



# RCN Health and Safety Reps

## Role descriptor

RCN health and safety reps understand and champion safe working practices and environments, for both mental and physical wellbeing. They do this by building strong relationships in their workplace to identify health, safety and wellbeing issues, and by actively engaging with their employer to enact changes needed.

RCN health and safety reps have specific rights under The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996. These entitle them to time off to carry out their duties, and access to workplaces and information to enable them to do so.

As a health and safety rep, your role may include the duties below.

### Engaging members

- Regularly visit members and colleagues in your workplace to identify their health and safety concerns.
- Carry out regular workplace inspections to identify health and safety risks.
- Link in with student ambassadors and other student representatives to check the employer is ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of students on placement.

### Tackling issues

- Investigate potential health and safety hazards and examine the causes of accidents in the workplace.
- Investigate member concerns relating to health, safety or welfare at work.
- Raise health and safety concerns and issues with your employer and advocate for these to be acted upon.
- Act as the RCN point of contact with your employer during consultations relating to health and safety, and advocate for them to meet their legal duty to consult with their workforce on health and safety issues.
- Carry out or take part in relevant casework, such as cases around workplace stress or injury, working conditions or reasonable adjustments.

### Creating long-term change and improvements at work

- Represent and negotiate for members and the workforce on staff side and in partnership forums (eg, Joint Consultative Negotiating Committee, Health and Safety Committee, Learning and Development Committee, etc.)

- Communicate national RCN campaigns to members and co-ordinate activities where relevant.
- Run local and workplace specific campaigns and activities to create health and safety improvements where needed.

### **Ensuring an equal and fair workplace and profession**

- Review and challenge workplace policies and impact assessments to ensure they are inclusive and non-discriminatory.
- Ensure your workplace inspections are inclusive and unbiased.
- Monitor any disparities in health, safety and wellbeing between employees from different backgrounds and communities and advocate for these to be acted upon.
- Ensure RCN meetings and communications reflect the diversity of the workforce.
- Promote allyship and challenge exclusionary behaviors in the workplace and in RCN spaces.
- Engage with staff EDI networks and/or leads, self-organised groups and RCN networks.
- Ensure RCN reps and members are supported and encouraged to contribute to workplace EDI initiatives and policies.

### **Co-ordinating RCN presence in the workplace**

- Hold regular meetings with fellow reps to co-ordinate efforts and ensure all members in your workplace are kept updated on RCN activity.
- Serve as a contact point for RCN activists such as student ambassadors and voting volunteers.
- Make sure your RCN contact details and availability are clear to all members.
- Keep noticeboards and intranet updated with RCN materials and meeting information.
- Recruit and support new reps and members, including student members.

### **Engaging with the RCN**

- Attend branch meetings and AGMs when possible.
- Work with RCN officers and your region to share workplace insights.
- Participate in support and supervision with your RCN officer.
- Maintain and develop your rep skills through ongoing learning and development.
- Record rep activities on the RCN system provided.

**Please note that members who are stewards, health and safety reps or learning reps, and who hold principal governance committee roles within the RCN, may be unable to carry out the full remit of the role due to their additional governance responsibilities.**

**Additionally, to be clear, representatives elected into principal governance roles such as the RCN Trade Union Committee, RCN Professional Nursing Committee or RCN Council should not be placed on hold where they are fulfilling their national governance duties and responsibilities.**