



Council

Date of Meeting:	08 December 2016
Title of Paper:	Report back from the Deputy President
Appendices:	None
Presented by:	Professor Rod Thomson, FRCN
Is a decision required? No	

Overview of reporting period 25 July 2016 to 2 December 2016

Since my last report to Council regarding my activities as Deputy President it has been a busy period working on a wide range of topics. Participation in key Council committees such as the Governance Support, International and the National Policy and Practice Committees has been a significant part of my core work. In addition I have had great pleasure in taking part in the national Representatives Conferences in Cardiff and Glasgow. Despite the pressures our representatives face in their roles, it was impressive to see the enthusiasm that they display for supporting our members. My thanks to all of them, and their colleagues in Northern Ireland and England for the brilliant work that they do.

Not surprisingly our Centenary Celebrations have played a major part of my activities in recent months. Walking has been a highlight for me. I had the pleasure of walking two sections of the Centenary Walk in company with staff

Agenda Item 11.10

members from the West Midlands regional Office. As I work in the West Midlands and live in the North West Region I chose the section of the walk that covered the last section of the West Midlands and the first section of the North West routes. The path extended from Market Drayton in Shropshire to the Eastern edge of Chester almost 30 miles away. It was good practice for the 96 miles of the West Highland Way trek in September that a group of RCN members took on to raise funds for the RCN Foundation. It has been an ambition of mine to walk the West Highland Way for many years and I could not ask for better company than the 16 RCN members who volunteered to risk the potential injuries, blisters, midges and of course the Scottish weather to raise money for a great cause. Council was well represented with Michael Brown and Stuart McKenzie, the planners for the event, joined by Tracey Budding, Elspeth Caithness and Brian Murphy. A very special mention must go to Rachel Brown, Michael's daughter who volunteered to accompany her dad. She became a core member of Team RCN during the trek and a great fund raiser in her own right. It is usually recommended that the Walk is done over seven days so the challenge set for us was to complete it over just five days! It says a great deal for my companions that they overcame injury, recent illness/surgery, blisters and the variable weather of the West Highlands to support the RCN Foundation. My thanks to everyone who sponsored me and helped me to smash my target. Thanks also to Helen Kerslake and Andy Scott-Donkin who were my companions for the last four days of the trek. We had never met each other before this adventure, but became good friends over the ups and downs of the West Highland Way.

Other highlights for me in the last three months have included being a member of the judging panel for the Wales Nurse of the Year Awards. Once again there was superb quality in the nominations being made for the various awards making it very difficult to select the finalists. The Awards ceremony was a tremendous showcase for all that is inspirational about nursing in Wales. My congratulations to everyone at RCN Wales for organising such a brilliant event, and of course to the winners of the awards.

I've also been working with RCN staff on our lobbying of Government and other organisations on a range of issues important to our members. This has included follow up work on agenda items from RCN Congress as well as responding to consultations on issues such as public health funding; children's services; changes to community pharmacies and data access. I have also presented at various conferences on matters of interest to nursing, including at the King's Fund and Public Health England. My lobbying on nursing issues during this period has included meetings at the Home Office and Department of Health, as well as the House of Commons.

Agenda Item 11.10

My term of office as Deputy President of the Royal College of Nursing was due to be completed at the end of December this year, so it was a very pleasant surprise to be elected unopposed to serve a further two year term. I hope that this reflects the views of members that I have honoured their confidence in me. My thanks for giving me this continued opportunity to serve our members.