

## Agenda Item 9



### Council

<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>08 December 2016</b>
<b>Title of Paper:</b>	<b>Royal College of Nursing Fellowship by application</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>Appendix A – process for application</b>
<b>Presented by:</b>	<b>Jane Denton, Convenor of Fellows</b>
<b>Is a decision required? Yes X No <input type="checkbox"/></b>	

#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To discuss the proposal from the RCN Fellows that we should move from the current nomination process for RCN Fellowships to an application process.

#### 2. Introduction

- 2.1. This paper asks Council to discuss introducing an open and transparent application process for Fellowships.
- 2.2. It would build on the current Fellowship model (which has now been in place for 40 years) and be open to all nurses and midwives working in the UK in clinical practice, leadership, management, research, policy or education roles and who meet the criteria for Fellowship.
- 2.3. It is proposed that Council would continue to be able to award Honorary Fellowships by nomination in recognition of someone of exceptional standing in Nursing or health care.

## Agenda Item 9

- 2.4. Council would need to approve a new regulation to provide for the proposed changes to the Fellowship and to open up the Honorary Fellowship to nurses and midwives as well as people who are not members of the nursing profession.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. RCN Fellows contribute significantly to the work of the nursing profession and its standing both nationally and internationally and also do an enormous amount to raise the awareness of the impact of nursing on public health and wellbeing.
- 3.2. The first RCN Fellowships were awarded in 1976.
- 3.3. The RCN standing orders provide for Council to admit to membership of the College in its discretion any persons who are admitted to membership on the grounds of distinction in nursing.
- 3.4. Our regulations currently provide for Fellowships to be awarded to: 'Those who have made an exceptional contribution to nursing or health care, whether through clinical innovation, leadership, research or practice development'.
- 3.5. Fellows of the RCN are entitled to the letters FRCN after their name.

### 4. Rationale

- 4.1. Fellowship by application would encourage more RCN members, from nursing and midwifery, to seek recognition of their exceptional contribution to health and healthcare through this prestigious award. It should also enable us to target a wider demographic, recognising those who have made a significant contribution at earlier points in their careers.
- 4.2. A stronger body of RCN Fellows has the potential to play a vital role in upholding the professional work of the RCN, promoting high standards of service and conduct, enhancing the evidence base, analysis and dissemination of healthcare information.
- 4.3. An application process would also address the concerns we have all heard about the current process and that it does not recognise everyone who meets the criteria and to some extent depends on the calibre of the written nomination and the quality of the statements submitted by the referees.
- 4.4. The proposed criteria for a new Fellowship by application; the process of application and verification and role description are attached at Appendix A

## Agenda Item 9

- 4.5 The awards would continue to be an honour bestowed on the successful applicants and the process would continue to be overseen by the Awards Panel supported by the Governance Department.

### 5. The benefits of RCN Fellowship

- 5.1. RCN Fellowship confers benefits to the individual in recognition of their personal contribution to the profession of nursing or midwifery. However it also benefits the RCN, the wider profession and the employers and organisations of RCN Fellows.

- 5.2. We believe these would be significantly increased by the proposed application process and would significantly strengthen the RCN's professional voice externally.

#### 5.3. Benefits to the individual would include

- Enhanced professional and personal credentials and opportunities
- Endorsed professional credibility
- Value as a RCN Fellow by employer/organisation
- An opportunity to contribute to the work of the RCN at a strategic level
- An opportunity to contribute to the Fellows collective contribution to the RCN
- The opportunity to be an ambassador for the College and the profession
  - An enhance opportunity to influence high level policy decisions and developments
- A lifetime award
- The designated title of FRCN

#### 5.4. Benefits to the RCN would include

- A unique body of expertise, experience and knowledge within the College
- Fellows make an individual and corporate contribution in all strands of the work of the College
- Fellows enhance the professional standing of the RCN externally
- Fellows represent the College in external working groups
- RCN Fellows have impact nationally and internationally

## Agenda Item 9

-Fellows can be critical friends of the RCN and can offer wider perspectives

### 5.5. Benefits to the profession would include

A powerful and cohesive group of leading nurses and midwives who can

- contribute to the development of the professions and health care
- Promote and celebrate the professions
- Help enhance the public perception of the professions
- support the development, testing and evaluation of RCN led work that has impact on professional practice
- help shape important decisions for the professions

## 6. **Recommendation**

- 6.1. Council is asked to discuss the proposal from the Fellows to move to an application process for awarding Fellowships and decide whether it is happy for a detailed implementation plan to be developed with a view to awarding the first new Fellowship in 2018.

