



Royal College  
of Nursing

## **Professional Nursing Committee**

### **Report to members – October 2018**

1. Professional Nursing Committee (PNC) met for a day and half on 29/30 October.
2. The first afternoon was spent taking stock of PNC work to date and reviewing the terms of reference and Committee objectives. PNC discussed its working relationships with Council, Trade Union Committee and RCN Headquarters staff, discussing how we could work better together to improve communication and lines of accountability for the work of the College.
3. Following the first afternoon PNC met with Donna Kinnair, Maria Trewern and Jane Clarke to review the discussion and agree next steps. PNC stated that in order to exercise its governance role effectively, it would need to meet more frequently during 2019, utilising teleconference/webinar technology as appropriate, clearer links with Council and TUC activities, and for work to start immediately on a work plan for next year, ensuring sufficient preparatory time for papers to be drafted, circulated and reviewed ahead of meetings
4. It was agreed that a member of the communications team would attend PNC meetings going forward to help ensure we are able to communicate directly with members. This will include agreeing key messages from each meeting, sharing details in advance about our agenda, and enabling members to inform our work in a timely and meaningful way. We have asked that the Committee have an interactive webpage and a Committee Twitter and Facebook page which is monitored and updated frequently with RCN staff support.
5. PNC agreed that our agendas and non-confidential papers should be published in advance, and that minutes of meetings to be made available to members on the website in addition to the summary report to Council. A presentation will be prepared for PNC members to use when speaking to their Boards about the Governance structure and the way the Committee will be working and how they input into it.
6. The Committee also asked for a discussion with the Chair of Congress about the arrangements for the TU and PN Committees to participate fully at 2019

Congress and how the Committee could work with Agenda Committee in the lead up to Congress to help inform the business agenda.

7. PNC will identify a member of the Committee to join the Forum Governance Group from January 2019. We also agreed it would be helpful to schedule into the work programme briefing sessions with RCNi and the RCN Foundation.

### **Consent for organ and tissue donation:**

8. The Committee noted that following its decision in September to support a new RCN position of qualified support for an opt-out system, subject to certain safeguards, supports and resources being in place:

In England:

- The RCN had responded to the [DHSC consultation on opt-out consent for organ donation](#), based on its new position
- Geoffrey Robinson Labour MP had continued to take the Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) legislation (his Private Members Bill that has government support) through the Commons, third reading was on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October
- We had briefed him on our UK position.
- The RCN had been working closely with British Heart Foundation which has been working on the wording of an amendment that the England legislation will include a requirement for investment in workforce and capacity to enable more donations to be successful – This was lobbied for when the legislation went to the House of Lords on 23 November.
- Jackie Doyle Price, Minister for Mental Health, Inequalities and Suicide Prevention is meeting with Donna Kinnair and members to discuss organ donation on 13 December.

In Scotland:

- The RCN in Scotland had responded to the Scottish Parliament's call for [Stage 1 written evidence](#) on the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill and used the RCN position to assess the provisions in the Bill
- The RCN gave oral evidence to the lead committee for the Bill on 13 November, using the position and accompanying member survey information to highlight some concerns in the drafting.

### **Staffing for Safe and Effective Care across the UK**

9. PNC agreed as a Committee to make safe and effective staffing in all practice settings our over-arching priority for 2019 and are looking forward to working with the College membership on this essential programme of work to ensure nurse staffing for safe and effective care is enshrined in law in each country of the UK.

10. PNC stated a clear expectation that campaign work should be based on robust and considered evidence, and take a whole-College approach to fully engage the members of Council, TU and PN committees, Country and Regional Boards, professional forums, representative committees and country and regional boards and networks.
11. We received an update on the different stages of the campaign across the four countries and the proposed approach for a UK wide model for planning and delivery of the work and our role in the campaign.
12. We noted the opportunity provided by the public commitment by the new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to expanding the nursing workforce, and giving consideration to legislation. The Committee offered our support to the Student Committee which was going to be leading a public campaign to demand at least £1bn a year to be put back into student higher education funding from Government's £20bn NHS promise as part of NHS Ten Year Plan.
13. We asked for a presentation that Members of the Committee could use to promote the campaign with their Boards and highlight the key messages for the campaign.

