the high profile campaign *Stay Sharp, Be Safe*, which raised awareness of the risks of sharps injuries.

2009

The **Frontline First** campaign is launched to highlight cuts to nursing posts.

2012

This is Nursing campaign launched to celebrate the huge contribution that nursing staff make. This campaign included utilising the RCN's social media channels on Twitter, YouTube and Facebook, as well as high profile poster advertisements on London Underground stations and on the sides of buses.

2016

The Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act receives royal assent, the first such legislation in the UK.

Wales secures nurse staffing legislation with statutory establishment methodology in acute adult in patient setting (first in Europe).

2017

Scrap the Cap campaign launched. Government lifted 1% on public sector spending.

2018

Scotland launches ***Ask for More*** campaign.

2019

Safe Staffing and Effective Care/Fund Our Future campaigns.

The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Bill passed. The First bill in the UK to apply to both health and social care services.

England launches ***People's People*** campaign - highlighting the crisis facing nursing.

Northern Ireland strike - pay and safe staffing.

Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act becomes law, the first legislation in the UK to set out requirements for safe staffing across both health and social care services.

2020

Fair Pay For Nursing campaign launched.

COVID-19 - the RCN supports and campaigns throughout the pandemic.

2021

Fair Pay for Nursing campaign continues with consultative and indicative ballots conducted on pay awards in England, Wales and Scotland.

For the Full Team public campaign about safe staffing levels launched in Wales.

RCN Nursing Workforce Standards launched - first standards of their kind in the UK to be written by nursing, for nursing.

RCN continues campaign for staffing for safe and effective care, and influences the **Health and Care Bill** as it moves through Parliament through direct lobbying and member action.

Jayne McCreadie
hospital play specialist, member since 2012



“I joined the RCN in 2012 and since then, have campaigned to encourage nursing staff, especially nursing support workers, to join the RCN. The first national campaign I got involved with was *Scrap the Cap*.

During *Scrap the Cap*, I began by walking around my hospital with the petition to get nurses and members aware of what the campaign was about.

We held an RCN stand in each of our three main hospitals, collecting signatures from staff and the public, and we went to the town centre and talked to the public.

By campaigning with the RCN, you’ll never feel you need to struggle on your own. We are here to support every member with a very loud voice that is full of passion to do what is right for ourselves and our patients.

Nursing staff are vital to the NHS and beyond, and it makes me cross to see us being undervalued – that’s why I got involved in campaigning; it gives us a voice.”

Vicky Brotherton
senior sister ophthalmology, member since 1979



“Once you become actively involved in campaigning, you won’t look back, as you will know you have made a difference to your patients and colleagues.

We all have a common goal: to improve patient care and the working lives of our fellow nursing colleagues. We are stronger if we combine our strengths and resources. We do not have any political allegiance to any party, so this allows us to speak to all politicians. I have found that campaigning has improved my confidence in speaking to a range of people outside of the nursing community and in situations I never thought I would feel comfortable in.”



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Jincy Bilgy

sister emergency care, member since 2005



“Think 2 Drink was launched to make it easier for staff to access fresh water at convenient, but discrete, hydration stations on every ward and department, and by giving staff a free re-usable water bottle.

Our idea tied in with the RCN’s national *Rest, Refuel, Rehydrate* campaign, and we were able to use RCN leaflets and posters to promote the idea -encouraging people to check the colour of their urine to see if they might be dehydrated.

Local RCN reps also helped to promote the campaign, making it a big success. Reminders about rehydrating have been especially important during the heatwave this summer. Overall, I think the campaign is helping to reduce staff sickness, reinforcing the idea that the organisation is trying to help staff look after their own health, so they can take better care of their patients.’

Malcolm Rae OBE FRCN

retired director of nursing, member since 1977



“The RCN has huge credibility and traction, and as a campaigner, you’ll be taking part in collective action and have access to expert advice and informed materials.

