

The London Activist

Network Newsletter for RCN Stewards, Health and Safety and Learning Representatives across London



Royal College of Nursing
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London Activists reflect on their experiences of the Joint Representatives Autumn Conference held in Cardiff

Carl Adams (pictured right) is a Rep in Outer north central London branch.

I attended the conference at Cardiff recently and found this a great experience and found it a great place to meet and catch up with friends from all over the four different countries. We learnt about

burning issues that nurses, care assistants and health staff are having to deal with and how we as reps can support our fellow members in the workplace while keeping a good relationships with our employers. The conference was making us look and work together in groups to find ways and plan how we as reps could be getting more involved and what support we need to give our members to overcome issues they are facing

These conferences that are held twice a year and are there to help, guide & develop RCN reps in their roles and gets reps sharing ideas and experiences from all their years of being a rep and what issues or problems they have faced and how stewards, H&S reps & learning reps work together as one to support each other, our members, and any obstacles they have to overcome to get the right results.



What's on When? Dates for your 2017* diary

2-3 March RCN UK Joint Reqs Conference

13-17 May Congress Liverpool Arena
& Conference Centre

14 June Joint London Representatives Development Day@ RCN
London Region HQ

19 September Joint London Representatives Development Day
@RCN London Region HQ

5-6 October RCN UK Joint Reqs Conference

28 November Joint London Representatives Development Day
@RCN London Region HQ



RCN London Activist Cecilia Anim is standing for a second term of office as President. Results are due out mid November.

Sad Farewell to Andy

It was with great sadness that London Region learnt of the untimely death of Andy Shum, Branch chair for Inner SW London Branch.

Andy was a loyal RCN Activist for many years and worked tirelessly for nurses and nursing around his patch of London. He was always enthusiastic, smiling and prolific on social media raising the nursing profile on the political agenda. He also helped neighbouring Branches with study days and Congress activities. Andy, you will be sorely missed by all those that knew you. Rest in peace.



Reflective Learning - Joint Representative Conference 29th - 30th September at Cardiff City Hall

by Joyce Inoniyegh RCN Steward Outer North West London Region

My reflection on the conference would be in three categories as follows;

CONCEPT - of the conference was very good and most important part of the event, it gave the opportunity for all representatives to come together to be with their colleagues to unite with in unity to participate and understand more the work of RCN in a wider context. It also allowed delegates to reflect and know where they are in their roles and what difficulties lie ahead and how those challenges could be met together as the RCN. The work RCN is doing to support the delegates and where there maybe gaps, and how the gaps could be bridged with the help of all present at the conference as a collective group of Activists. In my own experience it made me understand my strengths and weakness and to identify my development needs.



LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT - The opportunity to meet with other representatives from all over the country was very good, to network and share ideas understanding that the challenges we we have as a collective is not an easy task. Learning from each other was a positive idea and the group work was educative and achieved the purpose of collective responsibilities. The speakers were inspirational and met the educational needs of the delegates.

LEARNING OUTCOME - The work in Wales was excellent to know this was RCN at its best, the speaker from Big Issue was very educative as he gave an insight into how you could get people back on their feet after difficulties through support and

encouragement, working with them. This is very relevant to the work we do as representatives at all levels for our members.



Mike Smith, national stewards committee member for London pictured with the London RCN Board at one of their recent meetings at HQ

Lisa Marsh – Reith, Outer South East London Branch RCN, Learning Rep

I was fortunate to attend the Joint Reps conference in Cardiff. With easy transport links from London, I arrived in Cardiff to a welcoming and vibrant city. City hall is a characteristic building and a great venue and setting for the next two days. It was encouraging to see so many Learning Reps, Safety Reps and Stewards in the hall.

After a welcoming address from Peter Meredith – Smith from RCN Wales, we listened to our key note speaker Janet Davies, discussing Our Centenary year and beyond. What a year so far? Many wonderful learning opportunities, Workshops, celebrations to mark the occasion. However, we similarly have very challenging times ahead both financially and politically.



powerful and left me wanting to hear and research the topic more.

It was lovely to catch up with reps at the Conference Dinner. A heart felt address from Cecilia Anim thanking each and every one for their continued support and hard work. We even came 5th in the after dinner Quiz which was fun.