## Agenda Item 9

### Appendix A

#### Role Description

Fellows of the RCN are expected to be involved individually and collectively in all aspects of developing the nursing and midwifery profession within the RCN strategic framework. They are also required to be ambassadors for the College and the professions.

Current and potential future activities of the Fellows could include:

- Representing the RCN on internal and external working groups
- Being a source of expertise for the RCN forums and Professional Leads
- Acting as a reference point of expertise and knowledge for the College
- Supporting the development of RCN guidance, competences and frameworks
- Being involved in internal and external consultations and external guidance
- Making a corporate contribution of knowledge and expertise as a resource to the RCN
- Offering mentorship to staff/members/new Fellows
- Interviewing/assessing new staff, forum committee members, within the Credentialing framework and new Fellows
- Contributing to debates, projects and College developments
- Representing the position of the RCN when speaking for RCN externally
- Acting as a critical friend of the RCN

## Agenda Item 9

-Role models for the profession

### **RCN Fellowship by application**

#### **Eligibility criteria for the application of a RCN Fellowship**

Member of the Royal College of Nursing

Currently registered with Nursing and Midwifery Council

Working in at least one of the five pillars of nursing and working in the UK:

- Clinical Practice
- Research
- Education
- Leadership and management
- Policy

Exceptional contribution to nursing or healthcare. Examples of such evidence include, but are not limited to:

Leading innovations that lead to sustainable and transformational change

Demonstrable significant, measurable and influential impact on Service/  
Patient/Client /Profession

External recognition of impact through innovation or research

Having made a national / international impact on policy/ strategy/ practice  
developments

Evidence of working collaboratively multi-disciplinary / multi-agency in  
innovations

Evidence of inspiring, supporting and developing others to develop beyond  
expectation

## Agenda Item 9

Exceptional leadership, exemplifying distinction in care, leadership, service and innovation

Providing a lasting contribution to the nursing profession.

### Application Process

#### Support:

Information about applying for a RCN Fellowship will be available online, including a downloadable application guide for applicant, sponsor and supporter.

Information in these guides will include:

- Clear information on the benefits and role of Fellows
- Fellows understanding that they will have the opportunity to actively engage and contribute internally and externally to the work of the College. Voluntary pre-application self-assessment worksheet
- Process map required outlining the process from application to assessment.
- A clear timeline for when applications can be made in the current year
- A clear timeline for applicants for processing applications
- Information on how the applications will be assessed and by whom
- Link to person or team that they can call or contact for questions and discussions

#### Application process:

Fellowship applications completed and submitted online

Applicants apply with a sponsor and two supporters

The application requires the applicant to demonstrate that they have achieved the criteria via:

- A written statement (maximum 1,000 words) demonstrating how the applicant meets the criteria

## Agenda Item 9

-A 2 page CV summarising career history, qualifications and achievements

-Third party evidence verifying achievement of the criteria:

- From the sponsor a statement (maximum 500 words)
- Reference from the two supporters.

### Sponsor

A sponsor may be a senior colleague or a current RCN Fellow. One of the supporters needs to be a professional in the same practice area; the other supporter can be a non-registrant, carer, patient.

### **Assessment/verification**

Applications will be assessed and verified by an awards panel. It is proposed that the panel should consist of representatives from RCN Council, the Fellows, the RCN President, RCN Forum chairs, nursing and governance departments and a patient representative.

Governance department will review the applications against the Fellowship criteria. Successful candidates will be invited to an informal discussion with the awards panel. The awards panel will make the final decision.