



RCN Council elections 2019 – Scotland seat

On Thursday 5 September 2019, RCN Scotland hosted a hustings for the three candidates standing in the election for the Scotland seat to RCN Council.

During the hustings, the candidates gave opening statements before answering questions submitted in advance by members.

Watch a [recording of the hustings](#)

Members watching the hustings on a livestream were also able to submit questions via social media. There was only time to answer one of these submitted questions on the night. The candidates agreed to submit written answers to the questions after the event.

Here, candidate [Kathleen Bree](#) answers the three additional questions.

1. How will candidates ensure that the voice of members in Scotland is heard at RCN Council?

“Being clear that Council is a governance body but where appropriate:

- By working closely with the RCN Director and Officials
- Being accessible to members by various media and shared attendance at branch meetings
- Meeting members
- Keeping up to date with current issues facing members in Scotland
- Keeping up to date with health & social care and public health issues in Scotland
- Keeping up to date with political agendas affecting, or having the potential to affect members
- Being prepared and informed going into Council meetings (e.g., agenda items) affecting Scottish members - having discussions, being advised etc., beforehand.
- Ensuring pertinent Scottish issues are tabled at Council meetings.”

2. All three candidates talked about member engagement a lot during the hustings – what will you do to try to improve this? What barriers to member engagement have you encountered previously? What can be learned from that to improve member engagement in the future?

“I have met barriers to engagement in a variety of settings and some of the anecdotal reasons have been as follows:

- ‘It doesn't concern me’

- 'I'm too busy'
- 'Meeting venues and times don't suit me'
- 'I wasn't listened to when I raised an issue previously'
- 'I didn't get a response to my query/complaint'
- 'I can't be bothered'
- 'What benefit would it give me?'

"Anecdotal evidence is very useful and can give an indication of the issues, but it may not be accurate and may only apply to a minority of the disengaged members.

"So I would suggest commissioning a comprehensive report to:

- Identify areas and locations of diminished engagement in Scotland
- Research why there is a lack of engagement with members
- Explore what would, if anything, engage members
- Make recommendations and solutions for action.

"Other actions would be to:

- Develop a rolling programme of Council and RCN Officials meeting with members
- Campaign for more RCN Stewards so that they, along with existing engaged members can encourage and support non-engaged members to participate."

3. The RCN council has a number of priorities within its plan - can you pick one of these and explain why this is important to nursing in Scotland?

"... a coherent domestic health and social care workforce strategy, which includes preserving the rights of EEA nationals working in the sector and allow for future migration."

"Better working relationships and collaboration between health and social care delivery

- To ensure patient's treatment, recovery and discharge is seamless by joint working
- To provide holistic care for patients and families
- Staff satisfaction in being able to deliver the highest standards of care possible
- Improved recruitment and retention
- Ensure and safeguard our ability to employ the right skill-mix and staffing levels to deliver the highest standards of care by having simple processes for recruitment and retention of overseas staff
- Collaborative learning and research
- Shared best practice and learning from other countries and professionals experience."