A Great Video shown of the West Highland way walk. A huge achievement to all the walkers who raised money for the RCN Foundation. This is something that I would like to participate in next year for a good cause.

Joint Reps conference is a great opportunity to network with old friends and colleagues and meet new

The standard of the presentations this time was excellent. Fantastic presentation from Lara Carmona – associate director of Policy, International and parliamentary, RCN and Stephen Robertson – Chief Executive Officer, The Big Issue Foundation. Both presentations were insightful,

representatives from different branches, working collaboratively and bringing new idea's to the table. I am looking forward to being back in my work area, with fresh ideas and the educational tools needed to work with our members, ensuring that they are informed, supported, included and engaged in key issues within the workplace and to provide high quality patient care.

Autumn of Learning

As part of RCN London's commitment to supporting members with continued learning we are putting on a series of educational branch conferences across the city this autumn.

These free, member-led events are a great way to brush up on your nursing skills in a variety of subjects and are also an opportunity to share knowledge with other RCN members working in your part of London.

RCN London are running a total of five events over this coming autumn. Some have already happened whilst these are still to come:

North West London branches - Thursday 10 November 2016, Cowdray Hall, RCN HQ, 20 Cavendish Square. The theme of the day will be how techniques such as mindfulness and effective leadership can help provide safe and compassionate care and can support you to enhance and develop your practice. [Registration is open now.](#)

South West London branches - Friday 25 November 2016, Sutton Hospital. The theme of the day will be developing knowledge and skills for improved nursing practice. [Registration is open now.](#)

South East London branches - Friday 2 December 2016, Lewisham Hospital. The theme of the day will be "Nurses, Politics and Passion: Influencing for Success". [Registration is open now.](#) All of the events are free to attend and a complimentary lunch will be provided.



Karen Sanders
London Representative on the UK Learning Representatives Committee

The most recent **RCN Joint Representatives Conference** took place between Thursday 29th and Friday 30 September 2016 in Cardiff. The conference aimed to explore new ways in which RCN representatives **could be 'Engaging and Influencing for Change at all Levels;** in order to **improve the working lives of RCN members** and, in doing so, enable them to **continue to deliver high quality patient care.** The Conference provided multiple opportunities for members to network with other representatives and RCN Staff, share ideas, reflect and further develop their representative role(s).

Lisa Turnbull from RCN Wales helped members understand the key actions and activities that enabled RCN Wales to achieve the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016. Members were encouraged in groups to use the RCN "Ask, Listen and Act" questioning and influencing tool to explore how they might engage members and influence employers and government for safe staffing levels in their own workplaces.

Chris Cox, Director of Membership Relations, RCN outlined the RCN's commitment through the RCN's new "Valuing Rep work", to improving its support for representatives to ensure that you feel better valued in their role. Following Chris's presentation members were asked in groups to discuss how the RCN could better celebrate and value the work that representatives do. This piece of work has provided the RCN with a rich and valuable resource highlighting "what matters to Rep's" and a Framework for Action.

Chris also highlighted the importance of the RCN collecting evidence of representative's activity in preparation for the impact of the Trade Union Bill. Members were asked to consider how the RCN could start to collect evidence (case studies) to help the RCN demonstrate the value of RCN representatives to government, the public, employers, and the media in order to challenge negative perceptions around the value of trade unions.



Lara Carmona, Associate Director – RCN Policy, International and Parliamentary department shared her aspirations for links into the workplace through the RCN representative's community. Members were asked in groups to reflect upon what they had learnt from Wales around trade union influence.

The conference concluded with a presentation from Stephen Robertson, Chief Executive Officer, Big Issue Foundation. Stephen shared how The Big Issue Foundation engages and influences, building strong relationships at all levels to tackle the complex issues that make it tough for rough sleepers to get what they need to improve their situation, thus helping individual vendors to gain the skills and confidence to go out and sell to the public and how the organisation, as a whole, gains support from the public, businesses and the government. Members were encouraged to reflect on their journeys home, the lessons learned by the foundation

The next conference will be held from the 2nd to 3rd March 2017. The venue is to be confirmed shortly.

