



## Terms of Reference: UK Nursing Support Workers Committee

1. Name of Committee

UK Nursing Support Workers Committee

2. Purpose

2.1 RCN Council has established the Nursing Support Workers Committee in accordance with Schedule Rule 2.1 of the Royal Charter.

2.2 The Nursing Support Workers Committee represents the RCN members defined under Standing Order 5.2 and the regulation on RCN membership – definitions of membership.

2.3 The remit of the Committee is to provide a voice for Health Care Support Workers, Health Care Assistants, Assistant Practitioners, Nursing Associates and Trainee Nursing Associate members of the RCN and report through the three ex-officio members to RCN Council, the RCN Trade Union Committee and the RCN Professional Nursing Committee.

3. Delegated responsibilities

3.1 The role of the Nursing Support Workers Committee is:

- a) To contribute to the development of RCN policy relating to Nursing Support Worker members within principles established by RCN Council;
- b) To advise and be consulted on activity relating to Nursing Support Worker members including recruitment of new members into the RCN through the RCN Boards;
- c) To liaise and communicate with Nursing Support Worker Members by linking with RCN Boards and put forward their views, ideas and concerns;
- d) To work in partnership with external stakeholders in line with the decisions of RCN Council and its committees where relevant to Nursing Support Workers;
- e) To advise and be consulted on RCN strategy and planning where it pertains to Nursing Support Worker members;
- f) Through the three ex-officio members on the Committee, to ensure that issues specific to Nursing Support Worker

members that may have UK-wide implications are raised with RCN Council, the RCN Trade Union Committee and the RCN Professional Nursing Committee;

- g) To encourage, promote, facilitate and support the advancement of nursing in relation to Nursing Support Worker members in line with RCN strategy and policy;
- h) To ensure that Nursing Support Worker members are embedded in the activities of the RCN at all levels: local, regional, national, and international

#### 4. Reporting and accountability

- 4.1 The Nursing Support Workers Committee is responsible and accountable to RCN Council.
- 4.2 Formal minutes of meetings will be kept and approved at subsequent meetings of the Nursing Support Workers Committee.
- 4.3 The deliberations of the Nursing Support Workers Committee shall be reported to RCN Council and any resolution passed or decision taken shall be reported to Council.
- 4.4 Key messages from Nursing Support Workers Committee meetings will be disseminated via a report to members shared on the RCN website and with Boards/ other RCN committees.
- 4.5 The Nursing Support Workers Committee may set up such sub-committees or other groups as it thinks fit to further its work, but these shall be approved by RCN Council.

#### 5. Meetings and quorum

- 5.1 The Nursing Support Workers Committee will meet at least three times a year. The dates of the meetings shall be agreed by RCN Council in the year preceding that in which the meetings are to be held.
- 5.2 The quorum for decision-making is half the Committee.
- 5.3 Special ad hoc meetings may also be called if the business of the Nursing Support Workers Committee is of such urgency that it cannot wait until the next meeting.
- 5.4 The rules and procedures in the *RCN Meetings Policy and Process* apply to the Nursing Support Workers Committee.

## 6. Membership

6.1 Members of the Nursing Support Workers Committee must be a member of the Nursing Support Worker constituency as defined under Standing Order 5.2 and the regulation on RCN membership - definitions of membership.

6.2 There shall be no more than 15 members of the Nursing Support Workers Committee constituted as follows:

- the Nursing Support Worker member of Council (ex-officio member);
- the Nursing Support Worker member of the Trade Union Committee (ex-officio member);
- the Nursing Support Worker member of the Professional Nursing Committee (ex-officio member);
- one member from each of the twelve RCN UK countries and regions, to be elected by Nursing Support Worker members in each respective country and region.

## 7. Observers

7.1 Observers may attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair and the agreement of the Nursing Support Workers Committee. Observers can speak and/or participate in the meeting only with the permission of, or at the request of, the Chair.

7.2 Individuals attending in observer status will receive those papers relating to the areas relevant to their observer role.