My advice to RCN members interested in campaigning would be to prepare well, join with like-minded others, gain the support of colleagues and where appropriate, your managers. Engage closely with service users and patient organisations, and always have the benefits to patients at the forefront of key messages.”



Sam Turner

nursing student, member since 2017



“I joined the RCN to protect myself during my studies, for support and for Newly Registered Nurses materials for when I qualified. I got involved with campaigning when I applied for my role on the student committee, and I’ve not been able to stop!

I’ve worked on the *Safe Staffing* and *Fund Our Future* campaigns, both of which have clear messages and have enabled me to get involved in all sorts of activities, from lobbying MPs in Westminster and talking about the campaign at branch level, to taking on regional roles and ensuring the student voice is heard.

Campaigning with the RCN is important because it can light a fire somewhere that can spread, engaging members, and more importantly, engaging the public.”

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Together, we can make change happen

There's never been a better time to get involved in campaigning. Whether you have a few minutes a week or a few hours a month to spare, you can help influence the future of the nursing profession.

Idea 1 Become an e-campaigner and receive a regular email update with an easy online action you can take to campaign on nursing issues.

Idea 2 Attend a branch meeting to meet like-minded professionals and talk about the issues that matter to you – one of those issues could become your next campaign.

Idea 3 Talk to your colleagues, friends and family about the RCN's campaigns – we know that the more people who support the causes we fight for, the more the voice of nursing will be heard, and the more likely change will happen.

Idea 4 Visit rcn.org.uk/campaigns to learn more about campaigning with us.

Joining the RCN not only gives you a great opportunity to become a campaigner, but the skills you develop will help you in your professional role.

Our members tell us that campaigning helps them make new connections, develop their confidence, increase their knowledge and build personal and professional skills.

Become an e-campaigner

RCN e-campaigners sign up to a regular email and take part in quick and easy online actions to support our campaigning activity. Recent actions have included emailing MPs about our proposed changes to the Health and Care Bill or signing a petition for the Fair Pay for Nursing campaign.

Our e-campaigners make a real impact on the success of our campaigns. Sign up today:

rcn.org.uk/become-an-e-campaigner

Use your voice to demand change for nursing. Take a look at our new video, *Campaigning with the Royal College of Nursing*, to find out what you can do. Visit rcn.org.uk/campaigns to watch the video.

Members lead the way

RCN members are key to any campaign we launch, and we have an impressive track record of success in making change happen for the benefit of the profession.

In August 2020, we launched the *Fair Pay For Nursing* campaign. To date in this campaign, members have spoken directly to hundreds of MPs and other elected officials, secured the support of hundreds of thousands of the general public, inspired every major media outlet to tell their story consistently, taken their message to parliament at multiple moments, submitted strong evidence for a fair pay rise and influenced the Pay Review Body that makes recommendations to the government on pay. Significant numbers turned out to vote in ballots about pay and led the way to increase engagement while they ran, including by running hundreds of events across the UK.

The health and care system is under pressure to ensure services are delivered in a safe and timely manner, and the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified existing pressures on staffing and resources in all health and care settings. However, pressures on health and care services are not limited to COVID-19 or the increased demands caused by winter infections.

In 2021, the RCN created a resource designed to support RCN members both in delivering safe and effective care, and with the difficult decisions they make every day. These decisions often relate to the type of care provided, how it is provided, and can

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have wider implications on the delivery of health and social care services. More information is available at: **rcn.org.uk/get-help/unsustainable-pressures**

RCN members are at the heart of our campaigns and we work with you to design and deliver hard-hitting, change-making campaigns on issues that matter to you. When RCN members work together, we can achieve real change – in your workplace, in your profession and for your patients.

The RCN's new approach to organising aims to support our members to work collectively around local issues and use the power of your collective voice to improve professional standards, pay, staffing levels, employment rights and workplace safety.

Whatever your area of expertise and wherever you are working – whether in the NHS, the community, care homes or other parts of the independent sector, research or education and training – you have the opportunity to stand alongside close to half a million other nursing and health care colleagues and affect real change.

rcn.org.uk