### **The Community based workforce**

14. The Committee discussed a first draft of a brief for piece of work to help the RCN better understand the pressures faced by the community workforce and to define an overarching objective for future RCN activity relating to the community based nursing workforce.
15. The scoping document is currently being updated in light of our comments and we will be reviewing it again at our next meeting in the New Year. Meanwhile we have as a Committee stated our commitment to promoting and developing the community workforce in our 2019 work plan. This will include the importance of Registered Nurses with Specialist Practice Qualifications in community settings and Specialist Community Public Health Nurses.

### **Scope of Social Care Position paper**

16. The Committee noted that a mandate was given by members at the 2018 Congress to undertake specific activities on social care by supporting a resolution asking Council to lobby all political parties to work together to develop a fair and sustainable funding model for social care.
17. To deliver on this resolution an RCN position on social care needs to be developed.
18. We took note that there was currently no RCN position on social care nor was there a UK wide agreement on a particular model, structure or funding

arrangement. There was also no agreement from all four countries about the need for specific lobbying work in each country and no alignment between activities on social care across the UK.

19. The Committee asked for intelligence to be gathered from across the four countries on the current position and a paper developed by the end of year to inform a discussion at its next meeting on the scope and objective of specific activity to ensure that the RCN is in a position to engage with and contribute to upcoming Government policy consultations on a funding model for social care and represent members views within this process.

## **Apprenticeships and Supernumerary Status**

### **Position statement on nursing apprenticeships in England**

20. A draft RCN position on nursing apprenticeships in England was discussed and we asked for specific references to be added in the position statement to the need for more clarity on the arrangements for clinical placements and for more information on degree level apprenticeships and their funding.
21. Going forward the Committee agreed it was important for the RCN to take a UK wide approach to developing positions and solutions relating to apprenticeships in nursing care to ensure that lessons from the England process would inform any roll-out of apprenticeships in the other countries.

### **Options for the College's position on protected learning time to support learning in practice**

22. The Committee was updated on the Nursing and Midwifery Council's standards for pre-registration nursing programmes for trainee nursing associates in England and we agreed our position to protect the supernumerary status of learners on placement for all routes into nursing to ensure that the principles of good quality learning are embedded and student outcomes enhanced. PNC recognised that this position is opposed to moves for TNAs to have "protected learning time" rather than supernumerary status.

## **Emerging Issues around skill mix in the Nursing Workforce**

23. We were updated on proposals from the HP Committee to change the title and definition of the HP membership category and to continue its campaign for regulation and work underway to develop standards to form a draft regulatory framework.
24. The Committee noted that there was a Council task and finish group leading on a review of the current membership categories and it was agreed that a member of the Committee should join that Group and input into that important work.

25. As a Committee, we emphasised that support staff should always be complimentary to the Registered Nurse and not in place of it and must not become an acceptable way for Government not to make investment in the graduate Registered Nurse workforce both pre and post registration.

### **Return to Practice Consultation**

26. Committee Members agreed to forward comments on the consultation documents to Denise Llewellyn outside the meeting to inform the RCN response.

### **Decriminalisation of Termination of Pregnancy**

27. PNC noted that the first meeting of the project board was the following day when they would be agreeing the governance arrangements for the project; agreeing the scope of the different work-streams; making arrangements for a roundtable discussion with the other Royal Colleges and developing its communication plan.
28. The Committee will be receiving a follow-up report at its next meeting in the New Year.

### **Strategic Alliance – University of Sheffield**

29. Next on our agenda was a presentation on our new five year alliance with the University of Sheffield. The aim of this alliance is to help grow an evidence base to demonstrate the value of nursing. The first project is to support the safe and effective staffing campaign and the Committee was asked to help to identify the questions that needed to be answered and where would be the best places to go for that evidence.

### **2018 Congress Agenda Items**

30. PNC had appointed member leads for each of the items of 2018 Congress aligned to the professional agenda. The progress reports for each of the congress items allocated to the Professional Nursing were discussed in detail. Changes to the action template were suggested to better illustrate the work being undertaken.
31. A number of member leads reported that they had not received responses after contacting the staff leads for their items and Stephanie Aiken agreed to follow this up. The lack of progress in some of the key areas of work was also commented on and the plan to get follow-up kick off quicker in 2019 was welcomed.
32. PNC highlighted the importance of working with Agenda Committee to ensure the 2019 agenda is complimentary to the existing work-streams,

avoids duplication of items at the expense of a thorough and balanced programme of work, and to ensure that the outputs of Congress are realistic and achievable in the context of the College's professional strategy.