7.3 Observers will not usually attend private or confidential sessions of the Nursing Support Workers Committee.

## 8. Election to the Nursing Support Workers Committee

8.1 Elections to the Committee will be conducted in accordance with the *RCN's Elections and Appointments Policies* and with the specific procedure for each election.

8.2 One half of the elected Committee members shall retire every two years.

## 9. Terms of office

9.1 Terms of office will be for four years except for casual vacancies which will be to the end of the vacant term.

- 9.2 Members of the Nursing Support Workers Committee are asked to commit to serving their full term once elected and not stand for another RCN role if that meant they would need to stand down from the Nursing Support Workers Committee mid-term.
- 9.3 The *RCN Regulation on Terms of Office* shall apply in respect of serving more than one term.
- 9.4 The terms of office of ex-officio members of the Committee will follow the individual member's elected term of office.
10. Mid-Term (casual) vacancies
- 10.1 A casual vacancy on the Nursing Support Workers Committee shall be filled in accordance with the *RCN's Process for Filling Casual Vacancies*.
11. Chair and vice chair
- 11.1 In accordance with Rule 2.2 in the *Royal Charter* the Nursing Support Workers Committee shall have a Chair. A Vice Chair shall also be elected.
- 11.2 The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected every two years by the members of the Committee from within the Committee.
- 11.3 The terms of office for the Chair and Vice Chair shall each be for two years.
- 11.4 The *RCN Regulation on Terms of Office* shall apply in respect of serving more than one term.
- 11.5 The Chair and Vice Chair must relinquish these roles at the end of the term of office for the role, or if, for whatever reason, they cease to be a member of the Nursing Support Workers Committee including reaching the end of their term of office on the Committee.
- 11.6 The process for the election of Chair and Vice Chair will be conducted in accordance with the *RCN's Election Policy*.
12. Staff support, advice and guidance
- 12.1 The lead Executive Director will be the RCN Chief Nurse who will ensure support and advice to the Nursing Support Workers Committee as appropriate.
- 12.2 Committee members and staff will work together positively and constructively, in line with the *RCN's Respect Charter* to deliver the purposes of the Committee and within the Operating Framework\*\*.

- 12.3 In the unlikely situation where key professional advice presented by staff is not accepted by the Nursing Support Workers Committee, the advice and reasons for not accepting the professional advice will be fully documented in the minutes of the meeting. Should the responsible Director conclude this position poses a risk to the organisation and its members, the circumstances will be brought to the attention of the General Secretary/Chief Executive who will assess the seriousness of the position and advise the Chair of Council accordingly. Should a resolved position not be reached the matter will be escalated to Council for a determination on the way forward.
- 12.4 The Governance Support team will provide secretariat support to the Nursing Support Workers Committee.
13. Removal from the Nursing Support Workers Committee
- 13.1 A Nursing Support Workers Committee member may be removed before the end of their term of office on the grounds if they:
- a) have exceeded their powers in a way that is detrimental to the RCN;
  - b) have failed to discharge their duties;
  - c) have acted in breach of the RCN's Code of Conduct and/or Respect Charter;
  - d) have acted in a manner likely to bring the RCN into disrepute;
  - e) have failed to attend three consecutive meetings (excluding special ad hoc meetings);
  - f) have any active cautions from the NMC, or other regulator, against their name, are currently subject to any NMC, or other regulator's, sanction, and/or they are subject to any ongoing disciplinary proceedings with any of their employers or professional disciplinary proceedings before the NMC or another regulator;
  - g) are subject to ongoing disciplinary proceedings in respect of any role they hold at the RCN and/or currently subject to any RCN disciplinary sanction.
- 13.2 The processes for such removal will be in accordance with the *Member Resolution Policy*.

The template for these terms of reference will be reviewed annually and was approved by the RCN Council on 27 July 2022 and amended in September 2022

They should be read in conjunction with the *Operating Framework for RCN Committees*\*\* and other documents referred to above.

*Note – these terms of reference are subject to ongoing change in line with the implementation of the recommendations of the Council-led governance review (2022). \*Scheme of delegation under revision. \*\* Operating Framework for Committees in development [July 2022]*